

A Micro-Scale Approach to the Archaeology of Umbrian Cult Places

1 Introduction

To gain a thorough understanding of the role of Umbrian sanctuaries, the rituals performed there, and the changes that occurred after Roman expansion, it is necessary to explore the development of each sacred space separately. Therefore, this chapter takes a micro-scale approach to Umbrian sanctuaries, examining their topography, architecture, and votive offerings from the sixth century BCE to the beginning of the first century BCE. The focus is on the importance of each sanctuary to the community before and after the Romans established their presence in the region. As architectural elements are often absent in both pre-Roman and Roman period sacred spaces, the attention is on the votive offerings, which provide significant insight into the religious practices in ancient Umbrian sanctuaries.

This chapter categorizes cult places into groups based on their topographical location within the Umbrian territorial region, primarily determined by the geomorphology of the territory. These groups include southern Umbria, the Umbrian valley, northern Umbria, and Apennine Umbria. The focus is on three key aspects of each sanctuary. Firstly, the topographic location is outlined to provide a context within the contemporary settlement system of the region. Secondly, where relevant, the architectural aspects and spatial organization are discussed. Lastly, an analysis of the votive material is presented. The discussions are organized chronologically, in line with the chronology of Italic religions presented in Chapter 1. The chapter begins with the archaic and classical period (sixth–fourth century BCE) and proceeds to the Hellenistic period (late fourth–early first century BCE).

The presented data are the result of an integrated analysis of various sources, including published, unpublished, and archival material. To understand the changes that occurred in religious spaces following Roman encroachment, it is necessary to utilize all available information, including objects that survive only in archaeological documentation. The focus of the discussion of the votive material is on figurative votive offerings, the most widespread type of votive offering in Umbria, particularly before the Roman conquest.¹ This

1 All votive types are explained in Appendix 1. In this chapter, they are always described after

class of objects is examined in greater detail, drawing upon published and archival data as well as objects on display in museums and those stored in local depots.

In the conclusion, it is demonstrated how reviewing the architectural and ritual material from Umbrian sanctuaries can help debunk certain common assumptions regarding sacred spaces in central Italy. Should the widespread observance of the anatomical votive tradition be seen as an indication of a change in the cult sphere as a result of the gradual homogenization of Italy under Rome? Were rural cult places either abandoned or the object of the *laissez-faire* politics of Rome? The available data and new information collected for this study undermine the conventional scholarly interpretation of central Italian sanctuaries and the role of anatomical votives, thus falling in line with the most recent re-evaluation of sacred spaces advocated by scholars like Stek and Scopacasa.² In contrast to the prevailing scholarly consensus, the research findings reveal that sacred spaces remained vital during the Roman period, irrespective of their proximity to significant areas of Romanization, such as colonies or roads. Additionally, it is demonstrated that anatomical votives are not significantly related to the Roman presence in the region. This chapter calls for the abandonment of these conventional assumptions and concludes that the persistence of cult spaces and the apparent change in votive offerings should be examined by focusing on internal indigenous factors rather than solely attributing them to the hegemonic influence of Rome.

This chapter works in concert with the three appendices presented at the end of the book. All the votive figurines introduced in this chapter are linked in the footnotes to their database entry (abbreviation of the sanctuary site followed by a number) listed in Appendix 2 and to the photo catalog in Appendix 3.³

their first mention. The votive offerings whose rendering can noticeably vary, such as terracotta heads and anatomical votives, or those that are unique for certain sites, will be described on a case-to-case basis. The chronology, if not specified, is the one assigned to the objects by the archaeologists who studied or excavated the material. When this is unknown, I use comparanda from other sites in order to establish a plausible chronological framework. Comparanda are also used if they serve to better define the chronology proposed by the excavators.

² See Chapter 2 on this topic.

³ Although all the heads, the anatomicals, and the offerings belonging to the group “Other” will be accompanied by a photo, in the case of the Umbrian bronze figurines, the repetitiveness of the types does not necessitate a photo for each specimen. Instead, this Appendix includes photos of the best-preserved specimens from each sanctuary.

1.1 *Methodology Notes*

Various factors hinder obtaining a clear understanding of the life of Umbrian sanctuaries and the role and function of their votive offerings. Firstly, a significant proportion of Umbrian cult places were excavated in the 1960s and 1970s, which meant that stratigraphic analysis and techniques were not frequently employed. Consequently, not all the sanctuaries presented in this chapter are equally documented, and only rarely are quantitative data on their materials available. This lack of consistency arises from differences in the level of site exploration and the degree of relevant research and available publications, as well as archival data. Second, Umbrian votives have not been found in their original depositional position. In some cases, votive objects have been found inside votive pits (such as at Pantanelli and Monte Acuto). However, over time, votive objects were removed to make space for other offerings, as seen in other parts of Italy and Greece.⁴ Despite this removal, the sacred value of the votive objects was not lost, as they were often accumulated in votive pits, the so-called “votive deposits,” in specific sanctuary areas and where rituals appropriate to their placement were conducted. In other cases, votive objects and other construction materials formed obliteration deposits. They filled wells and/or cisterns when sacred areas were abandoned (Monte Moro) or water facilities went out of use (Monte Torre Maggiore, Colle Mori).⁵ In both cases, the accumulation of layers from different periods inside the pits means that the find context offers no information for the reconstruction of relative chronology. Each find can, therefore, be dated only by internal stylistic criteria.

Furthermore, the absence of remains from Umbrian sanctuaries, such as architectural terracottas or decorative elements, presents a challenge in establishing a chronological framework. Without these anchoring artifacts, excavators must rely solely on the findings within each deposit. Complicating matters, several Umbrian votives have been discovered accidentally on the surrounding surface (Monte Pennino, Monte Subasio), often due to the disturbance caused by more recent agricultural production (Monte Santo), or distributed across the sanctuary area in disturbed contexts (Monte Torre Maggiore, Monte San Pancrazio, Monte Moro, Monte Ansciano, La Rocca, Cancelli, Grotta Bella,

4 On relocating and burying offerings, see Murgan 2015. The author also discusses the terms employed to describe the different contexts containing depositions of dedicated objects.

5 As a few examples from Etruria show, when dismantled the material from sacred areas was still considered divinely imbued and therefore had to be handled with extreme care: see Nagy 2016.

Campo La Piana, Colfiorito). As a result, the circumstances of the discovery impact not only the dating of the artifacts, which is often based on comparanda and stylistic criteria, but also determinations about the original purpose of the dedications. Additionally, many sites were looted before being fully excavated, making it difficult to determine the proportion of different votive types and the level of activity at each cult place. Even when archaeological investigations have recovered votive material, it is still challenging to draw accurate conclusions about the site's activity level based solely on the votive deposition. It is possible that some activities continued but left no archaeological evidence.

Therefore, generalization and simplifications are unavoidable in interpreting the available material and any graphics presented in this chapter should be viewed with the proviso that they can only include the potentially biased sample of the available material.

2 Southern Umbria

2.1 *Grotta Bella*

2.1.1 Topographic Location

The site is on the northeastern slope of Monte L'Aiola (756 m above sea level). This mountain is the easternmost extension of the Monti Amerini chain, between the Monte Castellari to the south and the Monte Pianicel Grande to the north. It now makes up the territory of Avigliano Umbro, eight kilometers from the town of Amelia (ancient Ameria) and some two kilometers east of the village of Santa Restituta.

The cult place appears to have been connected to a system of settlements whose fortifications have been identified on the summit of the Amerine hills on the Monte Castellari and the Monte Pianicel Grande. The fortified areas defined by these defensive walls controlled the east-west routes that connected the southern Umbrian centers of Tuder and Ameria with central Etruria. The fulcrum of this territorial organization was the Umbrian town of Ameria, where a permanent settlement seems to have existed at least since the sixth century BCE.⁶ A mountainous path connected the cult place with both the Tiber valley and the pre-Roman routes that led to Ameria and were retraced by the Via Amerina in the third century BCE.

⁶ For more information on the settlement history of the Ameria territory, see paragraph 2.2. Pantanelli.

The first known historical reference to the cave's existence dates to 1902, when the geologist Bernardino Lotti had the opportunity to visit it. In a note, he briefly described the underground rooms and mentioned the discovery of a small terracotta head from the Roman period that he found in the Entrance Hall.⁷ In addition, he recalled some tunnels in the deepest part of the cave that he did not dare to explore alone. The first scientific exploration of the cave and its innermost recesses took place half a century later. At the end of the 1950s, the site attracted the attention of the Gruppo Grotte Pipistrelli CAI of Terni (cavers from Terni, Umbria). In addition to visiting most of the hypogeal environments, the speleologists from Terni carried out the first topographical examination of the space and surveyed the site in the Catasto delle Grotte dell'Umbria (Cadaster of Umbrian caves, identification position: 19 U/TR). As a result of the speleological investigation, the cave was thoroughly described. At the same time, ancient artifacts, revealed by clandestine diggers, spurred professional archaeological interest for the first time.⁸

In 1970, the Soprintendenza alle Antichità dell'Umbria, in collaboration with the Department of Human Paleontology and Pale ethnology of the University of Milan, began the first archaeological investigation of the cave. During four consecutive campaigns, the research effort was concentrated on one external trench and three internal ones. In one of these internal trenches, the excavation of a deep stratigraphic sequence, explored to a depth of seven meters from the surface, allowed for the identification of three phases of occupation of the space.⁹ The site had been inhabited from Neolithic times (5000–3000 BCE) until the late Bronze Age (1200–1000 BCE) and became a cult place from the archaic to the end of the imperial period (sixth century BCE to fourth century CE). However, from the first century CE to the fourth century CE, the votive offerings noticeably decreased compared to the previous centuries, suggesting more episodic use of the sacred space.¹⁰

7 Lotti 1902.

8 Mattioli 1968.

9 Guerreschi et al. 1992. Evidence of human occupation during the pre- and protohistoric period, from the fifth to the second millennium, can be found in both the first rooms (entrance and Entrance Hall) and the deepest rooms (secondary branches) of the cave. However, recent investigations have shown that there was a complete burial site in the cave, specifically in the Sala dello Scheletro. This suggests that in prehistoric times, there was a living area near the entrance of the cave and a burial area located in the deepest part of the cave. For more information on these earlier phases of occupation, see Zapelloni Pavia and Larocca 2023.

10 A preliminary archaeological report of this excavation was published by Arena (1975–1976). A detailed overview of its materials has been presented by Monacchi (1988) and more recently by Zapelloni Pavia (2020) and Zapelloni Pavia and Larocca 2023.

In the 1990s, after a decade in which the cave appears to have been widely forgotten and its stratigraphy disturbed by looters, it became a regular destination of the Gruppo Speleologico Todi. This group, made up of professionals in all aspects of caves and cave systems, explored the entire underground system and discovered a number of new areas. In particular, in the deepest parts of the cave they revealed the presence of a room with a large scattering of human skeletal remains. Here, they found a skull embedded on the base of a massive stalagmite—hence the name Sala Dello Scheletro (Skeleton Hall). Unfortunately, this discovery was not followed by a thorough survey of the cave, and, once again, several decades passed before archaeological work in the cave resumed.

In 2019–2021, archaeologists and anthropologists from the Regional Center of Speleology “Enzo dei Medici,” an organization specializing in speleo-archaeological research, and the aforementioned Gruppo Speleologico Todi investigated anew the Sala Dello Scheletro. They ascertained the archaeological importance of the site and rekindled scientific interest in the historical stratification of the cave.¹¹

2.1.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution

The cave is set within the hard limestone of the slope of the Monte l’Aiola and consists of several underground segments (figure 2).¹² The first room, the so-called Entrance Hall, is massive: the major axis measures 40 m and the minor axis 30 m; its average height is about 10 m. From the most sunken sector of the Entrance Hall, three distinct tunnels continue into the cave. Each of them has been given a conventional name: 1) Via delle Strette (Narrow Passages Route); 2) Ramo delle Firme (Signature Branch); and 3) Condotta Preistorica (Prehistoric Passageway).

11 For an updated study of the cave see Larocca 2022 and Zapelloni Pavia and Larocca 2023.

12 For a thorough discussion on the spatial distribution of the cave, see Zapelloni Pavia and Larocca 2023.

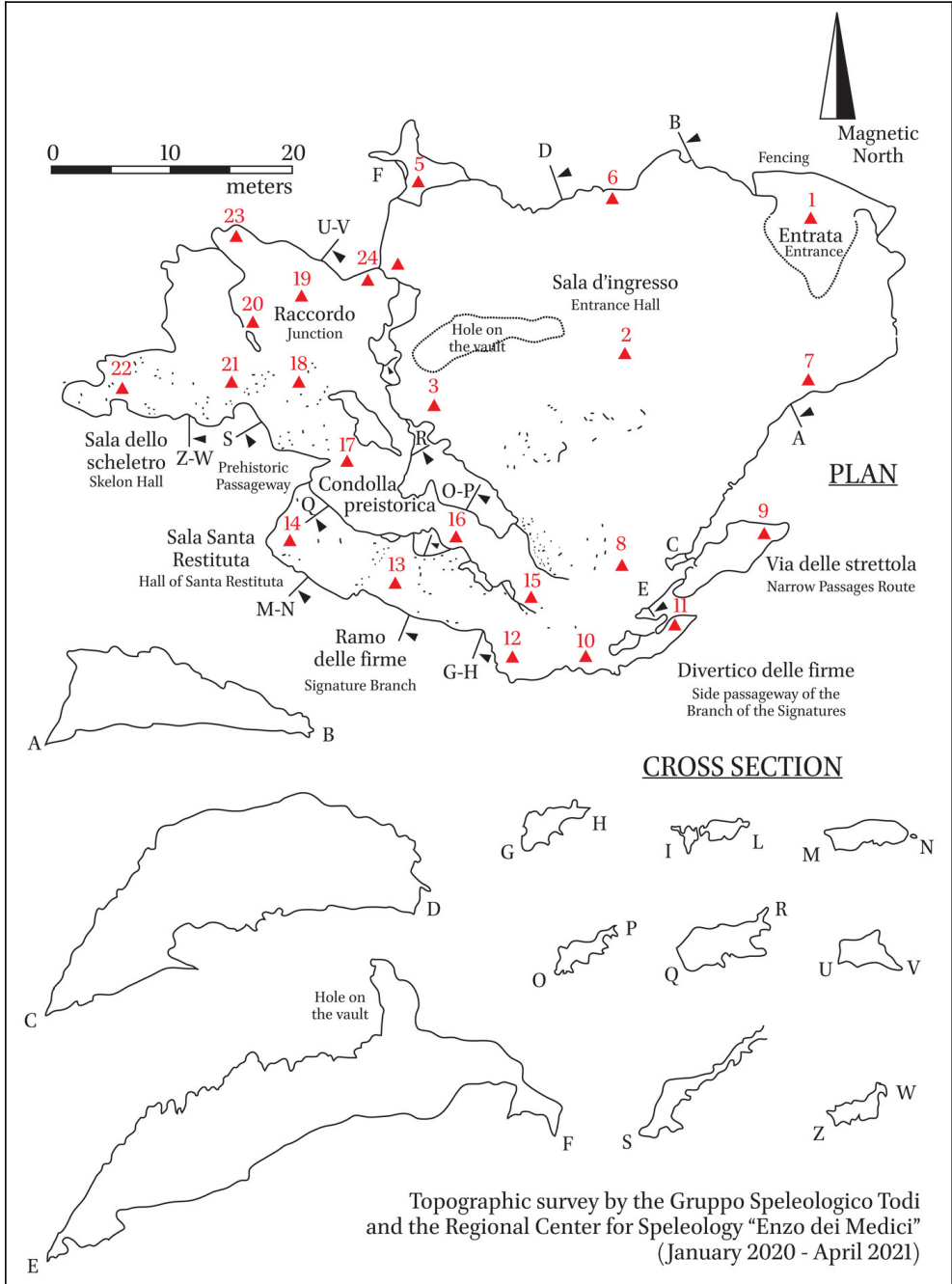


FIGURE 2 Planimetry and cross sections of the cave derived from the most recent topographic survey (after Zapelloni and Larocca 2023, 40 fig. 1).

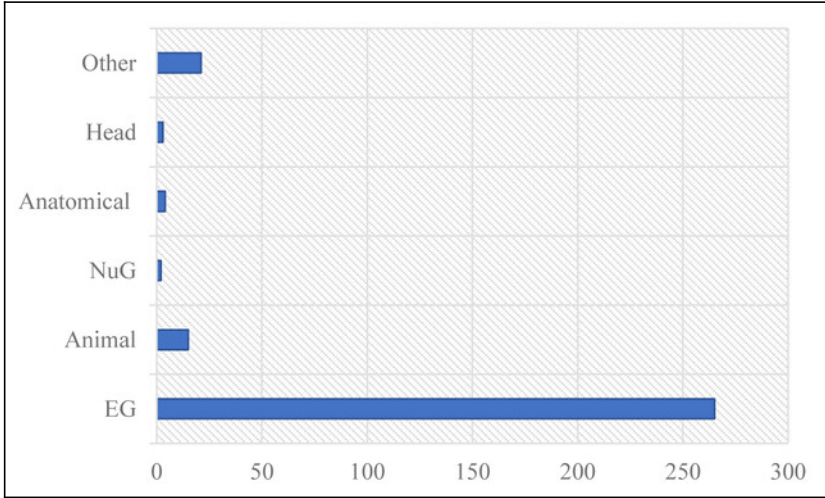


FIGURE 3 Graph showing the type distribution of the Grotta Bella votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

2.1.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material

The votive material attributed to this phase consists of twenty-four pieces of *aes rude* and two hundred and eighty-six figurines, mostly made out of bronze and a few of lead (figure 3).¹³ Both the fragments of *aes rude* and the figurines were found in disturbed layers of soil during the excavation of the Entrance Hall, mixed with earlier and later objects.

The “Esquiline group” (EG) is, with two hundred and sixty-five specimens, the most attested type of votive figurine (figures A1–10). All figurines of this group have a flat, narrow, and relatively elongated body with stiff arms and legs. The legs are slender and pointed, while the head is elongated with grooves indicating the eyes and an incision representing the mouth. The arms may have transverse grooves to depict the fingers. There are twenty-six females, one hundred and two males, and thirty-five warriors. Females are depicted wearing a long tunic; males are naked with clear genital protuberances; warriors bear a highly schematic crest on their heads and their right arms are pierced to make space for a spear.¹⁴

13 Lead slugs found in the cave are likely related to the production *in loco* of the lead figurines: Monacchi 1988, 44.

14 Females: GB_41 GB_48 GB_49 GB_50 GB_51 GB_52 GB_53 GB_145 GB_152 GB_163 GB_164 GB_165 GB_166 GB_167 GB_168 GB_169 GB_170 GB_171 GB_205 GB_241 GB_8 GB_9 GB_292 GB_293 GB_294 GB_295. Males: GB_10 GB_47 GB_54 GB_55 GB_56 GB_58 GB_59 GB_60 GB_61 GB_62 GB_63 GB_64 GB_65 GB_66 GB_67 GB_70 GB_71 GB_72 GB_73

Similarly schematic in the rendering of the bodies are fifteen figurines of the type Animal (figure A11–14). These consist of six cows, one goat, two sheep, five pigs, and one unidentifiable animal.¹⁵ Standard features of the type are elongated bodies, pointed feet, and anatomical details rendered by grooves or by small circles carved in the bronze.

Two figurines of the Nocera Umbra type (NuG) represent a warrior, identifiable by the presence of the helmet and a hole for a spear (figure A15,16).¹⁶ The body of the warrior is presented in a flat, filiform style, with only the crest of the helmet rendered in three dimensions. The arms and legs are wide open and lack any significant detail, except for small grooves that suggest anatomical features. The figurine is supported by two spikes situated underneath the feet.¹⁷

Three votives present schematic heads and four reproduce anatomical parts of the body (figure A17–23). The heads of the former group (figure A21–23) are modeled and rendered like the heads of the schematic EG figures, with the eyes

GB_74 GB_75 GB_76 GB_77 GB_78 GB_79 GB_80 GB_81 GB_82 GB_83 GB_84 GB_85
 GB_86 GB_87 GB_88 GB_89 GB_90 GB_91 GB_92 GB_93 GB_94 GB_95 GB_96 GB_97
 GB_98 GB_99 GB_100 GB_101 GB_102 GB_103 GB_104 GB_105 GB_106 GB_107 GB_108
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 GB_221 GB_222 GB_223 GB_224 GB_225 GB_226 GB_227 GB_228 GB_229 GB_230 GB_231
 GB_232 GB_233 GB_234 GB_235 GB_236 GB_237 GB_238 GB_239 GB_240 GB_4 GB_37
 GB_38 GB_39 GB_40 GB_57 GB_144 GB_147 GB_148 GB_149 GB_150 GB_151 GB_153
 GB_156 GB_161 GB_162 GB_183 GB_184 GB_185 GB_199 GB_202 GB_1 GB_2 GB_3 GB_5
 GB_13 GB_14 GB_15 GB_16 GB_19 GB_20 GB_21 GB_22 GB_23 GB_24 GB_25 GB_26 GB_28
 GB_29 GB_30 GB_31 GB_32 GB_43 GB_44 GB_296 GB_297 GB_298 GB_299 GB_300
 GB_301 GB_302 GB_303 GB_304 GB_305 GB_306 GB_307 GB_308 GB_309 GB_310 GB_311
 GB_312 GB_313.

GB_6 GB_7 GB_11 GB_12 GB_17 GB_27 GB_33 GB_34 GB_35 GB_36 GB_42 GB_45
 GB_46 GB_68 GB_69 GB_154 GB_155 GB_157 GB_158 GB_159 GB_160 GB_172 GB_173
 GB_174 GB_175 GB_176 GB_177 GB_178 GB_179 GB_180 GB_181 GB_182 GB_314 GB_315.
 Warriors: GB_6 GB_7 GB_11 GB_12 GB_17 GB_27 GB_33 GB_34 GB_35 GB_36 GB_42 GB_45
 GB_46 GB_68 GB_69 GB_154 GB_155 GB_157 GB_158 GB_159 GB_160 GB_172 GB_173
 GB_174 GB_175 GB_176 GB_177 GB_178 GB_179 GB_180 GB_181 GB_182 GB_314 GB_315.

15 GB_242 GB_243 GB_244 GB_245 GB_246 GB_247 GB_248 GB_249 GB_250 GB_251.

16 GB_252 GB_253.

17 GB_242 GB_243 GB_244 GB_246 GB_248 GB_249 GB_250 GB_247 GB_287 GB_288
 GB_289 GB_290 GB_245 GB_291 GB_251. GB_287–290 and GB_291 were recorded by
 Monacchi (1988, 79), but I could not locate these pieces.

marked by small grooves and the mouth by a small horizontal incision. The neck is elongated and spiked at the end. The anatomical parts consist of two legs, one foot, and one arm (figure A17–20). The legs are extremely filiform, with little distinction between the upper and lower part. The foot is equally schematic with no rendering of the toes. The arm is represented outstretched and is supported at the elbow's level by a spike; the hand is missing due to a break running above the wrist.¹⁸

Twenty-one figurines belong to the group "Other." They stand out from the rest of Grotta Bella's figurines for two reasons. First, unlike bronze figurines, which are the result of a process of molding and casting, these are made out of lead sheets, which, still hot, were stamped with a mold and cut with shears or scissors along the edges. Second, they occur exclusively in the Amelia area (Grotta Bella and Pantanelli).¹⁹ The group comprises six female figurines, six warriors, and nine decorated miniature shields (figure A23–32).²⁰ As suggested by Monacchi, the shields would originally have been molded together with the male figurines, of which there must, therefore, have been at least nine.²¹

Both female and male figures are represented in profile, except for the bust, which is frontal. The former group (figure A26–28) wear long tunics decorated either with a zig-zag motif or with wavy lines, visible also on the back. The hair is held in a sort of ponytail, and the anatomical details are rendered with small, embossed circles. The male figurines (figure A24–25) are shown with wide-open legs and wear short *chitoniskoi* and armor with shoulder straps held by bosses. Their right arms are lifted as in the act of throwing a spear or holding a sword.

The shields are decorated on both sides (figure A29–32). While the backside of all specimens shows an arm fastened to the shield, the front one, the *episema*, presents three possible motifs. The first one (figure A29–31), attested

18 Heads: GB_279 GB_280 GB_281. Foot: GB_278. Legs: GB_275 GB_277. Arm: GB_276.

19 The choice of lead as a material for the figurines in the sanctuaries of Grotta Bella and Pantanelli could be influenced by the characteristics of the cults practiced there. Lead has been associated with various symbolic and mystical properties throughout history, including its connection to oracular and chthonic cults. The choice of locations for the sanctuaries, with Grotta Bella being underground and Pantanelli being connected to a necropolis, further suggests a connection to chthonic cults. These locations may have been considered spiritually significant and appropriate for conducting rituals dedicated to chthonian deities or ancestral spirits.

20 Females: GB_258 GB_259 GB_260 GB_261 GB_263 GB_263. Warriors: GB_262 GB_264 GB_265 GB_255 GB_256 GB_257. Shields: GB_266 GB_267 GB_268 GB_269 GB_270 GB_271 GB_272 GB_273 GB_274.

21 Monacchi 1988.

on six specimens, consists of three schematic figures with outstretched arms arranged circularly under a bare tree with several wavy branches. Embossed circles fill the space and are arranged circularly on the outer edge of the *episema*. The second motif (figure A32) is attested on only a single specimen and shows a *gorgoneion* with wide-open eyes, a long nose, and a thin mouth with its tongue extended. The outer edge of the *episema* is decorated with a zig-zag pattern. The last motif (figure A33), also attested on one specimen, depicts a central circle surrounded by either waves or rays.

The closest comparisons to Grotta Bella's lead figurines of warriors, women, and shields are from Laconia. The ancient sanctuary of Artemis Orthia and the Menelaion have yielded a significant number of small figurines of cast lead dated between the eighth and the fourth century BCE, with a peak in the sixth century.²² These Laconian figurines, carefully classified by Martin Boos, include winged figures, types identified as Olympian deities, warriors, and women. The women are festively dressed and turned either to the left or right, with their arms, in most cases, resting by their sides, with only the head shown in profile. The warrior figures are equipped with a helmet, a spear, a shield, and sometimes greaves. A distinctive feature of the warriors is the shield design which can consist of concentric circles around a central boss, straight lines radiating from a central boss, rosettes, curved lines radiating from a central boss, and, in a few cases, blazons (bucranium, scorpion, and cockerel).

The presence of similar votive offerings in two places in the Mediterranean illustrates how common figurative themes—such as the radiant sun, the male warrior, and the woman—could be adopted by faraway local manufacturers to create standardized votive types that could satisfy the request of the devotees without an expensive investment. Some motifs seem, however, to reflect individual choices and preferences of the worshipping communities. Like the Laconian votives, where artisans used a variety of motifs often inspired by local religious beliefs (demons and gods from the Greek pantheon), the shields depicting men under a tree may have drawn from local myths, local activities of the area (the harvest?),²³ and the ritual context of Grotta Bella. In support of the last interpretation, it is interesting to take note of the leafy motif engraved on the small temple model dedicated in the cave and dated to the third–second

22 Cavanagh and Laxton 1984, Muskett 2014, Boos 2000.

23 A similar iconography representing a harvest theme is recognizable in two black-figure Athenian amphoras from Etruria dated to the middle of the sixth century BCE (Beazley 1956, 273.11 and 270.50.). One side of the body of these vases depicts three men harvesting olives.

century BCE.²⁴ This motif and the tree depicted on the lead shields suggest a connection to the natural surroundings of the sacred cave and possibly evoke the presence of sacred groves, which were commonly found in pre-Roman and Roman Italy as important elements of sacred sites.²⁵

2.1.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

No architectural remains belonging to this phase have been unearthed in the cave.

2.1.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

The material from this phase has been found in disturbed layers inside the cave, mixed with materials from different periods. It consists primarily of ceramics, coins, a small terracotta model of a temple, four anatomical terracottas, and three bronze figurines (fig. 4).

Coins are attested with seventy-nine specimens, mainly asses of the *pro* series.²⁶ Besides the coins from the Roman Republic, six belong to the Romano-Campanian series and one appears to have been minted in Tuder. Ceramics include locally produced black gloss, mostly *paterae*, and miniature vases.

The anatomical terracottas are dated to the fourth–second century and include three feet and one breast (figure A34–45).²⁷ The terracotta breast (figure A34) is hemispherical and broadens sharply at the bottom. The nipple is rendered in high relief and has a light circular incision around it, indicating the areola. As for the terracotta feet, only the picture of one right foot survives in the archaeological documentation (figure A35). It terminates at the upper ankle, which continues to swell as it rises. The heel is rounded at the back, and the foot tapers at the center and widens toward the toes. These are indicated by small, indented lines that separate them. The bottom of the foot shows evidence of a sole.

The bronze figurines belong to the “Hellenistic worshiper with radiant crown” type and are dated to the third–second century BCE (figure A36–38).²⁸

24 On this model, with comparisons, see Monacchi 1986, 85–87.

25 Bassani et al. 2019, 141–157.

26 The term “*pro* series” was used by Crawford (1975, 42) to designate Roman asses that show on the reverse the bow of a ship. Generally, this motif is interpreted as a proclamation of Rome’s awareness of her position as a naval power and accordingly these coins are dated from the first Punic war, or soon after it in concomitance with the introduction of the *quadrigatus*.

27 Feet: GB_283 GB_284 GB_317. Breast: GB_282.

28 GB_285 GB_286 GB_318.

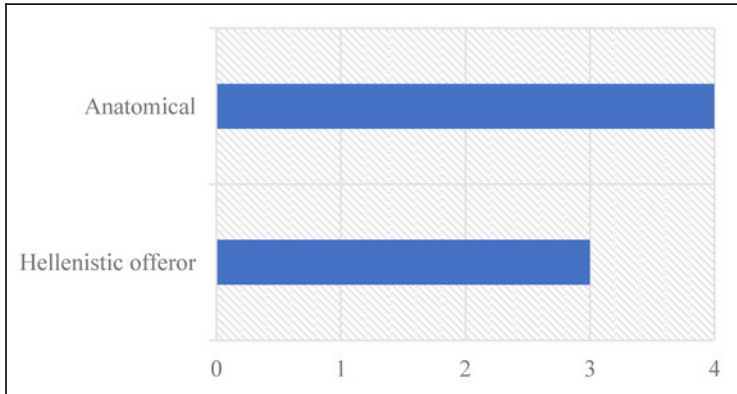


FIGURE 4 Graph showing the type distribution of the Grotta Bella figurine votive offerings between the late fourth and the early first century BCE.

Two are of the male type, which is portrayed holding a patera in the right hand and a round box (*acerra*) in the left (figure A36–37). They wear a long himation draped over the left shoulder; on the head, they wear a wreath of ivy leaves. The third one depicts one of the possible variations of the Hellenistic female worshiper (figure A38). The figurine has cap-like hair and is dressed in a chiton and mantle draped over the left shoulder and arm. The hands are open, the palms directed upwards.

2.2 *Pantanelli Sanctuary*

2.2.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary site is located in the Pantanelli necropolis, one kilometer southwest of the ancient settlement of Ameria (modern Amelia). The area is distinguished by the presence of mountains that divide the Tiber valley to the west from the Terni basin (Conca Ternana) and the valley to the east and northeast. The morphology of the terrain influenced the placement of the settlement of Ameria, which is located on a limestone spur that overlooks the Tiber river to the east and the Nera river to the west. The Tiber and the roads extending from its valley into Umbrian territory (later replaced by the Via Amerina) made it easier for Ameria to engage in regional commerce and trade with nearby Faliscan and Etruscan areas.

The human occupation of Ameria can be traced back to the Bronze Age, as suggested by the presence of impasto ware fragments. However, the settlement became more substantial starting in the ninth century BCE. During this time, the limestone outcrop served as a temporary shelter for a scattered rural community. The Pantanelli necropolis and sanctuary are the most significant

evidence of Ameria's earliest nucleated settlement, which emerged on this site during the seventh/sixth century BCE. These archaeological sites were discovered between 1860 and 1881 when the landowner in the Pantanelli area noticed artifacts emerging from the surface and carried out an excavation. Giovanni Erolì, an archaeology enthusiast from the nearby city of Narni, documented the findings. However, aside from a few votives, the artifacts only survive in his report. About a century later, a number of terracotta slabs were discovered in the Pantanelli area, not far from where Erolì had identified the votive materials and the necropolis.

Based on Erolì's documentation, the Pantanelli necropolis was excavated in the clastic travertine and was used from the sixth to the first century BCE. It consisted of corridors and chamber tombs that yielded fine gold jewelry and Attic vases, likely imported from Etruria. With respect to the sacred area, the excavation produced several votive offerings that date back to the sixth to the second century BCE and fragments of decorated terracotta slabs. Unfortunately, most of these artifacts are now lost, and no further excavation was carried out after the nineteenth-century exploration. As a result, our knowledge of the Pantanelli sacred area is limited and mainly relies on Erolì's brief report and Monacchi's more recent study of the terracotta slabs.²⁹

2.2.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
No architectural structure of this period was found during the nineteenth-century excavation.

2.2.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material
This phase is attested by fragments of *aes rude* and forty-nine votive figurines (figure 5). According to the nineteenth-century excavation report, this material was buried under a thin layer of soil covered by large tufo slabs.

Most of the votive figurines belong to the EG type, but none of them survives. Based on Erolì's succinct account, we know that forty figurines represented women, men, and warriors. Similarly lost are also two cow figurines.

The only bronzes noted by Erolì which survive today are seven figurines that belong to the type "Other." They are made of lead and belong to the same

29 Erolì 1860, 118–122; Erolì 1864, 56–59; Erolì 1867, 169–172; Monacchi 1997, 167–194. For an overview on the settlement of Ameria from the Bronze Age to the Roman period, see Matteini Chiari 1996, also with sections on the surviving materials from the Pantanelli necropolis, and Bravi and Monacchi 2017. The latter publication also provides a short summary of the nineteenth-century discovery and suggests a more precise dating for the votive offerings than that of Erolì.

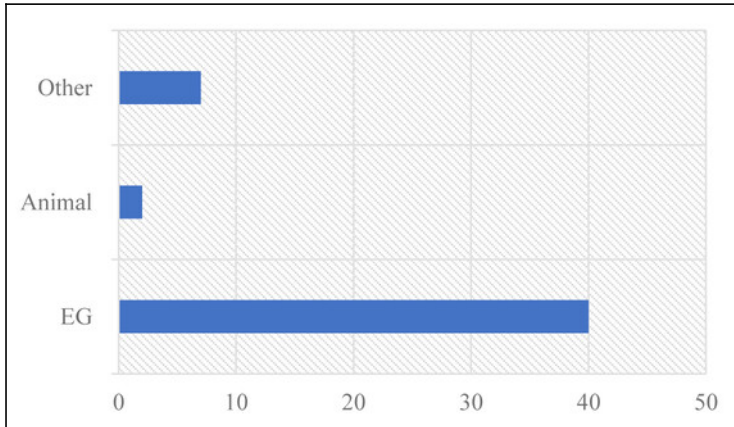


FIGURE 5 Graph showing the type distribution of the Pantanelli votive figurines between the late sixth and the fourth century BCE.

production as the Grotta Bella lead figurines. In particular, the Pantanelli specimens consist of one human figure (figure A40) whose poor state of preservation does not allow further identification, a fragment of a warrior (figure A39), and five decorated warriors' shields (figure A41–42).³⁰ Like their counterparts from Grotta Bella, the shields' reverse side depicts an arm fastened by three straps, while the motif on the *episema* varies. Three specimens are decorated with a zig-zag motif with the addition of knobs in relief (figure A42), and one with the *gorgoneion* motif (figure A41). The monster's head is schematically rendered with elongated eyes and a wagging tongue.

2.2.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

A rich assemblage of Etrusco-Italic architectural terracotta revetments (*antepagmenta*) spread across the Pantanelli necropolis has been attributed to the monumentalization of the sacred area during the end of the fourth/third century BCE. They are decorated with feathered palmette leaves, lotus flowers, and volutes, sometimes displayed in two rows (figure 6).³¹ This decorative motif

30 Figurines: PNT_1 PNT_2. Shields: PNT_3 PNT_4 PNT_5 PNT_6 PNT_7.

31 Monacchi (1997) has grouped the Pantanelli revetment plaques into six types. In the first one, a floral-form ornament, or anthemion, consists of one pair of palmettes separated by two volutes. The second is characterized by four palmettes with lanceolate leaves positioned at the four corners of the slab and connected by spirals and smaller palmettes oriented in the opposite direction; buds and berries branch off from the stems. The third type of revetment slab has two rows of palmettes connected by lines of horizontal spirals.

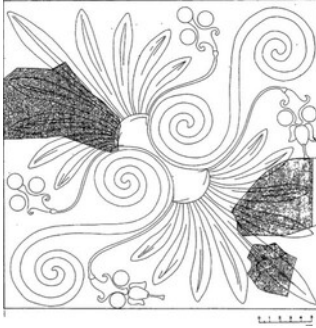


FIGURE 6
Revetment slab from Pantanelli (after Monacchi 1997, 179).

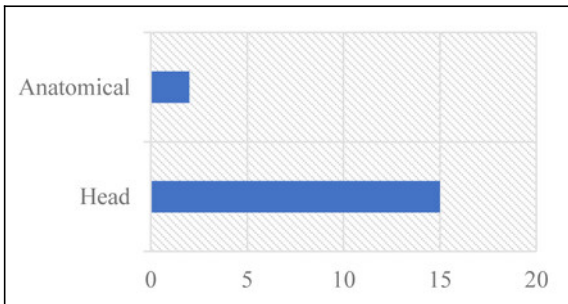


FIGURE 7 Graph showing the type distribution of the Pantanelli figurative votive offerings between the late fourth and the early first century BCE.

belongs to the repertoire of so-called “Etrusco-Italic” architectural decoration. It seems to have been first used in Etruria at the Scasato temple in Falerii in the fourth century and then adopted for the decoration of many sanctuaries of the Italic peninsula during the third and second century BCE.³²

2.2.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

The votive material of this phase consists of coins belonging to the Roman series of *aes grave*, fragments of black gloss pottery, fifteen terracotta heads, and two anatomical terracottas (figure 7). Except for one votive foot, this material is entirely lost, and Erolì provides no information about the objects’ appearance.

In the fourth type there is an alternation of palmettes and lotus forms, which in the sixth type is organized in three rows. The only decorative motif recognizable in the revetment plaques of the fifth type is a large palmette leaf.

32 Picuti 2006, 205; Strazulla 1981.

The single surviving anatomical terracotta, dated to the third–second century BCE, is a fragment of a right foot (figure A43). The poor state of preservation, with the forefoot, toes, and bottom entirely missing, does not allow for secure identification of the object as an isolated foot, leaving open the possibility that it was part of a complete leg. Traces under the heel suggest that the foot rested on a sole.

2.3 *Monte San Pancrazio Sanctuary*

2.3.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary is situated on Monte San Pancrazio, a southern Umbrian massif located around 9 km east of the ancient settlement of Oriculum (modern Otricoli). At approximately 1000 meters above sea level, the Monte San Pancrazio massif overlooks the plain known today as the Conca Ternana, providing a strategic vantage point over the Tiber valley and communication routes to the interior. The course of communication in and out of the Conca Ternana was determined by Monte San Pancrazio and Monte Torre Maggiore (2.4. below), making it a crucial crossroads in southern Umbria throughout history.

Our understanding of this site is very limited. In the 1960s, Umberto Ciotti conducted an archaeological investigation of the mountain peak after the accidental discovery of votive material on the slopes. A few travertine blocks were visible on the surface, but the results of the excavation, including the votive objects, were never documented or published. In his brief account of the sanctuary, Ciotti mentions uncovering the remains of a Hellenistic *porticus*. Based on this discovery and the analysis of the votive objects, he suggests that the sanctuary was used until at least the second century BCE.³³

2.3.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution

No structure has been attributed to this phase.

2.3.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material

Bronze figurines are so far the only evidence of ritual activity on Monte San Pancrazio (figure 8).

The best attested figurine type is the EG, with five male and four female figurines (figure A44–49).³⁴ Nine votive bronzes represent anatomical parts and heads (figure A50–53).³⁵ The limbs represented are two legs and two arms (fig-

33 Ciotti 1964, 111. See also Bonomi Ponzi 1985, 48.

34 Males: MSP_1 MSP_2 MSP_3 MSP_4 MSP_5. Females: MSP_6 MSP_7 MSP_8 MSP_9. For the description of types already introduced in this chapter, see Appendix 1.

35 Heads: MSP_13; MSP_16 and MSP_17; without the band: MSP_14 and MSP_15. Legs: 18 MSP_19. Arms: MSP_20 MSP_21.

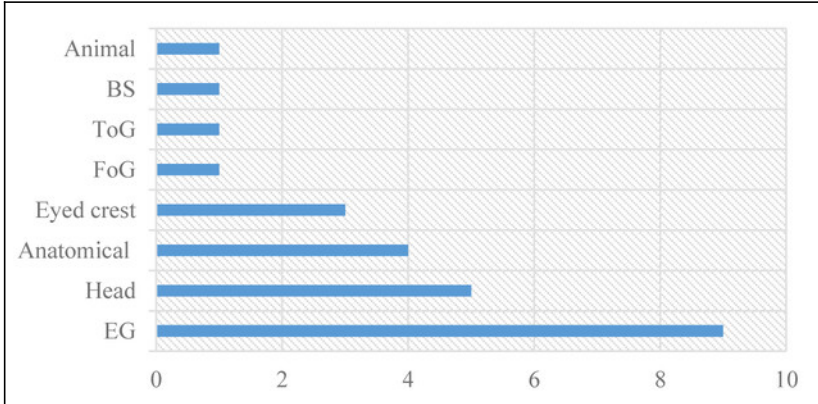


FIGURE 8 Graph showing the type distribution of the San Pancrazio sanctuary's votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

ure A50–51), while the heads depict male individuals (figure A53). Two of them resemble the heads of the EG type, while the remaining three have features of the male heads of the Amelia Group type. They are filed on the front, with the result of two flat surfaces that form an acute angle and end on the upper part with a curved edge. The eyes are indicated by small circles, and the mouth by an incision at the base of the angle that identifies the nose. On the forehead, a linear groove suggests the presence of a band of some sort.

Three specimens belong to the eyed crest type (figure A54).³⁶ The crests stand on spikes, are filed, and have two grooves made with a punch that resemble eyes. The remaining types are attested only by one specimen.³⁷ A warrior of the type Foligno Group (FoG) is represented naked and striding towards the left, wearing a crest on his head (figure A55). The eyes, nipples, and navel are rendered with punched roundels and the mouth with a small slit. The figurine is supported by two short spikes situated underneath the feet. A second warrior belongs to the type Todi Group (ToG). This figurine is notable for its size, three times larger than the average size of the other human figurines, and for its high level of detail. The warrior is shown wearing armor with shoulder guards that are hinged, as well as a belt and greaves (figure A56). On his head, he wears an Attic helmet adorned with geometric patterns similar to those seen on the greaves.

³⁶ MSP_23 MSP_24 MSP_25.

³⁷ FoG: MSP_10. ToG: MSP_11.

The last two figurines belong to the Bronze Sheet (BS) and Animal types.³⁸ The former shows a figure cut from a sheet of bronze and turned sideways; an eye in profile is carved into the metal, and a hole above the forehead (figure A57). The state of preservation does not allow the determination of the figure's gender. The Animal type figurine represents an ox and includes additional details, such as the circlets that may symbolize its genitals (figure A58).

2.3.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

There is only limited archaeological information about the appearance of the sanctuary during this phase. Umberto Ciotti opened two trenches on the mountain in 1962 and claimed to have discovered the foundation of a Hellenistic porticus that surrounded the sacred areas and was crossed by a water channel. He also notes that the porticus foundation and the water channel were dug into the rock.

2.3.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

Among the materials found scattered in the area, only a fragment of a terracotta head and twelve coins can be attributed to the frequentation of the sanctuary during this period. The coins are mostly illegible. The only one with a readable surface depicts a horse's head on the front side, dated to 280–245 BCE.³⁹

The terracotta head is of a male figure with wavy hair parted in the center of the crown (figure A59). It is broken under the eyes, but it is clear that they are deeply carved in an almond shape with marked eyelids that develop more laterally than frontally. This particular style can also be found in some of the heads discovered in Vulci and Tessennano, which Martin Söderlind has categorized as belonging to type A1.⁴⁰ By comparing this head to others of the same type, we can suggest that it was created during the last fifty years of the second century BCE.

2.4 *Monte Torre Maggiore Sanctuary*

2.4.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary is situated at the summit of Monte Torre Maggiore, which is 1120 meters above sea level. This mountain is the highest peak of the Monti Martani range and is about 20 kilometers north of the Umbrian settlement of Interamna Nahars (modern Terni). The mountain's elevated position offers

38 MSP_12; MSP_26.

39 The material is unpublished. This dating is suggested on the display at the MANU.

40 Söderlind 2002, 62;60.

a clear line of sight to Monte San Pancrazio and provides a panoramic view of both the Conca Ternana and many access routes to northern and southern Umbria. However, the mountain peak was unfortunately used as a firing range and anti-aircraft station during the Renaissance and the Second World War. These human interventions have significantly altered the area's appearance and inevitably damaged its stratigraphy.

There is evidence of early human presence on the mountain, as flint arrowheads dating between the fourth and second millennium BCE have been found. However, it seems that the mountain was only inhabited from the sixth century BCE, when the fortified settlement of S. Erasmo occupied a spur. This settlement was the center of a larger system of fortified settlements on mountain peaks (ranging between 700 and 1000 meters in height) scattered along the southern slopes of the Monti Martani. These settlements are identified mainly by the presence of imposing fortifications. At S. Erasmo, the fortifications consist of a megalithic wall built with limestone blocks that runs for 160 meters and covers an area of approximately 7000 m². Archaic settlements have also been identified in the surrounding area of Monte Torre Maggiore, such as Maretta Bassa and Interamna.⁴¹

During the same period when these settlements were established, the summit of Monte Torre Maggiore was also being used as a place of worship. The Soprintendenza Archeologica dell'Umbria, led by Laura Bonomi Ponzi, conducted intermittent excavations of the mountain's peak from 1984 to 2006. Through these excavations, they were able to identify the development of the site as a place of worship, which occurred from the pre-Roman period to the fourth/fifth century CE.⁴²

2.4.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution

From the sixth to the fourth century BCE, the sanctuary site did not have any permanent architectural structures. The original sacred area was likely only marked by a funnel-shaped pit and a connected channel (figure 9). When excavators discovered the pit in the *pronaos* of temple A (constructed in the third

41 The settlement of Maratta Bassa was used from the eighth century BCE to the fourth century BCE. Excavations carried out in the historic center of Terni (ancient Interamna) have shown that a settlement existed here as early as the seventh century BCE (Angelelli and Bonomi Ponzi 200, 11–12). The urbanistic development of Interamna occurred in the third century BCE, with the construction of walls and the definition of an urban street grid.

42 Bonomi Ponzi 1988; Bonomi Ponzi 1989; Angelelli and Bonomi Ponzi 2006, 118–130. The latter publication fully summarizes the results of these excavation seasons.

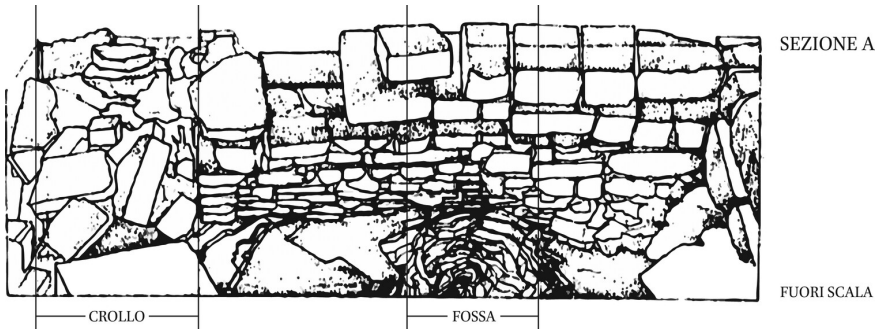


FIGURE 9 On the right: foundations of the third-century and the first-century temples (temples A and B). Notice the channel and the pit inside the *pronaos* of temple B (after Bonomi Ponzi 1988, 23, tav. v). On the left: section of the *pronaos* of temple A and of the funnel-shaped pit (after Bonomi Ponzi 2006, 116, fig. 6).

century CE), it was filled with sterile sand, leading them to interpret it as the foundation ditch or *mundus* of the sacred area.

2.4.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material

Ritual activity in these centuries is indicated by several fragments of *aes rude*, a gilded bronze object in the shape of a thunderbolt,⁴³ and bronze figurines (figure 10). These objects were recovered in disturbed layers throughout the sanctuary and in a well in the northwestern corner of the area, mixed with later material.

One hundred and fifty-six figurines of the EG type take up most of the assemblage (figure A60–65). One hundred and six of them represent males (figure A60–62), six represent female (figure A64–65), and forty-four depict warriors (figure A63).⁴⁴

43 Bonomi Ponzi et al. (1995, 47) have suggested that this object may either have been deposited as *fulgur conditum* (buried after having been struck by lightning) or connected to Iuppiter Fulgurator, whose presence is attested at Interamna Nahars during the Roman period. However, the excavation has not yielded other indications of the burial of the *fulgur conditum* or of the deity to whom the sanctuary was dedicated. For the difficulty in identifying the incumbent deities based on the ex-votos in Italian sanctuaries, see Comella 1981, 717–803.

44 Males: MTM_73 MTM_74 MTM_75 MTM_76 MTM_77 MTM_84 MTM_85 MTM_98 MTM_99 MTM_100 MTM_101 MTM_104 MTM_105 MTM_109 MTM_112 MTM_113 MTM_114 MTM_115 MTM_116 MTM_117 MTM_118 MTM_120 MTM_121 MTM_123 MTM_124 MTM_125 MTM_126 MTM_127 MTM_128 MTM_135 MTM_137 MTM_139 MTM_145 MTM_146 MTM_147 MTM_148 MTM_149 MTM_150 MTM_151 MTM_152 MTM_153 MTM_154 MTM_156 MTM_157 MTM_158 MTM_163 MTM_164 MTM_166 MTM_168 MTM_172 MTM_173 MTM_174 MTM_175 MTM_178 MTM_179 MTM_180

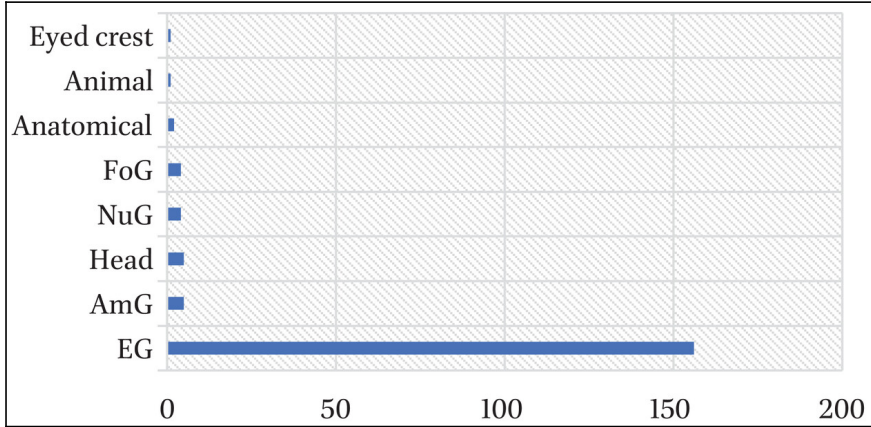


FIGURE 10 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte di Torre Maggiore sanctuary's votive figurines between the late sixth and the fourth century BCE.

Five votive figurines belong to the Amelia Group type (AmG). Four depict a man striding forwards (figure A66–67), while the fifth portrays a warrior (figure A68).⁴⁵ These figurines are characterized by their heads, which have been filed on the front to create two flat surfaces that form an acute angle and end on the upper part with a curved edge. Small circles on the surfaces indicate the eyes and the mouth is represented by a cut at the base of the angle, which identifies the nose. The striding men are depicted with their right legs slightly bent and their left legs straight. Their left arms are raised with the palm facing upwards and the thumb stretched wide, while their right arms are bent downwards with an open hand and an outstretched thumb. The warrior is shown holding a shield on the left and a spear on the right.

Five votives represent schematic heads, and two depict anatomical parts (figure A69–72).⁴⁶ The heads (figure A69–70) are rendered in the same manner as the heads of figurines of the AmG type, while the anatomical parts consist of

MTM_182 MTM_183 MTM_185 MTM_190 MTM_191 MTM_192 MTM_193 MTM_194
 MTM_195 MTM_196. Females: MTM_141 MTM_170 MTM_184 MTM_80 MTM_21
 MTM_22. Warriors: MTM_78 MTM_81 MTM_91 MTM_92 MTM_102 MTM_103 MTM_106
 MTM_107 MTM_108 MTM_110 MTM_111 MTM_119 MTM_122 MTM_129 MTM_130
 MTM_131 MTM_132 MTM_133 MTM_134 MTM_136 MTM_138 MTM_140 MTM_142
 MTM_143 MTM_144 MTM_155 MTM_159 MTM_160 MTM_161 MTM_162 MTM_167
 MTM_169 MTM_171 MTM_197 MTM_198 MTM_23 MTM_24 MTM_25 MTM_26 MTM_27
 MTM_28 MTM_29 MTM_30 MTM_97.

45 Striding men: MTM_16 MTM_17 MTM_18 MTM_19 MTM_20. Warrior: MTM_59.

46 Heads: MTM_63 MTM_64 MTM_72 MTM_66 MTM_67. Anatomical parts: MTM_65
 MTM_68.

a left foot and a left hand (figure A71–72). The latter is shown opened, with the thumb outstretched. A break at the wrist does not allow us to reconstruct the original appearance of the figurines, which, like the other anatomical bronzes of the pre-Roman period, may have been supported by a spike or have been part of a larger figurine.

Four figurines of the NuG type represent warriors with a lozenge crest and the open arms (figure A73–74).⁴⁷ Four more warriors belong to the FoG type and are represented naked and striding forward (figure A75a and b).⁴⁸ Lastly, attested by one specimen is the eyed crest (figure A76) and the Animal type (figure A77–78).⁴⁹ To the latter belongs two bull figurines (one in bronze and the other in impasto rosso), whose heads are partially preserved.

2.4.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

In the third century BCE, a temenos in *opus quadratum* (20 × 20.80 m) was laid around the area of the earlier *mundus* and organized in nine small utility rooms (ca. 16 m²). The center of this precinct was occupied by a temple (A), which incorporated elements of Etrusco-Italic temple architecture as well as that of Hellenistic type.⁵⁰

On a tall podium in *opus quadratum* with travertine crown molding stood a rectangular temple oriented east-west (11.80 × 7.90 m), with *pronaos* (5.70 × 2 m) and *cella* (5.70 × 5.70 m). Fragments of columns around the temple and the impression left on the ground by a column's base suggested that the temple was surrounded by columns on all sides, unlike Etrusco-Italic temples. The entrance to the temple was through a flight of stairs that were still visible in front of the *pronaos*. Interestingly, the sixth-century BCE ritual pit was not obliterated by the temple's construction but was incorporated inside the *pronaos*, indicating its importance to the cult site.

In 2006, a circular well was discovered in the southwestern area of the sanctuary. It measured 1.27 × 1.33 meters and was made of limestone blocks without mortar. The well was filled with votive offerings and pottery from both pre-Roman and Roman periods. It is uncertain when the well was constructed, but a coin from the reign of Commodus found inside provides the *terminus*

47 MTM_95 MTM_82 MTM_83 MTM_93.

48 MTM_57 MTM_58 MTM_199 MTM_94.

49 Eyed crest: MTM_79. Animal: MTM_60.

50 For an overall study of Etrusco-Italic temple architecture, see Colonna 1985 and 2006. For a general overview of Hellenistic temple architecture, see Winter and Fedak 2016, 5–34.

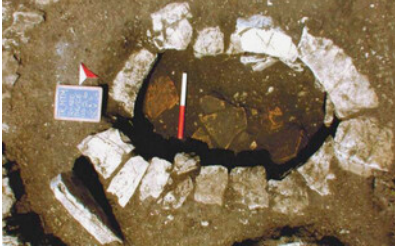


FIGURE 11
Well identified in 2006 in the sacred area of Monte Torre Maggiore (courtesy of the Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio dell'Umbria).

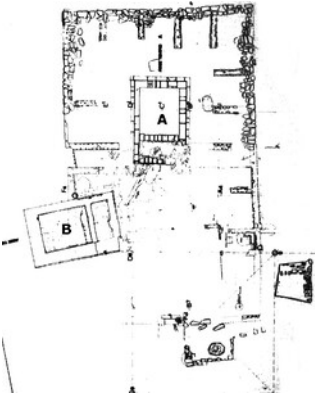


FIGURE 12
Plan of the Monte di Torre Maggiore sanctuary with the two temples (after Bonomi Ponzi 2006, 113, fig. 5)

post quem of its obliteration. During excavations, fragments of travertine architectural and sculptural decoration were also uncovered, including lion-headed waterspouts and a female head inspired by Hellenistic art.

In the first century BCE, the sanctuary underwent a second renovation that included the construction of a new temple (B) made of *opus caementicium* and covered with limestone slabs. Temple B was oriented north–south and located northwest of temple A. The renovation also involved the extension of the temenos to the south, with additional facility rooms (figure 12). This second renovation seems to have been the final major refurbishment of the sanctuary, which continued to be used until the end of the third century CE, as evidenced by fragments of lamps and imperial coins found on the site.

2.4.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

The materials from this phase come primarily from the area between temples A and B and the facility rooms of the temenos: fragments of pottery and terra sigillata, black gloss bowls, plates, miniature vases, coins of the *as* and *semis* denomination, and a black gloss bowl with the name “PVPVN” which dates back to the end of the third or beginning of the second century BCE. Additionally, unspecified coins, a fusiform *balsamarium* made of glass, and

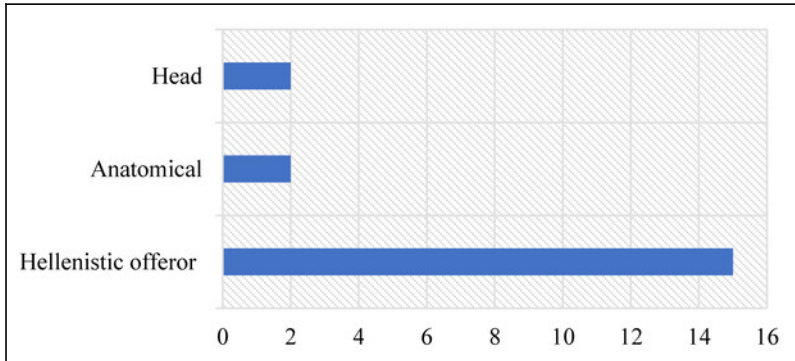


FIGURE 13 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte di Torre Maggiore figurative votive offerings between the late fourth and the early first century BCE.

bronze figurines recognized by the excavators as Hellenistic worshippers were found. Anatomical terracotta pieces were also discovered during this phase (figure 13).

The votive figurines consist of fifteen specimens of the Hellenistic worshiper type, two terracotta heads, and two terracotta anatomical offerings. The Hellenistic worshiper type is attested by ten male and one female worshiper and four fragments of arms holding a patera, all dated to the third century BCE (figure A79–81).⁵¹ The female worshiper wears a long chiton, wrapped under the breast, and a himation on the left shoulder, around the hips and hanging from the forearm. On her left arm she carries an acerra, and on her head is a diadem with several rays.

The terracotta anatomicals are dated to the Middle Republican period and represent a right hand and a foot (figure A82–83).⁵² The hand (figure A82) is clenched into a fist and broken at the level of the wrist. The index finger seems to wear a ring. The foot is now lost, and only a picture of three fragments survives in the archaeological documentation. Two fragments belong to the platform on which the foot must have stood, while the other represents part of the big toe and the two closest to it (figure A83). Due to the poor state of preservation of both pieces, it is difficult to determine their exact age through stylistic comparison.

The two terracotta heads are mostly broken (figure A84–85). One specimen (figure A84) represents an individual whose gender is difficult to detect; the

51 Males: MTM_1 MTM_6 MTM_7 MTM_8 MTM_9 MTM_10 MTM_11 MTM_12 MTM_14 MTM_15. Female: MTM_13. Fragments with patera: MTM_2 MTM_3 MTM_4 MTM_5.

52 Hand: MTM_69. Foot: MTM_70.

only facial features preserved are half of the nose, mouth, chin, and face below the eyes. Despite the few anatomical details preserved, the resemblance of the chin and mouth to the male heads of the AI(i1)/ (i2) group from Tarquinia may suggest a more precise dating to the end of the third century BCE.⁵³ The second head (figure A85) is equally damaged; only its crown, with wavy hair parted at the center, and the left eye are preserved. The hairdo finds comparisons with some female heads of the BVI (a2) type from Tessennano, thus suggesting a dating to the beginning of the second century BCE.⁵⁴

2.5 *Monte Moro Sanctuary*

2.5.1 Topographic Location

Monte Moro is a limestone upland mountain (696 m above sea level) located on the north bank of the Nera river, at the border between Umbrian and the Sabine territory. Prior to the Roman expansion into Umbria, the summit of Monte Moro was occupied by a sacred space. The southern slopes of the mountain were occupied by a settlement with a few structures made of dry stones that were possibly connected to natural water sources located further down the slopes.

The sanctuary was located in the Conca Ternana region and had a strategic position with regards to both the Umbrian and Sabine territories. It was situated in a location that overlooked the route connecting Spolegium in Umbria with Reate in Sabina, which passed through the Somma and Forca Sant'Angelo passes. Moreover, its location also created a strong visual link with the Monte Arrone peak sanctuary, situated on the left bank of the Nera river in Sabine territory.

In 1998, 2004, and 2010, the Soprintendenza Archeologica per l'Umbria, led by Liliana Costamagna, conducted archaeological excavations and surveys on the summit of the mountain to investigate structures that previous unauthorized excavations had uncovered.⁵⁵ Here, the excavators identified the presence of a sacred building whose stratigraphy had been entirely compromised by looters and reforestation activities. They were able to determine the timeline of the sacred area through ceramic analysis, which revealed that it was used from the fifth century BCE to the third century CE, when it seems to have been sub-

53 Söderlind 2002, 70–71.

54 Söderlind 2002, 180.

55 The results of the excavations are summarized by Sisani (2013, 132–134) in his latest publication on the *ager Nursinus*. The first season of excavations is published in: Costamagna 2002, 22–23. The report of the archaeological campaigns can be consulted in the Archivio della Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio dell'Umbria.

jected to looting to remove construction materials. The area was only sparsely frequented in the fourth century CE.

2.5.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
Based on a few fragments of bricks, limestone sherds, and pottery used as fill for a later sacred building and on the presence of archaic schematic votive bronzes, it is possible to hypothesize that an Umbrian sanctuary existed on the summit at least since the fifth/fourth century BCE.⁵⁶ However, nothing conclusive can be said of its original appearance and chronology, for the monumentalization of the area in the second century BCE required the leveling of the entire mountaintop and the use of any previous structure as excavation waste.

A pit, partially destroyed by looters, was found in 1998 on the eastern side of the later building and tentatively attributed to the pre-Roman sacred space. It is dug into the rock, lined with clay and rocks, and covered with small squared bricks. The excavators proposed that it may have been used as a cistern to collect rainwater or as a silo for storing food. Another pit from the second century BCE was found just east of it. Both pits were intentionally destroyed after the sanctuary site was abandoned in the third century CE and used as garbage pits for the architectural and votive materials accumulated at the sanctuary.

2.5.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material
The votive material from this phase comprises fragments of *aes rude* and bronze votive figurines (figure 14). This material has been found in two pits where it was mixed with material of the Roman period such as bronze nails, architectural elements, anatomical votives, and terracotta heads.

The bronze votive figurines consist of seven men belonging to the EG type (figure A86–88), five eyed crests (figure A89–90), two warriors of the FoG type (figure A91), two animal figurines—a horse and a fragment of an ox (figure A92–93)—and one schematic head with facial features that recall the rendering of the heads of the EG type figurines (figure A94).⁵⁷

56 While Sisani (2013, 133) argues that no pottery of this period has been found on the excavation and casts doubts even on the chronology of the bronze figurines, the excavation reports I found in the Soprintendenza archive confirm the presence, although scant, of archaeological material of the fifth/fourth century BCE. On the basis of this evidence, I see no reason to doubt the existence of a sacred area on the summit during this period.

57 EG: MM_3 MM_4 MM_5 MM_6 MM_7 MM_8 MM_9. Eyed crests: MM_10 MM_11 MM_12 MM_13 MM_1. FoG: MM_1 MM_2. Horse: MM_16, ox: MM_17. Head: MM_15.

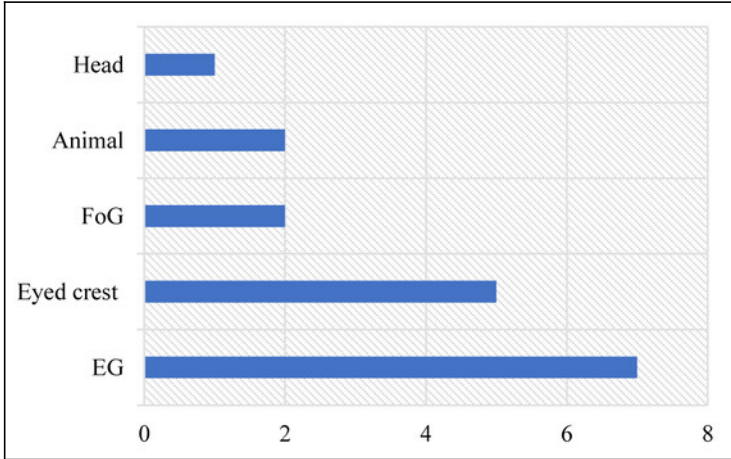


FIGURE 14 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte Moro votive figurines between the fifth and the fourth century BCE.

2.5.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

The sanctuary did not have an architectural form until the end of the second century BCE when the entire summit was leveled to create space for a building (figure 15). The new complex was 26 meters long and articulated into at least four rooms. The first (room A) is currently interpreted as the cult room. It runs northwest/southeast and measures 10×6 m. It was paved with concrete with small limestone and lithic inclusions; at the center of this room stood a rectangular structure lined with rock slabs set vertically into the bedrock. A large plastered pit was discovered south of room A and next to the previous pit, which may have been used as a silo.⁵⁸ An opening in the northern corner of room A connected it to room B, where the concrete floor is interrupted by large postholes and depressions related to the original setting of the room. On the northwestern side of the building, a small corridor granted entrance to both rooms. The 2010 excavation has established that the building extended southwest with more rooms, possibly used as service spaces.

Due to the lack of architectural materials, the building's decoration cannot be reconstructed with certainty. Two fragments of draped female figures have been tentatively attributed to the sanctuary's pediment decoration.

⁵⁸ Both pits were no longer used in the late imperial period and were destroyed, becoming garbage pits.

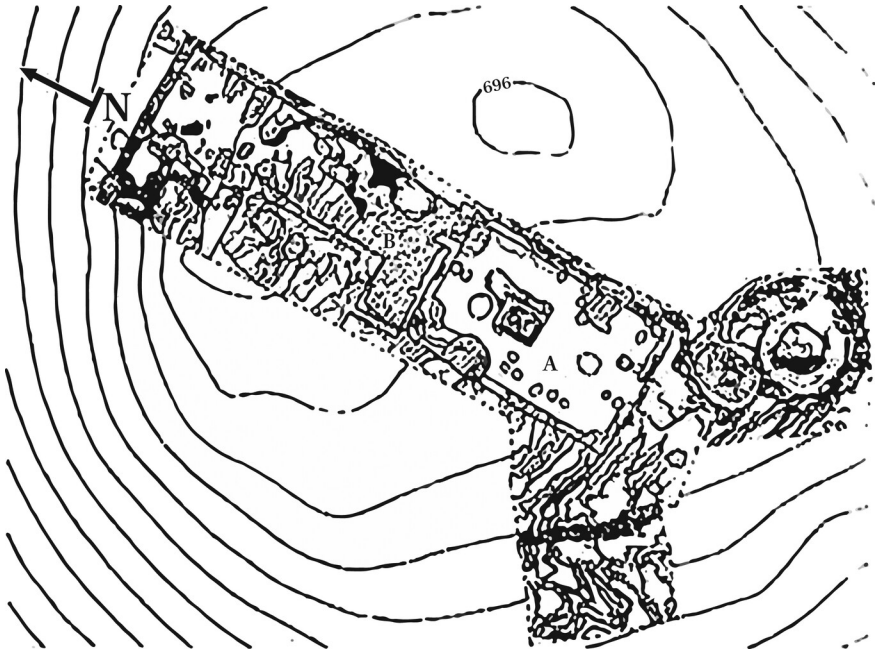


FIGURE 15 The Monte Moro sanctuary's structures (after Sisani 2013, 18 fig. 2).

2.5.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

The archaeological material dating to this phase consists principally of pottery, seven anatomical terracottas, and four heads (figure 16). These objects have been found in the pits mixed with other refuse material used to fill them.⁵⁹

Nearly 3000 fragments of pottery have been found in the sanctuary area. Black gloss (paterae, cups, and plates) is the most attested pottery class, followed by unpainted pottery (tableware and cooking ware) and terra sigillata.

The anatomical terracottas are from the third–second century BCE and include several body parts such as two uteri, two hands, one nose, one foot, and one set of male genitals (figure A95–101).⁶⁰ The uteri (figure A95–96) are fragmented and have an ovoid body with a slight tapering towards the top, with striations representing musculature. The hands are also fragmented, with one specimen (figure A97) showing the second, third, and fourth finger of a

59 See *infra* for the other material found in the pit.

60 Uteri: MM23 MM24. Hand without palm: MM 21. Hand with palm: MM_22. Nose: MM_25. Foot: MM_19. Testicles: MM_26. The dating of both the anatomicals and the heads proposed by Sisani (2013, 137–140) suggests that their deposition may have pre-dated the monumentalization of the area.

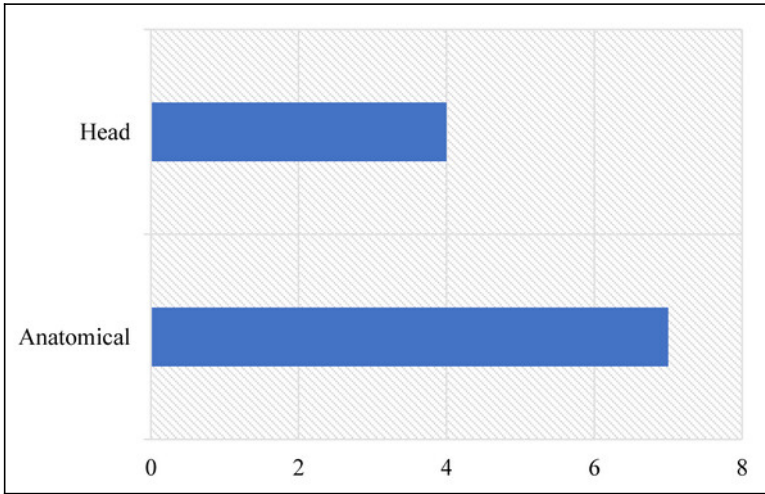


FIGURE 16 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte Moro figurative votive offerings between the late fourth and the early first century BCE.

right hand without any visible anatomical details. The second specimen (figure A98) depicts the palm of a left hand without any fingers. The nose (figure A99) is larger than life-size, with small indentations indicating the nostrils. The votive foot (figure A100) shows only the second and third toes attached to each other with signs of footwear, most likely a sandal. Lastly, the male genitalia (figure A101) depict low-hanging testicles and a missing penis with a fracture line where it was attached.

Like the anatomical offerings, the votive heads date back to the third–second century BCE and are fragmented (figure A102–104).⁶¹ One of the heads (figure A102) shows the left part of a male face with a smooth and rounded cheek and a straight mouth with separated lips. Another specimen (figure A103) includes three locks of forward-flowing hair and a fragment of the left eye and low eyebrow of a male figure. A third specimen (figure A104) is a small fragment of a veiled head's hairdo with no preserved facial features. The last specimen shows only the neck of a head.

2.6 *Monte Santo Sanctuary*

Located approximately 1 kilometer west of Todi, the sanctuary site is near Etruria and Umbria's border. The area's significance as a hub for commercial

61 MM_18 MM_19 MM_20 MM_28.

exchange and a connection between the inland Apennine region and the Etruscan world is evident from the grave goods discovered at the pre-Roman settlement of Tuder, as well as the presence of the Tiber river in the vicinity.⁶²

Based on the discovery of scattered artifacts on Monte Santo, such as a statue of Mars in the act of libation, parts of an inscribed honorary travertine column, and several small bronze figurines, it has been suggested that an archaic sacred place existed on the mountain.⁶³ Only a small amount of evidence is available regarding the use of the sanctuary on Monte Santo, which suggests that it was used during two periods: the fifth century BCE and the end of the first century BCE when Tuder became Colonia Iulia Fida Tuder. However, since no excavation has been conducted, it is not possible to determine if the sanctuary was in continuous use during these periods.⁶⁴

2.6.1 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
No excavation has been carried out on the mountain, and no architectural evidence is visible on the ground.

2.6.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material

In 1835, a local inhabitant of Todi noticed a bronze statue and a few travertine blocks of a column emerging from the ground on his property located on the western slopes of Monte Santo and carried out a private excavation of these objects. The statue, known as Mars of Todi after Francesco Roncalli's publication, is dated to the end of the fifth/beginning of the fourth century. It is 1.41 m high and depicts a warrior in armor, pouring a libation from a cup held in his extended right hand, while holding a spear with his left. An Umbrian inscription, carved in the Etruscan alphabet on the edge of the warrior's armor, suggests that the statue was given as a gift by Ahal Truitis, who could have been a local inhabitant. It is speculated that the statue was produced by a

62 See Chapter 4 for the pre-Roman necropoleis of Todi. It is also worth noting the presence of votive material found under the Chiesa della Visitazione di Santa Maria in Camuccia: Fabricotti 1969.

63 Bruschetti (2001, 155) briefly notes that black gloss pottery and architectural fragments were found on the hill's summit by the Soprintendenza Archeologica per l'Umbria. He does not provide any additional information, and, to my knowledge, these findings are neither displayed nor available in the archival records of the Soprintendenza.

64 For an overview and detailed summary of the finding of the statue and the Mars, see Roncalli 1973, 197. For an examination of the inscription carved on the statue, see Rocca 1996, 142 and Rix 2002, Um 1. The votive bronzes are published in Falcone Amorelli 1977 but without a historical contextualization of the sanctuary site.

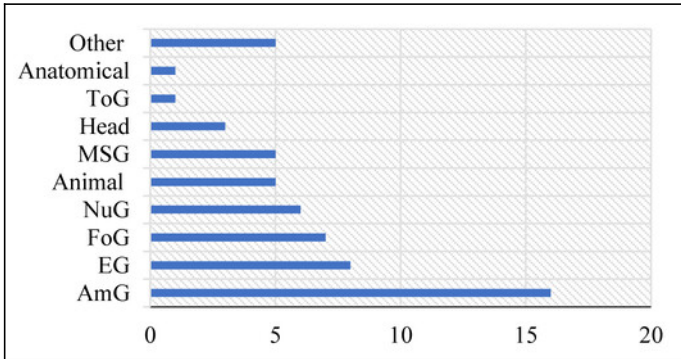


FIGURE 17 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte Santo votive figurines between the fifth and fourth centuries BCE.

sculptural workshop in Volsinii, a trade center with the Umbrian territory known for its bronze sculptors.

Forty-nine bronze figurines may be related to the sacred area of Monte Santo (figure 17). In only one case is a provenance from the mountain known, while for the remaining objects, the only information available in the Museo Civico di Todi archive is that they were found in Todi. Notwithstanding the lack of provenance, a case can be made for the association of all these objects with Monte Santo. It is worth noting that other sanctuaries identified in this city—at the sites of la Rocca, S. Maria in Camuccia, Porta Catena, and the Cathedral—have been dated between the end of the fourth and the third century BCE, while the bronze figurines have been dated to the fifth century BCE.⁶⁵ Monte Santo seems, therefore, to be the only (known) temple that existed in the area of Tuder during the fifth century BCE where these votives could have been dedicated.

Sixteen figurines belonging to the AmG type make up the majority of Monte Santo votive figurines (figure A106–109). Three depict a warrior (figure A106), and the rest depict a man striding forward (figure A107–109). The EG type is represented by six male and two female figures (figure A109–113), the FoG type by six warriors (figure A114–116), and the NuG type by five warriors and one woman (figure A117–119). Five warriors belong to the Monte Santo type (MSG), whose characteristic features are chiseled eyes, a small tunic that leaves the genitalia uncovered, and a helmet distinguished by the narrow point and raised cheekpieces (figure A120–121). Only one of the Monte Santo warrior figurines

65 For sanctuaries at Todi, see Tascio 1989, 66–67.

belongs to the ToG. Five figurines belong to the Animal type: three depict bulls and two horses (figure A122–123). Among the body parts, three figurines represent heads whose facial features stylistically recall the AmG (figure A124–126) and one a right hand (figure A234).⁶⁶

Lastly, five figurines belong to the group “Other” (figure A 127–130). Even though they resemble some of the types identified by Colonna, the overall rendering of the body and features seems to indicate an original creation of an individual craftsman operating in the Todi area or directly on the sanctuary site. It is possible that a local craftsman re-utilized known casts and applied subtle changes in order to create unique figurines that perhaps were more in line with the preferences of the donor or the artist. MTS_23 and MTS_24 represent a warrior naked except for a helmet; the body is solid, the left arm lies on the left hip, and the right arm is either bent upward (MTS_23) or forward (MTS_24) in the act of holding a spear. The modeling of the body recalls Colonna’s *Maestro Rapino*.⁶⁷

MTS_7 shows a resemblance to Colonna’s *Chiusi* type.⁶⁸ It represents a nude warrior in the act of striding forward with his left leg. He wears a helmet with a low crest and carries a shield on his left arm; his right arm is bent forward. The body is slender, and the facial features are roughly indicated.

MTS_45 portrays Hercules in the nude.⁶⁹ His right arm is raised in a club-wielding gesture, while his left arm is extended forward, and a lion’s skin hangs from his left forearm. The protruding ears, nose, and bulging eyes are reminiscent of Colonna’s *Maestro “Le Arti”* and *Biel* types.⁷⁰

66 AmG warrior: MTS_10 MTS_11 MTS_12, AmG striding man: MTS_26 MTS_27 MTS_28 MTS_29 MTS_30 MTS_31 MTS_32 MTS_33 MTS_34 MTS_35 MTS_44. EG males: MTS_38 MTS_39 MTS_40 MTS_41 MTS_42 MTS_43; EG females: MTS_46 MTS_48. FoG warriors: MTS_8 MTS_9 MTS_13 MTS_14 MTS_15 MTS_16 MTS_17. NoG warriors: MTS_18 MTS_19 MTS_20 MTS_21 MTS_22. NoG woman: MTS_47. MSG: MTS_3 MTS_4 MTS_5 MTS_6 MTS_25. Bulls: MTS_49 MTS_50 MTS_53. Horses: MTS_51 MTS_52. Heads: MTS_72 MTS_73 MTS_75. ToG: MTS_2. Head: MTS_76.

67 Colonna 1970, 137–140.

68 Colonna 1970, 87–88.

69 Compared with other regions of central Italy, such as Etruria, Latium and Samnium, representations of Heracles are scarce in ancient Umbria; only two out of the sixteen sanctuaries analyzed in the present work have yielded votive offerings representing Heracles (Monte Santo and the Sanctuary of Cupra at Colfiorito). See Bradley 2005, 129–143 for a discussion on the cult of Hercules in Central Italy.

70 Colonna 1970, 145–146.

2.6.3 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

No architectural evidence belonging to this phase has been found on Monte Santo. The column identified in 1835 is dated to the end of the first century BCE when the entire region received Roman citizenship.⁷¹

2.6.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

Although several bronze figurines of Hellenistic worshippers are displayed in the Museo Civico di Todi, none of them can be associated with certainty with the Monte Santo sanctuary due to the lack of provenance.

3 Umbrian Valley

3.1 *La Rocca Sanctuary*

The cult site takes its name, “La Rocca,” from the imposing medieval papal fortress (Rocca Albornoziata) that occupies the entire summit. La Rocca is located on the height of the Colle di Sant’Elia, a foothill of the Apennines (452 m above sea level) in the town of Spoleto in east-central Umbria. Due to its location at the head of a large, broad valley surrounded by mountains and overlooking communication routes between the Umbrian valley and the southern part of the region, the hill occupies a strategic geographical position and has been continuously occupied since the Middle Bronze Age. Unfortunately, the major work of land leveling connected with the construction of the Rocca Albornoziata has entirely compromised the archaeological record of the ancient settlement’s phases. Our knowledge of its development comes primarily from the dump layers accumulated along the hill’s slopes.

The earliest signs of activity on Colle di Sant’Elia include pottery fragments, a piece of a bronze fibula, spools, and loom weights, which suggest the existence of a settlement that likely occupied the eastern and western slopes of the hill. After the Bronze Age, archaeological findings indicate a gradual expansion of the settlement. Iron Age activity is attested by postholes, both on the summit of the hill and in the area of San Nicolò, located 3 km northwest of Colle S. Elia. The presence of numerous fragments of bucchero found both on the hill and in the modern centro storico, and the discovery of three necropoleis dating back

⁷¹ The column has been studied by Roncalli (1973). It has an attic base with two inscriptions and a 20 m high grooved shaft. The inscriptions preserved on the base of the column indicate that it was an honorary monument to the *duoviri quinquennales* of the colony: the *patronus coloniae* Q. Caecilius Atticus and C. Attius Bucina (*CIL* 11.4653a, 4652).

to the seventh–sixth century BCE indicate that during the archaic period, the settlement had expanded and occupied the whole southwest slope of the hill.

Although a settlement existed before the Roman expansion, Spolegium appears in the historical record only after being established as a Latin colony in 241 BCE. The settlement was spread over an area of approximately 30 hectares and was organized on an orthogonal grid system, with *insulae* along the primary slope of the site. The terrain was purposely terraced to create regularity. The main street of the ancient village was maintained, regularized, and connected to the Via Flaminia, which acted as the *cardo* of the new settlement. When the colony was founded, the hill's summit was transformed into the citadel of the new city.

Although the construction of the Albornoziana Fortress leveled any preexisting structures, restoration and construction work carried out in the last thirty years on the slopes of the hill and inside the Fortress have yielded evidence of the existence of at least one sacred area used from the fifth century BCE to the fourth century CE.⁷²

3.1.1 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
No cult building of this period has been unearthed.

3.1.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material
The votive material attributed to a cult place in this phase consists of eleven bronze figurines (figure 18).⁷³ These have been found in disturbed layers during excavations in the Fortress' "Cortile delle Armi" and "Cortile ovest" and on the northern and southern slopes of the Rocca.

72 The analysis of the pottery typologies found on La Rocca shows that the area was only scarcely frequented in the imperial and the early medieval period; pottery fragments drop from more than 2000 pieces in the fourth–first century BCE to fewer than fifty in the first–fourth century CE: Ermini Pani 2011, 44. The first excavation results are published in Bruni et al. 1983 and De Angelis 1994. Pani et al. (2011) summarize all excavation seasons from 1993 to 2007. The sanctuary on La Rocca may not have been the only pre-Roman sanctuary. In 1986, a votive bronze figurine (inv. n. 390939), was found near the church of S. Niccolò. It remains unpublished but is displayed at the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Spoleto. Its discovery opens up the possibility that another cult place existed in the area of the future Roman colony. For the earliest phases of occupation of the hill see also De Angelis 1994, 221–247. For the necropolis, see Museo Archeologico di Spoleto 2008, 11–15. For an overview of the colony of Spolegium, see Sisani 2007, 92–97 with previous bibliography.

73 Several fragments of pottery, such as impasto, black gloss, and bucchero, have been found during the excavation at La Rocca but have not been associated with the sacred area.

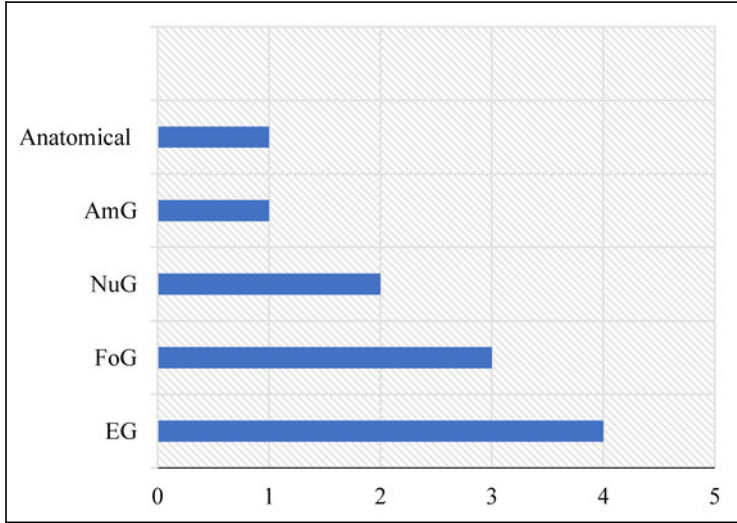


FIGURE 18 Graph showing the type distribution of the La Rocca sanctuary's votive figurines between the late sixth and the fourth century BCE.

The votive figurines consist of four male figures of the EG type (figure A131–133), three warriors of the FoG type (A3.134–135), two NuG figurines, a warrior (A3.136), and a striding male (A3.137), one striding male figure of the AmG (figure A138), and one anatomical specimen depicting an arm (A3.138).⁷⁴

3.1.3 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

Backfill layers on the hill's northern slope have yielded two fragments of Etrusco-Italic *antepagmenta* (figure 19) and two fragments of terracotta antefixes. These fragments can be attributed to the architectural and coroplastic decoration of the sacred building(s) on La Rocca during this phase.

The slabs appear to depict spiraling volutes,⁷⁵ while the antefixes show part of the lower body of a winged, draped female figure, identified by the excavators as the *Potnia theron* (Mistress of the Animals). This motif, believed to have originated in Faliscan territory in the fourth–third century BCE, became a common decorative motif on the antefixes of central Italian sanctuaries between

74 EG: Rocca_4 Rocca_5 Rocca_6 Rocca_7. FoG: Rocca_1 Rocca_2 Rocca_3. NuG: Rocca_8 Rocca_9. AmG: Rocca_10. Anatomical: Rocca_11.

75 For this type of revetment slabs, see *supra* 2.2. Pantanelli.

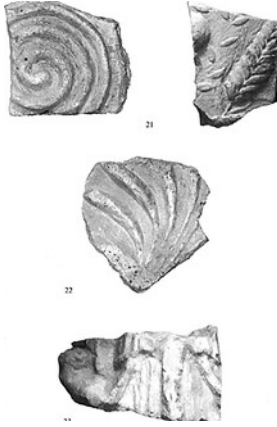


FIGURE 19
Architectural terracottas from La Rocca (after Ermini Pani 2011, fig. 20–23).

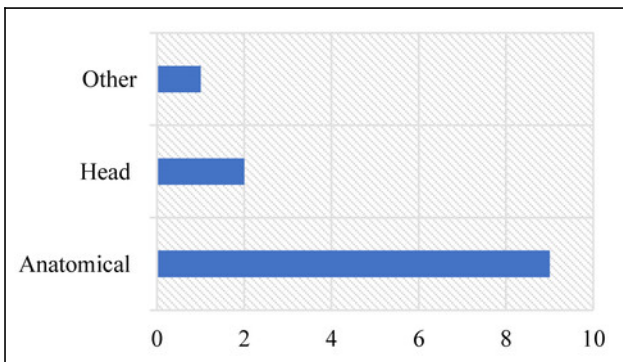


FIGURE 20 Graph showing the type distribution of the La Rocca figurative votive offerings between the end of the third and the early first century BCE

the third and the first century BCE. The goddess is traditionally represented as winged, draped, and flanked by two panthers.⁷⁶

3.1.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

The material from this phase consists of several fragments of pottery, one third-century BCE Roman bronze coin of the *triens* denomination, nine anatomical votives, two heads, and one terracotta figurine of a bovine (figure 20). These objects were found in a modern landfill and a dump layer. The latter, based on

⁷⁶ This type, known as classicizing, is widespread both in colonial and non-colonial areas of the peninsula. A list of sanctuaries with this type of antefix decoration is in Comella 1993, 66–67; Känel 2001, 35–36; Faustoferri and Lapenna 2014, 127.

the *terminus post quem* provided by the presence of a fragment of sigillata italica and amphorae, appears to have been deposited in the first century CE.

Pottery is the most abundant category of material found at La Rocca. Common ware is the most frequent ceramic class (1796 fragments, mostly *ollae*), followed by black gloss (1027; some pieces are of local production), coarse ware (203) and grey pottery (9).

The anatomical terracottas are dated to the third/second century BCE and consist of two feet, two big toes, two fingers, two uteri, and one phallus (figure A3.140–142).⁷⁷ The feet are preserved in two fragments (A3.140): Rocca_13 represents a right foot with toes individually formed and separated from one another; the toenails are executed by means of incision and rise slightly off a small platform. A break runs through the entire left side of the foot, cutting off the big toe and a large part of the heel. Rocca_12 depicts the second, third, and fourth toes from a right foot on a high platform. They are attached to each other and marked by a groove in between. Rounded incisions indicated toenails. Rocca_14 and Rocca_5 show the big toe of a left foot, whose platform is partially preserved (A3.140). Rocca_16 represents a thumb whose shape is rendered realistically. It terminates in a break midway down. Rocca_21 shows an unidentifiable finger. It is long and thin and slightly curved in a way reminiscent of the joints of the finger. The tip is pressed, perhaps indicating a fingernail. It terminates at the bottom in a break (A3.140). Rocca_18 and Rocca_19 show an ovoid uterus (A3.141) slightly tapering toward the top to create a rounded point. Striations are visible along both fragments. The body of the organ rests on a flat and featureless bottom, the edges of which extend beyond it. Rocca_17 depicts part of a pair of low-hanging testicles (A3.142). An irregular break surrounds the entire fragments, cutting off half of the testicles. There is no trace of the penis attached initially to the piece.

The terracotta heads are dated to the third/second century BCE (figure A143).⁷⁸ Rocca_22, represents the oval face of a veiled female. The hair is swept back from the forehead and falls over the sides of the face, forming two lines of ringlets, completely covering the ears. The forehead is short, the eyes are narrow, and the nose is big with a rounded tip. The mouth is chipped off, and the chin is round and fleshy. A large break runs along the left edge of the face,

77 Feet: Rocca_13, Rocca_12. Fingers: Rocca_16, Rocca_21. Uterus: Rocca_18, Rocca_19. Male genitalia: Rocca_17. I was not allowed to view the anatomicals and the heads outside the case where they are displayed. The measurements of these objects and their inventory numbers, contained in Appendix 2, were kindly provided to me by Anna Riva, from the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Spoleto.

78 Rocca_22, Rocca_20.

from the crown of the head to the cheek. A comparison with heads of the BIV type classified by Comella and dated between the fourth and the third century BCE may suggest a third-century BCE date for this head.⁷⁹ The second head, Rocca_20, is worn out and broken in multiple places; the only facial features preserved are the right eye, part of the nose, the mouth, parts of the cheeks, and the chin. The eye is shallow and framed by a low eyebrow. The upper eyelid is thin and plastic. The mouth is small, and the lips are even; the lower lip is slightly thicker with a soft undercut. Although the poor state of preservation prevents the identification of typologically similar heads, the resemblance of the chin and mouth to the male heads of the AI from Vulci, Tarquinia, and Tessennano suggests a dating to the second half of the third century BCE.⁸⁰

Finally, Rocca_23 belongs to the group “Other,” since it is an isolated find, and its presence in the region is limited to the sacred area on Colle S. Elia (figure A144). It represents a terracotta quadruped, most likely a bovine. The head is entirely cut off, and the features that remain after heavy wear do not show any details revealing what particular kind of bovine is represented. Although otherwise absent in Umbrian sacred contexts, terracotta animals are common in the western part of central Italy, southern Italy, and Sicily.⁸¹

3.2 *Monte Subasio Sanctuary*

The sanctuary site is located on the summit of the San Rufino hill, which represents the northernmost peak of Monte Subasio. The mountain is located 7 km east of Assisi (ancient Asisium) and, from a height of 1290 m above sea level, dominates the surrounding hills and valleys: on the western slopes are the towns of Assisi and Spello; on the east Nocera Umbra and Valtopina, in the northern territory of Gualdo Tadino; and on the south the city of Foligno. In antiquity, the mountain functioned as a regular stop for the summer transhumance that took place between the Umbria-Marche Apennines and the Ager Romanus via routes later retraced by the Via Flaminia.

The cult place was connected to a vast settlement area that occupied the slopes of Monte Subasio. The only settlement in the area that has been archaeologically investigated is Assisi. After an early occupation in the Bronze and

79 In particular, the heads from the Temple of Minerva Medica in Rome and Ariccia. Comella 1981, 783, fig. 19. In another publication (1982, 27), the author notes that, starting from the third century BCE, the type of hairdo with long ringlets framing the head is replaced by the one where the hair is gathered on top.

80 Söderlind 2000, 58–68.

81 Comella 1981, 767. On votive offerings of terracotta animals in central Italy, see Söderlind 2004. According to Comella 1981, this category of votive offerings is part of the Etrusco-Latial-Campanian (E-L-C) phenomenon. For this class of material, see also Appendix 1.

Iron Ages, the central area of the modern town (Via Arco dei Priori) seems to have been continuously inhabited starting from the sixth century BCE. Some other settlements may have existed in the area, as suggested by the presence of bronze material dating from the Bronze Age to the seventh century BCE and grave goods in the form of jewelry of the sixth century BCE. On Colle San Rufino itself, a system of moats and earthwork ramparts was perhaps associated with a high settlement on the summit.

The archaeological record of the cult place located at the summit of Colle San Rufino is limited to a small number of votive offerings, likely due to the history of the site's excavation. In 1879, archaeologist Wolfgang Helbig reported the discovery of seventy-five votive figurines and fragments of handmade vessels made of brown clay near a sulphur spring in the locality of Torre Maser, on top of S. Rufino hill. Most of the figurines were coarse male figurines about 3 cm high. However, when Francesco Pennacchi, an official of the municipality of Assisi, excavated the area indicated by Helbig in 1923, he did not find any structural remains. No other excavations have been carried out since then. In 1984, when the votive assemblage from the hill was published by Monacchi, the votive figurines mentioned by Helbig had been lost, except for eight specimens.

Due to the disappearance of votive objects found in the nineteenth century and the lack of any excavation record, our knowledge of the Monte Subasio sacred area is extremely fragmented. However, based on Monacchi's publication, it appears that the area was in use from the end of the sixth century/beginning of the fifth century BCE until the third/second century BCE.⁸²

3.2.1 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
No cult building of this period has been unearthed.

3.2.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material
Bronze figurines seem to have been the only votive offerings found on the Colle S. Rufino (figure 21).

Although Helbig noted the presence of seventy-five votive figurines (see above), Monacchi was able to study only five of them: one male figure of the EG type (figure A145), one striding male of the AmG type (figure A146), and three figurines classifiable under the umbrella of the group “Other” (figure A147–149).⁸³

82 The findings are published in Monacchi 1984. The objects viewed by Monacchi are today missing. For the nineteenth-century excavations, see Helbig 1880, 249 and Archivio Storico di Perugia: Assisi 1-6.

83 EG: CSRufino_2. AmG: CSRufino_8. Other: CSRufino_1 CSRufino_7 CSRufino_3. The mea-

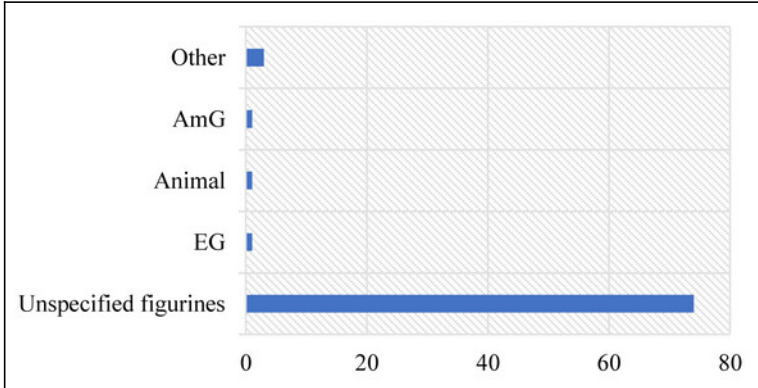


FIGURE 21 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte Subasio votive figurines between the fifth and the fourth century BCE (the unspecified figurines are those mentioned by Helbig).

The first offering of this type (Other), CSRufino_1 represents a warrior figure with a miniature situla—a bucket-shaped vessel used for carrying liquids during religious ceremonies—attached to his left foot (A3.147). The warrior is depicted in a striding stance with the left leg forward, and the right arm lifted to throw a spear, while the left arm is bent to hold the shield. He wears a helmet with a fissure to hold the crest. The shoulder straps and the lower part of the greaves are decorated with small circlets. The iconography of the warrior belongs to the “Gruppo San Fortunato di Genga” ascribed by Colonna to northern Umbrian production and common in the Picenum region.⁸⁴ As for the situla, its miniature size and its association with a warrior figure have led Colonna to consider it as suggestive of the *lustratio agri*, a Roman ceremony described by Cato in *De Agricultura* 141: farmers would address the god Mars with a prayer, beseeching him to “keep away, ward off, and remove” all kinds of catastrophes from their household, fields, and animals.⁸⁵

surements in Appendix 2 for the offerings from Colle S. Rufino are those, often incomplete, noted by Monacchi. The inventory numbers for these objects reference the numbers given to them by Monacchi.

84 Colonna 1970, 48.

85 According to Cato (*Agr.* 141. 1–2), part of the formula for purifying the land was: *Mars pater, te precor quae soque uti sies volens propitius mihi domo familiaeque nostrae, quous re ergo agrum terram fundumque meum suovitaurilia circumagi iussi, uti tu morbos visos invisosque, viduertatem vastitudinemque, calamitates intemperiasque prohibessis defendas averruncesque; utique tu fruges, frumenta, vineta virgultaque grandire beneque evenire siris, pastores pecuaque salva servassis disque bonam salutem valetudinemque mihi domo familiaeque nostrae.*

CSRufino_7 (A3.148) shows an elongated and rather flat figurine dressed in a tight, ankle-length dress with long sleeves; the surface of the dress is covered with a motif of incised circles that form parallel lines. The figure's left hand is bent to touch the side of the head, while the fingers of the right hand rest on the right hip. The facial features are coarsely rendered; the breast is signaled by incised circles. As Monacchi notes, although the figurine is stylistically in line with the Umbrian production of schematic offerings, its iconography recalls that of some Etruscan figurines found at Chiusi, interpreted as dancers.⁸⁶ The uniqueness of this object, as well as of CSRufino_1, suggests that they were most likely local products.

CSRufino_3 (A3.149) is an animal pendant with a hole through the center portion. The animal is schematically rendered, with no anatomical details. Pendants of this type are found most often in tomb context in Picenum.⁸⁷ Their presence among the materials of the Colle S. Rufino sacred area highlights the abovementioned cultural contacts between the two areas.

3.2.3 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

No cult building of this period has been unearthed.

3.2.4 Late Fourth–Early First Centurys BCE: Votive Material

The material of this phase consists of three bronze figurines belonging to the Hellenistic worshiper type and dated to the third–second century BCE (figure A150).⁸⁸ Two represent the male worshiper type, and one is a fragment of an arm holding a patera.

4 Northern Umbria

4.1 *Monte Ansciano Sanctuary*

4.1.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary is situated at the northern edge of a limestone mountain, standing 893 meters above sea level, in the northeastern region of Gubbio (formerly known as Iguvium). Positioned on the watershed between the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic coasts, the site holds strategic significance, with closer proximity to the

86 Maetzke 1957, 511; Richardson 1983, plate 193 figs. 562–563.

87 Monacchi 1984, 85–86, esp. note 50 for similar objects in Picene necropoleis.

88 CSRufino_4, CSRufino_5; arm with patera: CSRufino_6.

Adriatic. To the east lies the Gualdo Tadino Basin which, during Roman times and later, acted as a route for the Via Flaminia that ran from Rome to southern Umbria and then to the Adriatic through easy passes and valleys. The Apennines surround the site to the north and east. At the same time, the lower hills towards the south obstruct easy access from Perugia and the extensive former lake basins of central Umbria.

Bronze Age frequentation is attested in the area from 1100 BCE to 950 BCE. The presence of a drystone wall running around the summit, within which a midden accumulated—mostly bones and pottery but also a distinctive bronze fibula, daub, and blue glass beads—and a large oval posthole structure have led excavators to surmise that the summit served as an upland outpost, and that the majority of the population lived on the colluvial slopes below. During the same period, a similar settlement system existed on Monte Ingino, just northeast of Monte Ansciano, and a hut of the Late Bronze Age has been identified in the area of modern Gubbio, at the beginning of Via dei Consoli.

By the eighth century, occupation had shifted entirely from the summits of Monte Ansciano and Monte Ingino to the basin lying below them—the area of the Vescovado and S. Agostino—where a nucleated settlement and associated cemetery continued to be used until the Roman period. The material of this phase, mostly impasto pottery, suggests that these dwellings ceased to be used in the fourth century BCE when domestic structures and mortuary display became conspicuous in the area of Gubbio.

The Gubbio Project conducted a systematic excavation of the entire Gubbio valley from 1983 to 1987, which was published in 1988 and 1994.⁸⁹ Among their findings was evidence that the upper part of the Gubbio valley landscape had been intentionally made into a ritual space by the sixth century BCE. At Monte Ansciano, archaeologists discovered a sacred area likely in use from the sixth century BCE to the fourth–third century BCE, with occasional use continuing until the first century CE.

4.1.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
The sacred area of this phase appears to have consisted of a simple drystone platform that capped a previous wall of the Bronze Age period (figure 22).

89 Stoddart and Whitley 1988, Stoddart and Malone 1994, Stoddart 2010, cf. Stoddart et al. 2012a and 2012b. The Gubbio valley may have hosted more than one sacred area. One bronze figurine was found on the Monte Ingino (Schippa 1987, 93) and two sporadic surface finds, published by Colonna (1970, 87; 105), come from Monte Loreto and Fratticciola Selvatica, on the northern and southern edges of the valley.



FIGURE 22 Plan of the sanctuary on Monte Ansciano (after Malone and Stoddart 1994, 146, fig. 5.2).

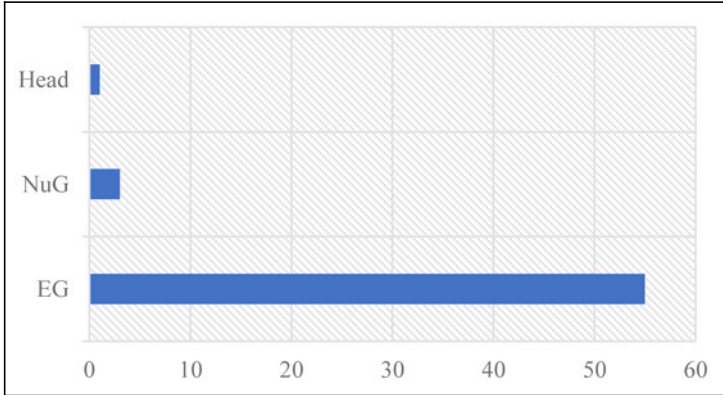


FIGURE 23 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte Ansciano votive figurines between the fifth and the fourth century BCE.

4.1.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE Votive Material

Materials associated with this phase consist of one hundred and sixty-nine nails and some fragments of pottery, fifty-nine bronze figurines, and one fragment of a terracotta head (figure 23).⁹⁰ This material has been found mixed with earlier and later material in the upper soil layers of the excavations.

The votive figurines consist of thirty-five males (figure A151–154), twelve warriors (figure A155) and eight females (figure A156–158) of the EG type, three warriors of the NuG type (figure A159–160), and one head (figure A161).⁹¹

Unlike the Umbrian bronze votive heads of this period, the head from Monte Ansciano is made of clay. The face is characterized by large oval eyes and a mouth with closed lips. Fractures run right above the eyelids and along the left and lower part of the face; the nose is entirely chipped off. Despite the poor state of preservation of this artifact, the shape of the eyes and the mouth recalls specimens from Veii dated to the end of the sixth–early fifth century BCE.⁹²

90 The pottery is unpublished and remains to date unstudied. One hundred and sixty-nine nails have been associated by the excavators with this phase.

91 EG males: MtAnsc_23 MtAnsc_24 MtAnsc_8 MtAnsc_9 MtAnsc_11 MtAnsc_4 MtAnsc_5 MtAnsc_6 MtAnsc_7 MtAnsc_14 MtAnsc_20 MtAnsc_21 MtAnsc_22 MtAnsc_26 MtAnsc_28 MtAnsc_29 MtAnsc_30 MtAnsc_33 MtAnsc_34 MtAnsc_35 MtAnsc_36 MtAnsc_37 MtAnsc_38 MtAnsc_39 MtAnsc_40 MtAnsc_41 MtAnsc_43 MtAnsc_44 MtAnsc_45 MtAnsc_47 MtAnsc_48 MtAnsc_49 MtAnsc_50 MtAnsc_51 MtAnsc_52.; EG warriors: MtAnsc_42 MtAnsc_53 MtAnsc_54 MtAnsc_55 MtAnsc_56 MtAnsc_57 MtAnsc_58 MtAnsc_59 MtAnsc_60 MtAnsc_61 MtAnsc_12 MtAnsc_13; EG females: MtAnsc_1 MtAnsc_2 MtAnsc_3 MtAnsc_18 MtAnsc_27 MtAnsc_31 MtAnsc_32 MtAnsc_46. NoG: MtAnsc_15 MtAnsc_16 MtAnsc_17. Head: MtAnsc_10.

92 Comparisons can be made in particular with the female head AII classified by Lucia Vagnetti (1971, 33; tav. v).

4.1.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

No cult building of this period has been unearthed.

4.1.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

Starting with the third century BCE, cult activity at Monte Ansciano seems to decrease. The only material evidence of this phase is represented by a coin of a very early Roman Republican issue and a bronze fragment depicting a patera (figure A162), most likely related to a figurine of the type Hellenistic worshiper.⁹³

4.2 *Monte Acuto Sanctuary*

4.2.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary is situated at a height of 926 meters on the summit of Monte Acuto, which is located on the right bank of the Tiber river in northwestern Umbria. From its peak, the mountain overlooks the surrounding territories, including the river and the Fratta plain situated on the border between the Etruscan and Umbrian territories.

This position of control over river and transit routes has been exploited since the Late Bronze Age. In this phase, a fortified settlement—identified on the ground by a ditch, an embankment of stone heaps, and fragments of bowls, handles (*a cornetti* and *a maniglia*), and impasto cooking ware—was built on the extreme limit of the crest in direct visual control of the Umbrian plains and territory. A series of fortified settlements on the lower mountain peaks at about 700 m above sea level (Monte Elceto di Murlo, Monte Civitelle, Cerchiaia, Monte Corona, Monte Santa Croce) gravitated to this axis of control. These settlements shared similar features of altitude and were equipped with circular or elliptical enclosures, whose local drystone elements are still visible on the ground.

After an apparent hiatus of hundreds of years, the summit of Monte Acuto was transformed into a sacred place starting from the sixth/fifth century BCE. Given its position, the sanctuary had a viewshed that enclosed other similar Umbrian sanctuaries in Umbria: from north to south, Gubbio (Monte Ansciano), Umbertide (Monte Acuto), Assisi (Monte Subasio, Monte Subasio), Terni (Monte Torre Maggiore), and Calvi dell'Umbria (Monte San Pancrazio). It seems, therefore, that the original purpose of utilizing the mountain for its elevated position was reiterated during the archaic period and accompanied by a sacred function. It is reasonable to imagine that the population of the sur-

93 MtAnsc_19.



FIGURE 24 Excavation plan of the Monte Acuto sanctuary. A: entrance; B: precinct; C: *sacellum*; D: votive pit (after Cencioli 1998, 46).

rounding territories used the sanctuary on Monte Acuto not only for religious purposes but also to find shelter and gather in moments of danger.

From 1986 to 1995, the Soprintendenza Archeologica dell'Umbria, led by Luana Cencioli, conducted investigations on the summit of Monte Acuto. These excavations revealed a cult site that was in use from the sixth to the fourth century BCE and was occasionally visited until the fourth century CE.⁹⁴

Unfortunately, the area on top of Monte Acuto has suffered from degradation caused by both natural and human factors over time. Human activities, such as the installation of cell towers, have caused significant harm to the site. Furthermore, clandestine actions and looters have disrupted the stratigraphy and resulted in the loss of essential archaeological information.

4.2.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
The sanctuary is characterized by a pseudo-rectangular enclosure (35 × 20 m) with a wall of about 3 m wide built with local stones without mortar. On the western side of the enclosure, a small drystone corridor led to the *sacellum*, built with two courses of drystone wall (figure 24). The presence of three small

94 For a topographic framework of the sanctuary and the excavation's results, see Cencioli 1992, 1996, 1998.

channels cut into the rock of the rectangular foundation suggests that this area was dedicated to the sacrifice of animals, whose remains (bovine) have been recovered inside the votive pit. The latter (4 m deep and ca. 3.50 m wide) is dug into the rock south of the *sacellum*. Besides bones and votive figurines (below), the pit has yielded brick fragments—interpreted as the material of the structure's roof—one spindle, impasto clay, the base of a cup, and a ribbed handle related to a previous occupation of the area.

4.2.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material

Votive figurines represent the only type of offerings found at the Monte Acuto sanctuary. The excavation has retrieved 1600 specimens, of which I could analyze only one hundred and eighteen (figure 25). Sixty-nine of them have been recovered inside the votive pit, while the rest has been found spread across the entire excavation areas in disturbed layers.

The most common type of figurine is the EG (figure A163–166). At Monte Acuto this group comprises sixteen male figures (A3.163–164), twenty females (165–166), and six warriors (A3.167). Animal figurines (figure A168–172) are attested by twelve pigs (A3.168), ten sheep (A3.169), seven oxen (A3.170), two goats (A3.171), and three unidentifiable quadrupeds (A3.172). Thirteen human figures cut from thin sheets of bronze belong to the BS type (figure A173–174). The extreme approximation of their bodily features and poor state of preservation allows us only to identify two as men, while the rest remain unrecognizable. The NuG is attested by nine figurines of warriors (figure A175–176) and the AmG by six figurines representing a striding male (figure A177–178). Lastly, eleven votive figurines represent specific parts of the human body (figure A179–182): five heavily deteriorated heads (A3.179) with features that resemble the heads of the EG figurines, four legs (A3.180), one hand (A3.181), and one arm (A3.182).⁹⁵

95 EG males: MTA_21 MTA_22 MTA_23 MTA_24 MTA_25 MTA_26 MTA_27 MTA_28 MTA_29 MTA_30 MTA_31 MTA_32 MTA_39 MTA_40 MTA_41 MTA_42 MTA_43 MTA_44 MTA_45 MTA_46; EG female: MTA_10 MTA_11 MTA_12 MTA_14 MTA_15 MTA_16 (extremely schematic); MTA_47 MTA_48 MTA_49 MTA_50 MTA_51 MTA_52 MTA_53 MTA_54 MTA_55 MTA_56; EG warriors: MTA_17 MTA_18 MTA_19 MTA_56 MTA_57 MTA_58. Animals: MTA_59 MTA_60 MTA_61 MTA_62 MTA_63 MTA_64 MTA_65 MTA_66 MTA_67 MTA_68 MTA_69 MTA_70 MTA_71 MTA_72 MTA_73 MTA_74 MTA_75 MTA_76 MTA_77 MTA_78 MTA_79 MTA_80 MTA_81 MTA_82 MTA_83 MTA_84 MTA_85 MTA_86 MTA_87 MTA_88 MTA_89 MTA_90 MTA_91 MTA_92 MTA_93. NoG: MTA_1 MTA_2 MTA_3 MTA_4 MTA_5 MTA_6 MTA_7 MTA_8 MTA_9. BS: MTA_94 MTA_95 MTA_96 MTA_97 MTA_98 MTA_99 MTA_100 MTA_101 MTA_102 MTA_103 MTA_104 MTA_105. AmG: MTA_33 MTA_34 MTA_35 MTA_36 MTA_37 MTA_38. Heads: MTA_108

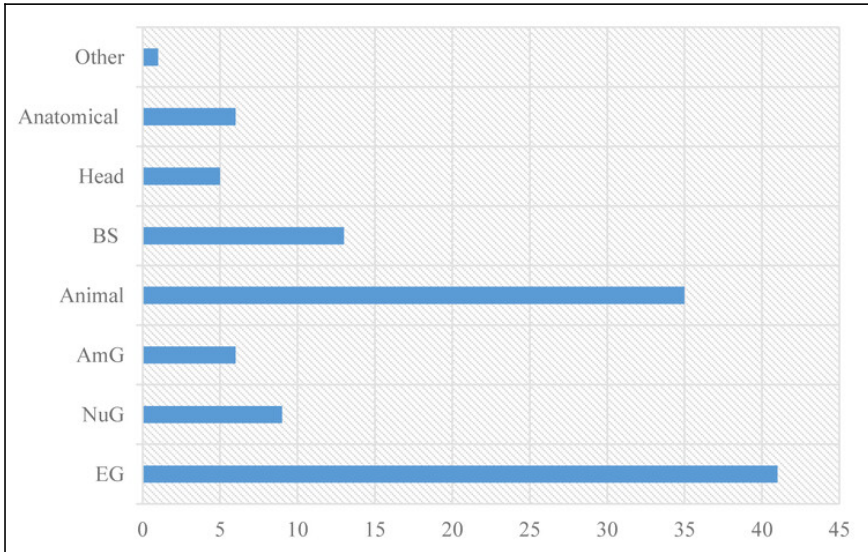


FIGURE 25 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte Acuto sanctuary's votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

The excavation has also retrieved a situla in the shape of a basket (MTA_118). This vessel has a narrow foot and two small rings (broken on the upper part) attached to each handle, and, unlike the situla found at the Monte Subasio sanctuary (CSRufino_1), it is not hollow. If Colonna's interpretation of the connection between this miniature vessel and the god Mars is right,⁹⁶ it is possible that also in the case of Monte Acuto the object relates to the *lustratio agri*, the propitiatory ceremony dedicated to the god Mars in the hope that he will increase the abundance of fields and cattle. In this respect, the high number of animal figurines dedicated at this site may be a further indication of the practice of this type of purification ceremony.

4.2.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

No interventions seem to have been made at Monte Acuto during this phase.

MTA_109 MTA_110 MTA_111 MTA_112 MTA_113. Arm: MTA_106; hand: MTA_107; legs: MTA_114 MTA_115 MTA_116 MTA_117.

96 Colonna 1970, 48.

4.2.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

During this period, fragments of black gloss and sigillata italica, along with a miniature vase, have been found as the sole archaeological evidence from Monte Acuto. This apparent decline in use of the sanctuary continues during the imperial period, as attested by a group of coins of the second century CE and the fourth/fifth century CE.

5 Apennine Umbria

5.1 *Colle Mori Sanctuary*

5.1.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary is situated at the summit of Colle Mori, which is located 743 meters above sea level and approximately 3 kilometers north of the modern town of Gualdo Tadino. The hill lies on the western side of the Umbria-Marche Apennines and is positioned only a few kilometers from the mountain passes of Fossato di Vico (740 m) and Scheggia (575 m). The surrounding landscape is characterized by mountains to the east, including Monte Serra, Monte Fringuello, and Monte Penna, and hills to the west. A plain stretches from north to south, bounded by mountains and hills.

The presence of iron and copper deposits in the area controlling important trans-Apennine routes encouraged human occupation since the Late Bronze Age (thirteenth century BCE). During this period, there seems to have been a protohistoric settlement on the summit of the hill. Archaeologists have found traces of circular hearths and a considerable number of objects, such as cups and ollae made of impasto, spindle whorls, loom weights, and bronze ornaments dated between the thirteenth and the ninth century BCE. Additionally, some evidence of Bronze Age occupation in the area has been discovered about two kilometers southeast of this settlement, where a valuable deposit of two golden discs, horse bits, and scalpels was found.

In the sixth century BCE, Colle Mori saw a resurgence of human occupation after a gap of four centuries. On the western slope of the hill, a small nucleated settlement covering a few hectares was discovered (figure 26). The settlement was built on artificial terraces, constructed with walls made of dry-laid limestone slabs, and positioned along the contour levels. The buildings on the terraces included both public and private structures, featuring three rooms and, in some cases, multiple floors.⁹⁷ The cemeteries of San Facondino, Malpasso,

97 For this settlement, see also Chapter 4.

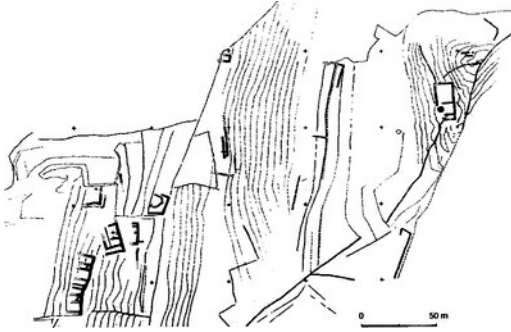


FIGURE 26
Plan of the Colle Mori Umbrian settlement. On the right: the sacred area (after Bonomi Ponzi 2010, 184 fig. 25).

Cartiere, and the sacred area on the summit of the hill were associated with the settlement. From the top of the hill, the sanctuary overlooked the entire valley and the access roads that straddled the Apennines.

The settlement, possibly occupied by the Tadinates mentioned in the Iguvine Tablets and attested in an inscription of the fourth century BCE,⁹⁸ was defended by a series of small fortified settlements that controlled access routes from the neighboring territories of Perugia and Gubbio, in addition to the Apennine routes towards the Adriatic Sea. The ceramic material, which covers cooking and food conservation needs, indicates that the settlement on the Colle Mori was occupied until the third century BCE before being abandoned, perhaps due to a fire. At the end of the third century BCE, following the abandonment of the Umbrian center, a new settlement was founded in the valley, southwest of the modern town of Gualdo Tadino and facing the Via Flaminia.

Our knowledge of the site is owed to the detailed fieldwork of Enrico Stefani and Laura Bonomi Ponzi. In 1921 and 1935, Stefani uncovered the remains of the necropolis of San Facondino and evidence of the sacred area on the summit of the Colle Mori. Between 1992 and 2002, Stefani's work was resumed by the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici dell'Umbria under the direction of Bonomi Ponzi. This decade of archaeological investigation brought to light the existence of the Bronze Age and archaic settlement and clarified the phases of the sacred area on the summit of the hill.⁹⁹ The votive material suggests that the

98 The inscription, published by Rix (2002, Um 201) was found in 1996 on the slopes of the Colle Mori. It reads *tarina/ ei tuce st[ahu]* (I-stand (here) in-public/publicly for-the-Tadinates) and has been interpreted as the boundary marker of the settlement that occupied the summit of the hill. It attests that, at least in the fourth century, the Umbrians living on the hill referred to their settlement with a name and offers a confirmation of the later mention of this community in Tablet 1 of the Iguvine Tablets. The inscription is examined in Agostiniani et al. 2011, 54–55.

99 Stefani's excavation results are published in Stefani 1935. Some of the findings from the

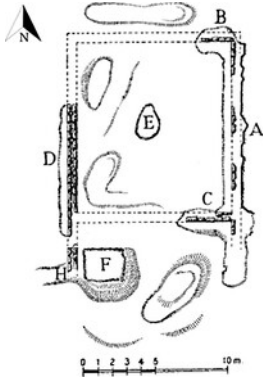


FIGURE 27
Plan of the *sacellum*: letters A, B, and C indicate the walls of the *cella*; E is the pit; F is the cistern inside the *pronaos* (modified after Stefani 1935, 156, fig. 2).

sacred area continued to be used even after the abandonment of the settlement on the slopes and was been frequented until at least the second century BCE.

5.1.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
During this period, the sacred complex comprised a temple (measuring 11.90 × 10.70 m) with a rectangular *cella* and *pronaos*, which was almost precisely oriented according to the cardinal points (figure 27). The perimeter walls (A, B, C, D) were constructed using dry-laid and irregularly shaped limestone blocks. The regularly spaced openings on the walls were likely post holes that once supported the poles that held the structure of the walls. Inside the *cella*, there was a pit (E) where a bronze foot and a slab with two clumps were discovered, possibly related to a cult statue. Within the space of the *pronaos*, a 3 m deep pit (F) was dug and interpreted by the Soprintendenza’s excavators as a cistern that was connected to the religious activity practiced on site.

5.1.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material
The votive material is composed of eight specimens of *aes rude*—noted by Stefani and now lost—six bronze figurines, and one terracotta head (figure 28). Except for two bronze figurines and the coins, which Stefani reports to have been found in the temple’s *cella*, the offerings were found deposited inside the cistern together with a number of iron nails and four metal objects, three unidentifiable and one interpreted by the excavator as part of a door hinge.

Soprintendenza’s excavation, mainly related to the settlements and the necropolis, are summarized in De Vecchi 2002, Bonomi Ponzi 2010, Micozzi 2014 (on the necropolis only), and Manconi 2017, 620–621. Unfortunately, the unpublished reports of the excavation season are absent from the archive of the Soprintendenza.

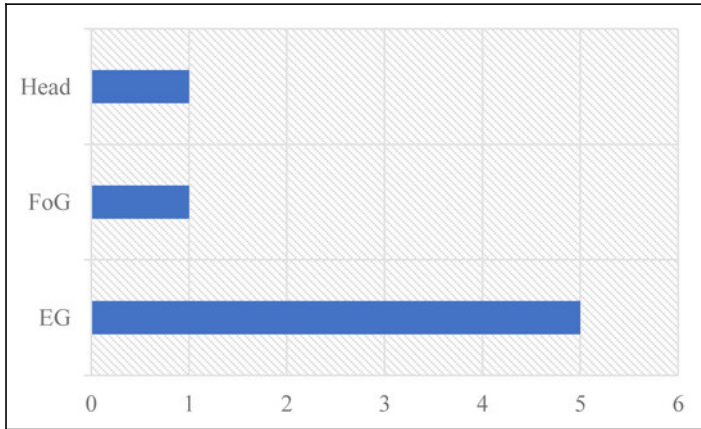


FIGURE 28 Graph showing the type distribution of the Colle Mori votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

The bronze figurines consist of five males of the EG type (figure A183–185) and one warrior of the FoG type (figure A186).¹⁰⁰ Although only the head of the latter is preserved, the original appearance can be reconstructed with the aid of a drawing produced by Stefani (A3.186).

The terracotta head is wheel-made and entirely in the round (figure A187).¹⁰¹ Due to a large break running across the figure's mouth, the only features preserved are the lower lip, the chin, and the neck. The lips appear to be pursed in a faint "archaic smile," the chin is pointed, and the neck tapers at the center and widens at the bottom. The rendering of the smile and neck is clearly derived from Attic korai, or maiden figures, sculpted in Athens around 530–500 BCE. The closest central Italian parallel is a head (AIV according to Vagnetti's classification) from Veii that is dated around the end of the sixth to the beginning of the fifth century BCE.¹⁰² It is likely that the terracotta head from Colle Mori was also made in the same timeframe.

5.1.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

The cistern and the temple are paved in *cocciopesto* (figure 29).

100 EG: CM_5 CM_6 CM_7 CM_8 CM_9; FoG: CM_10_.

101 CM_1. Bonomi Ponzi (2010, 187) tentatively interprets the object as an acroterion. To be placed on roofs, however, statues in the round had to be attached to bases, and the bottom of the CM_1 is smoothly finished with no trace of having been attached to anything.

102 Vagnetti 1971, 32, tav. VII.



FIGURE 29
 Colle Mori cistern clad in bricks (after Bonomi Ponzi 2010, 189, fig. 35).

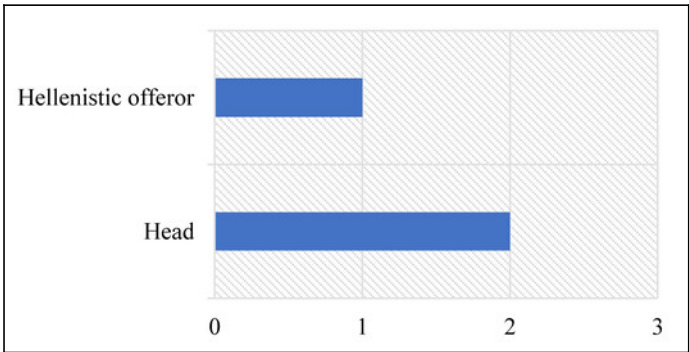


FIGURE 30 Graph showing the type distribution of the Colle Mori figurative votive offerings between the late fourth and the early first century BCE.

5.1.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

The materials from this phase comprise a black gloss miniature vase with Umbrian letters inscribed on the bottom and the outer wall, a black gloss plate, fragments of a black gloss cup, and three figurative votive offerings (figure 30). While the black gloss pottery is mentioned by Stefani as having been found alongside the eastern wall of the temple (D), the figurative votive offerings come from the cistern from inside the *pronaos*. These consist of one bronze figurine of the Hellenistic female worshiper type (figure A188) and two terracotta heads, all dated to the end of the fourth/third century BCE (figure A189–190).¹⁰³

One head (A3.188) is represented in profile (left). The face is oval and slightly titled back. The hair is curly and combed tidily forward. A few locks stick out of

103 Hellenistic worshiper: CM_4; Heads: CM_2 CM_3.

a hairband and rise above the center of the crown, and some cover the temple and the ear. The eye is oval and deep and the nose is straight and small. The mouth is straight. The overall effect is slightly androgynous, making it difficult to determine the gender. The soft lines and features of the head are reminiscent of some Etruscan heads classified as type A1 by Söderlind, indicating a possible dating to the second half of the third century BCE.¹⁰⁴

The second piece (A3.190) represents the back of a head rejoined from four pieces. The hair is simply represented with wavy incisions, and a diadem is visible on the top of the head, indicating that it is likely a depiction of a female head. However, due to the poor state of preservation and lack of details in the hairdo, it is difficult to precisely date this piece or compare it to other dated heads from central Italy.

5.2 *Cancelli Sanctuary*

5.2.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary site is in the modern cemetery of Cancelli, 13 km east of Foligno (ancient Fulginae), on a mountain almost 1000 meters above sea level. It is situated in the heart of Apennine Umbria, along a mountain chain that marks the eastern boundary of the Umbrian valley, on the left of the river Menotre, a tributary of the Topino. The centrality of this site as a crossroads and crossing point is highlighted by the presence of a series of ancient paths that, originating in the Umbrian valley, converge at Cancelli.

Archaeological evidence suggests that human occupation of the area dates back to the sixth century BCE, with the establishment of a fortified settlement in the valley below the mountain, 910 meters above sea level. At the same time, a cult place was built halfway up the slope, in the locality of La Corte, 934 meters above sea level. On the hilltop, 1010 meters above sea level, a fortification with a moat and embankment was discovered, which was part of a larger system of fortified settlements strategically placed around the mountains surrounding Foligno. These fortifications served defensive and territorial control purposes, as they allowed for monitoring approach routes like the Via Plestina and the road leading to Cancelli. Other examples of such fortified settlements include the Monte Aguzzo (1100 meters above sea level), the two peaks of Monte Cologna, and the area of Acqua Santo Stefano.

The sacred area on the hill has been known since the late nineteenth century, but only in recent years has it been the focus of systematic archaeological campaigns.¹⁰⁵ In the summer of 2012 and 2013, the Soprintendenza per i Beni Arche-

104 Söderlind 2000, 145–145.

105 Michele Faloci Pulignani published a report in 1890 where he mentions the fortuitous find-

ologici dell'Umbria, under the direction of Maria Laura Manca, and a team of high school students supervised by archaeologists Maria Romana Picuti and Matelda Albanesi, investigated the central and northern sectors of the modern cemetery of Cancelli. They uncovered an area of 20×8m that belonged to the ancient cult place.¹⁰⁶ The excavations revealed that the sacred place was in use from the sixth century BCE until the Augustan period, after which it appears to have been abandoned, possibly due to an earthquake. Fragments of lamps dated to the fourth/fifth century CE attest to occasional visitation of the area until the Late Antique period.

5.2.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
No architectural remains belonging to this phase have been unearthed in the area.

5.2.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material
The materials associated with this phase of the site include various vessels for cooking and eating food, such as impasto ollae and cups, which were locally produced, as well as imported bucchero bowls and Faliscan overpainted black gloss cups and plates from Etruscan and Faliscan territory. A few miniature vessels, such as jugs and bowls in impasto or purified ware, bronze Etruscan vessels, one bronze fibula, one bronze pendant, loom weights, and twelve figurative votive offerings in bronze were also found (figure 31). These materials were discovered mixed with later objects in two layers of soil rich in charcoal, which are believed to be the layers that leveled and sealed the earliest architectural structures below.

Among the figurative votive offerings, the most frequently represented types are the FoG (figure A191–192), attested by three warrior figurines, and the EG, which includes the figure of one man (3.193), one woman (A3.194), and one warrior (A3.195). The other figurines consist of two bulls of the Animal type (figure A196), one warrior of the NoG type (figure A197), one bronze sheet depicting a male figure (figure A198), one “eyed crest” (figure A199), one schematic head (figure A210), and one schematic limb representing a left arm (figure A201).¹⁰⁷

ings of some bronze votive offerings in the area of the modern Cancelli cemetery: Faloci Pulignani 1890, 315.

106 Manca et al. 2014.

107 FoG: Cancelli_3 Cancelli_9 Cancelli_12. NoG: Cancelli_13 Cancelli_14 Cancelli_16Animal: Cancelli_11 Cancelli 15; BS: Cancelli_1; Eyed crest: Cancelli_4; Head: Cancelli_5; Anatomical: Cancelli_6.

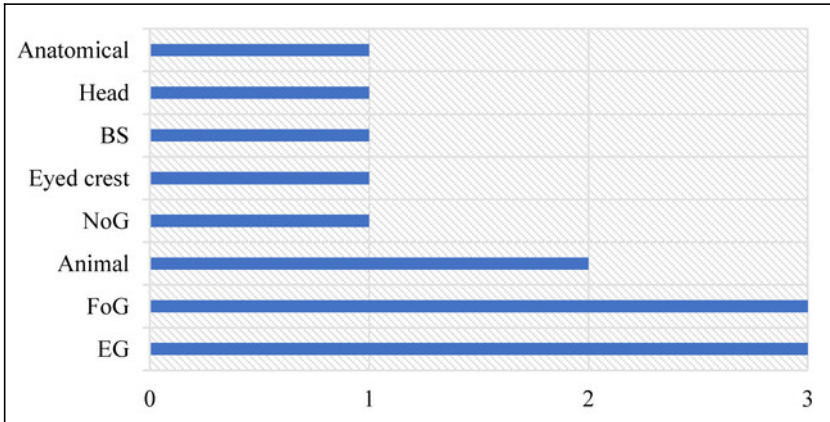


FIGURE 31 Graph showing the type distribution of the Cancelli votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

5.2.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution

Although the complete layout of the sanctuary is not known, it is during this phase that it was monumentalized. The first phase of this construction, which occurred in the fourth–third century BCE, involved the creation of drystone walls that were aligned northwest/southeast and built directly on the bedrock. Additionally, a large container called a dolium was buried in the ground and filled with lime during this phase. While there are no comparisons available for such a use, the excavators believe that the lime was stored in the vessel for use in ritual activities.

These structures underwent a significant change sometimes during the second century BCE when they were rebuilt and rotated on a north–south/east–west axis. Three rooms (one has been excavated only partially) were built following the new orientation (figure 32). Two of them, equipped with *opus signinum* floors, show evidence of later alterations, such as the blocking and substitution of two openings with a drain, which also went out of use and was subsequently replaced by a drain with *opus reticulatum* inserts. The original function of these rooms is unknown, although the presence of the water channel suggests water-related rituals.

With respect to the architectural decoration of the complex during this phase, the excavation yielded a terracotta antefix and a small sandstone fragment belonging to the vegetal ornaments of a capital. The former, destroyed during the Second World War, depicts a female head surrounded by acanthus leaves. At the base of the antefix is a socle decorated with an ionic frieze with ovules and smooth listels. This motif, with human heads surrounded by a deco-

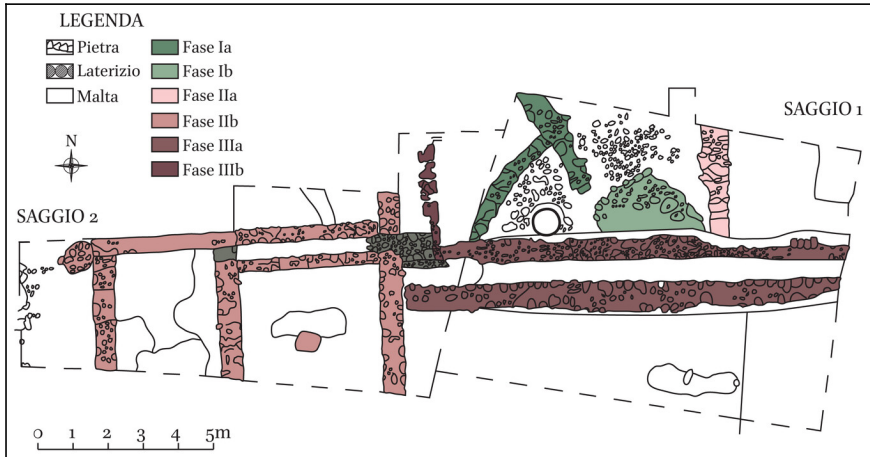


FIGURE 32 Plan of the excavation. The features in green belong to the first phase of the structure, while the ones in brown belong to the second-century BCE phase (after Manca et al. 2014, 31, fig. 10).

orative shell that begins at the base with a pair of acanthus leaves, has its origins in southern Italy in the area of Taranto and is believed to have been elaborated in Etruria around the fourth century BCE. A comparison with similar specimens found at Arezzo, Chiusi, Cortona, Perugia, and other centers of Apennine Umbria suggests a dating for the piece from Cancelli around the late third–second century BCE.¹⁰⁸

5.2.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

The material from this phase consists of ceramics (one south-Etruscan or northern-Latium overpainted *kantharos* and small cups with black floral motif), a bronze bowl, one Roman Republican coin, one figurine of Hellenistic worshiper, one head, and one foot (figure 33).

The coin is a Republican *as* of the first century BCE and shows Janus on the obverse and three prows on the reverse. Ceramics are mostly represented by imported and locally produced black gloss pottery, a vast proportion of which includes plates, bowls, and cups. Miniature pottery is also abundant and includes amphorae, one of which has the letter *a* inscribed on the outer wall, and pitchers.

108 Picuti 2006, 205. A second antefix from Cancelli depicts a head between felines and can be attributed to the Julio-Claudian period.

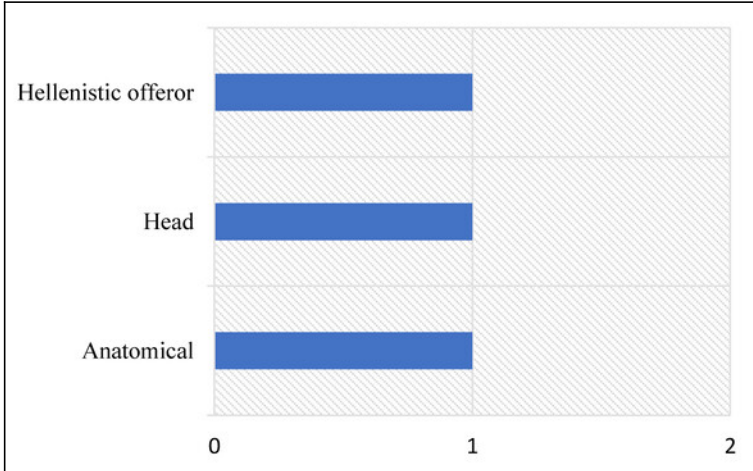


FIGURE 33 Graph showing the type distribution of Cancelli figurative votive offerings between the end of the fourth and the first century BCE.

The figurine of the Hellenistic worshiper type is unfortunately lost, but is preserved in one drawing produced by Michele Faloci Pulignani and published by Picuti (figure A 212), which shows the figure of a male wearing a long tunic and a rayed crown; in his right hand he holds a patera. The terracotta anatomical offerings have been both generically attributed by the excavators to the Republican period.¹⁰⁹ They are in an extremely poor state of preservation, with breaks that hinder a comprehensive understanding of the whole item.¹¹⁰

The foot is realized in a summary way without most anatomical details, except for a slight separation between the big toe and the other toes (figure A203). The toes are not separated and there is no indication of toenails. The foot rests on a rounded shoe sole that follows the contours of the foot. The poor state of preservation does not allow the object to be dated more precisely than to the Republican period. Furthermore, we cannot exclude the possibility that the foot was part of a statue rather than a votive offering on its own.

The head, which preserves traces of red paint on the orbital region and the crown, presents deeply carved eyes with their pupils plastically rendered and protruding eyebrows with sharp lines (figure A204). Overall, the hair and features are coarsely rendered. The few surviving typological properties seem to

¹⁰⁹ Cancelli_17 Cancelli 2.

¹¹⁰ It is worth mentioning that the excavators do not provide a clear interpretation for these objects. In particular, they suggest that the head may be interpreted as an antefix but do not present any comparisons to make this interpretation sound.

correspond with Söderlind's AIX type and thus can be tentatively attributable to the second century BCE.¹¹¹

5.3 *Campo La Piana Sanctuary*

5.3.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary at Campo La Piana, like the sanctuary at Monte Pennino (5.4.4, below), is in the territory of Nocera Umbra (ancient *Nuceria*) located in the Umbrian Apennines some 20 km north of Foligno. This large area measures about 100 km² and lies on a hill flanked by the valleys of the rivers Topino and Caldagnola. The river valleys and the roads that run on both sides of Monte Pennino guaranteed a functional connection between the Tyrrhenian and the north-central Adriatic coast prior to the construction of the Via Flaminia. They connected the Nucerian territory with, on the one hand, the road system of the Colfiorito plateau and, on the other, the valley of the Potenza river in the modern Le Marche region. Such territorial organization was complemented since the sixth century BCE by the cult places identified at Campo La Piana and on Monte Pennino.

Traces of occupation in the Nuceria area begin during the Orientalizing period (eighth century BCE) and become more frequent in the archaic period (sixth/fifth century BCE). During this phase, the dominant settlement pattern was one of fortified villages set on hilltops. These settlements have been identified mainly through aerial photos and surveys (pottery, tiles, millstones fragments), and they appear to have been surrounded by moats and ramparts of stones and grouped around major topographical elements such as mountains, valleys or plains.

The necropoleis associated with the hilltop villages were laid at the bottom of the hill. Grave goods from the necropolis of Portone (second half of the eighth century to the end of the sixth century BCE) and Boschetto-Ginepraia (end of the seventh century to the early fifth century BCE) illustrate the existence of a wealthy aristocracy and lively trade with both the Tyrrhenian and the Adriatic coasts. Among the most remarkable grave goods are ceramic and metallic imported objects, such as Etruscan bronze basins and red-figure vases, fibulae and cups from Picenum, amber beads and glass paste, weapons, and precious ornaments in bronze, silver, and iron (bracelets, fibulae, pendants, decorated discs).

The Campo La Piana sanctuary was located near a transhumance route that, crossing the Subasio mountain, connected Asisium (modern Assisi) with Tad-

111 Söderlind 2002, 142–145.

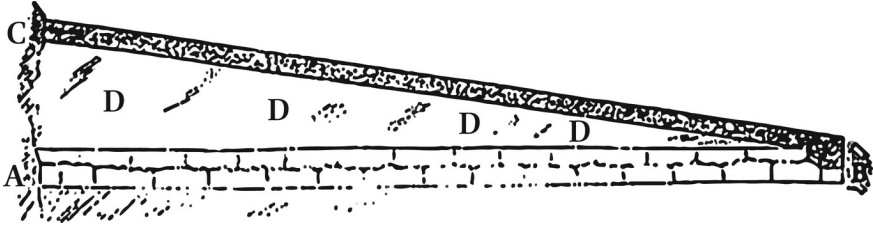


FIGURE 34 Drawing of the walls identified by Ticchioni in loc. Campo La Piana. Letter D indicates the space where votive materials were found (after Brizio 1891, 309).

inum (modern Gualdo Tadino), and the Umbrian valley with the valley formed by the Topino river. The sanctuary was discovered and excavated in 1890 by a local resident, Pierleone Ticchioni, in the aftermath of the fortuitous discovery of votive bronzes, coins, and pottery. Edoardo Brizio, at the time “Ispettore dei Musei e degli Scavi presso la Direzione Generale degli Scavi di Antichità,” was appointed to write a report of Ticchioni’s investigation and examine the objects found on site.¹¹² Based on the coins he found, Brizio determined that the sanctuary was used from the fifth century BCE to the second BCE, and then again in the third century CE.

It is not possible to verify Brizio’s assessment for two reasons. First, the area has not been investigated since 1890, and the documentation has thus not been updated. Second, apart from four figurines and two coins, the material has been irretrievably lost and was never documented.

5.3.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
The complete layout of the cult place is not known. The excavation carried out by Ticchioni brought to light a wall in *opus quadratum* (wall A) which ran for ca. 50 m and was preserved for a height of 10 m. This wall intersected at an acute angle with a smaller wall in *opus incertum* (wall C; figure 34).

5.3.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material
A large quantity of votive material has been recovered in the sanctuary area. No quantitative data are available, and there has been no stratigraphic contextualization of the finds.

This material was found in the space between the two walls (D in the figure above) under a thick layer of ash. It is composed of fragments of *aes rude* and

¹¹² Brizio 1891, 308–313. More in general on the Nuceria territory and the necropoleis, see Bonomi Ponzì 1985 and Albanesi and Picuti 2013.

several figurative votive offerings, whose number and type remain unknown. Although Brizio records the presence of more than one hundred and fifty items—mostly figures of warriors and devotees but also two bronze heads—only four specimens survive (figure 35). These are four male figurines of the EG type (figure A205–206) and one clay head that falls under the broad umbrella of the group “Other” (figure A207).¹¹³

The clay head dates to the fourth century BCE and was part of a now-missing statuette. It represents an individual with rounded eyes, a large nose, and a wide mouth wearing a pointed hat. This peculiar hat provides an important clue that allows the identification of the subject. Scholars have recognized hats as identifying elements in Etruscan priestly costumes.¹¹⁴ In particular, the pointed hat has been attributed to the haruspices, the diviners specializing in reading animal entrails to determine the will of the gods, whom the Romans used during the period of the Roman Republic and the Empire.¹¹⁵

Although the available evidence points to the presence of haruspices in Umbria from Etruria or trained there only in the first BCE,¹¹⁶ our figurine may

113 CLP_1 CLP_2 CLP_3 CLP_4; other: CPL_5.

114 The hats had similar importance in the presentation of Roman *flamines*. For an extensive analysis of priestly dress and attributes in Etruria, see de Grummond 2006, 35–38; Gleba and Becker 2009, 184–191.

115 Information on the function and role of these priests during the Roman period comes from literary (Cic. *Div.* 1.92) and epigraphic sources (the well-known Constantine inscription from Spello of the fourth CE). In Roman sources, the haruspices appear as interpreters of *fulgura* (thunderbolts), *ostenta* (unusual happenings), and above all *exta* (entrails, especially liver). Iconographically, scholars have identified features of the costume of the haruspex in a bronze statuette of the fourth century BCE dedicated by Vel Sveitus and displayed in the Vatican Museums. It represents a clean-shaven figure wrapped in a fringed mantle fastened with a fibula wearing a tall hat, tied under the chin, that broadens into a fitted cap with a slight brim: Gleba and Becker 2009, 183–193 and 283 fig. 50; Turfa 2013, 539–556. Another depiction of a haruspex occurs on a mirror from Tuscania, dating to the third century BCE. In the scene represented here and interpreted as a sort of lesson in haruspicy, a beardless man wears a similar apical hat with a cord at the neck. For a discussion on this bronze mirror, see Turfa 2013, 540–541. See also Jannot 2005, 125–126; De Grummond 2006, 27–28.

116 A funerary epitaph (ET Um 1.7; *CIL* 11.6363) inscribed on a marble plaque dated to the last quarter of the first century BCE was found at Pesaro. The inscription, in Latin and Etruscan, recalls the role of the Etruscan native Cafate, who, with his part-Latin genealogy, was both haruspex and interpreter of thunderbolts. Another inscription (*CIL* 1.3378) found in Maevania (Bevagna) and dated to the Late Republican period mentions that the local senate had decreed the posting of this inscription in honor of Aulus Rubrius, a haruspex from Volsinii. Bonomi Ponzi (Feruglio et al. 1991, 86–87) notices that the name Rubrius appears in other inscriptions from Maevania but not in Volsinii. She therefore proposes that the haruspex came from Mevania but had been instructed in the art of haruspicy at Volsinii,

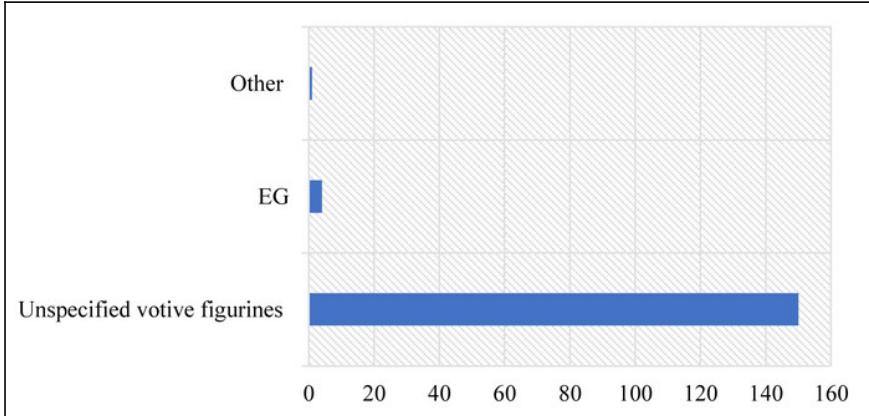


FIGURE 35 Graph showing the type distribution of the Campo La Piana votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

represent the dedication of such a priest (or his family member) who either was traveling or was asked to intervene at the Campo La Piana sanctuary in the region in the fourth century BCE. However, since Umbrian priestly attire is unknown, our figure arguably represented a local priest with uncertain functions.

5.3.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution

No cult building of this period has been unearthed.

5.3.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

Like the pre-Roman material, objects of this phase have been found under the ash layers inside the walls. None of them have survived, and only scant information can be gathered from Brizio's account. He lists black gloss pottery, *fibulae*, glass beads, Greek and Roman coins, and figurative votive offerings. These are generically attributed to the Hellenistic and Republican periods on the basis of the votive type they represent: one female Hellenistic worshiper and two fore-arms (figure 36).¹¹⁷

and Haack (2002, 128) adds that this is the earliest known source that shows an Etruscan office translating to an Italian/Roman position.

¹¹⁷ CLP_8 CLP_9 CLP_10.

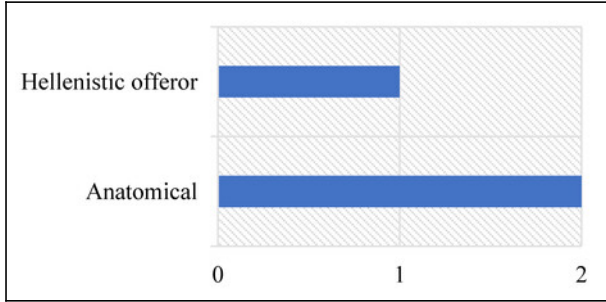


FIGURE 36 Graph showing the type distribution of Campo La Piana figurative votive offerings between the late fourth and the early first century BCE.

5.4 *Monte Pennino Sanctuary*

5.4.1 Topographic Location

The cult site is located on the peak of Monte Pennino (1590 m above sea level), on the border between the province of Macerata, in the region Le Marche, and the province of Perugia in Umbria. The high peak played a significant role as a passage between the eastern and northern regions of the Apennines, with roads connecting the Colfiorito basin, the Umbrian valley, and the Val Nerina on both sides of the mountain.

The existence of a sacred area on the mountaintop was first proposed after World War II by Pietro Staderini, an antiquities collector and resident of Nocera Umbra, who found several votive offerings and a pit dug into the rock. Using numismatic evidence, he suggested that the cult site existed on the mountain from the sixth century to the Late Republican period. However, without any archaeological investigation of the peak following Staderini's discovery, it is impossible to verify his information. The only documentation available on the sacred area is an account published by a priest, Gino Sigismondi.¹¹⁸ Adding to the challenge, most of the votive offerings collected by Staderini have been lost or are in private possession, making it impossible to determine the exact location of the sanctuary, its layout, and the duration of its use. Based solely on the information provided by Sigismondi, it appears that ritual activity on the mountain took place from the sixth to the second or first century BCE.

¹¹⁸ Sigismondi 2009, 44–45.

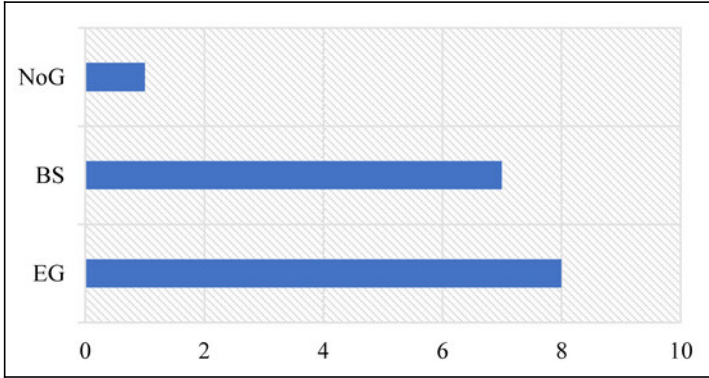


FIGURE 37 Graph showing the type distribution of the Monte Pennino votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

5.4.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution

In the absence of excavation, it is impossible to know if a cult building existed on the mountain.

5.4.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material

Part of the votive deposit was contained within a small pit (60 cm deep) found and excavated by Staderini. The material therein consists of a small iron blade, a pot, and remains of animal bones belonging to a rooster, a jackdaw, and a toad, interpreted as the remains of animal sacrifice.

Other material found scattered on the peak included an indefinite number of bronze votive figurines, only sixteen specimens of which survive, either displayed in a local museum or privately owned (figure 37).¹¹⁹ These are eight male figures of the EG type, seven figurines of the BS type (figure A208), and one warrior of the NoG type.¹²⁰

5.4.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

Some finds provide evidence for the use of the area during the Roman period. They include three Roman Republican *asses* and several fragments of painted pottery.

¹¹⁹ Unfortunately, however, only two are currently visible. The remaining part is owned by the Staderini family and not available to be studied.

¹²⁰ BS: MTP_1 MTP_2 MTP_3 MTP_4 MTP_5 MTP_6 MTP_7; EG: MTP_8 MTP_9 MTP_10 MTP_11 MTP_12 MTP_13 MTP_14 MTP_15; NoG: MTP_16.

5.5 *Sanctuary of Cupra at Colfiorito*

5.5.1 Topographic Location

The sanctuary site is located on the upland plateau of Colfiorito, between the towns of Foligno in Umbria and Camerino in Le Marche. It lies 200 meters north of the ancient settlement of Plestia. During the Pleistocene epoch, the plateau was covered by a large lake. By the Iron Age, the lake had receded, leaving behind two large basins. These basins are known as the marshes of Colfiorito (located to the south) and Lacus Plestinus (a lake in the plain of Casone to the north, which has since been drained).

The plain of Colfiorito, which was shaped by the marshes and lake, served as the sole passage connecting the eastern and western shores of the Italian peninsula. This made it a crucial crossing point for centuries, starting from pre-historic times, facilitating travel between the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic coasts, and establishing it as an important central Italic crossing point. Several communication roads, connecting Umbria with Etruscan, Sabine, and Picene territories, crossed the plateau, facilitating movement across the Apennines. In addition to its strategic location on supra- and interregional communication routes, the plain had direct visual communication with other Umbrian landmarks such as Monte Pennino, Monte Acuto, and Monte Torre Maggiore, all visible beyond the basin.

The plateau was likely inhabited on a seasonal basis from the Neolithic period, but evidence of permanent settlement dates back to the late ninth or early eighth century BCE. At first, three villages consisting of huts were established on the shores of the former upland lake basin (Lacus Plestinus, 700 meters above sea level), with each village approximately 500 meters apart from the others. The cemeteries of these settlements only contain inhumation burials, and they remained in use until the third century BCE.

At the end of the seventh century, occupation shifted to higher fortified positions, perhaps as a response to flooding in the lowland settlements. The new hillforts were situated at an altitude of approximately 800 to 1000 meters above sea level and were all surrounded by moats and stone ramparts. The fortifications could be either circular, elliptical, or arranged in artificial terraces that sloped downward toward the outermost fortification.¹²¹ Some of the con-

121 The focus of this settlement system seems to have been the hillfort identified on Monte Orve. Here a 1300m long wall circuit in polygonal masonry surrounds a series of terraces and a higher citadel. Besides Bonomi Ponzzi's (2010, 176) mention of the discovery of bronze figurines and walls of a temenos, the results of the excavation of the Monte Orve *sacellum* remain unpublished, and the materials mentioned by Bonomi Ponzzi unobtainable. From the survey of the Archive of the Soprintendenza, I was able to find only

temporary grave goods from the lowland cemeteries consisted of weapons, drinking vessels, bronze discs, and luxury objects from Etruria, Greece, and southern Italy, all elements that point to the presence of wealthier individuals and families. The cult focus for the inhabitants of the Colfiorito plateau was the sanctuary of the goddess Cupra, situated on the shores of Lake Plestinus near the hillforts and their cemeteries. Because the sanctuary was established at the same time as the settlements, and due to its location, Bonomi Ponzi concluded that it was the territory's "federal" sanctuary.¹²²

At some point in the third century BCE, the fortified settlements and the accompanying cemeteries were no longer being used, potentially due to the trans-Italian trade routes shifting onto a north–south axis with Rome as the center.¹²³ The population then moved back to the area of the Iron Age village, and by the end of the third century, the settlement of Plestia was established just 200 meters south of the Sanctuary of Cupra.

The excavation of the sanctuary, overseen by Anna E. Feruglio, started in 1962 and continued in 1966 and 1967. Feruglio found that the sacred space was utilized from the sixth to the first century BCE. However, the knowledge available on the sanctuary is not as extensive as the literature about the Colfiorito region and its cemeteries. Feruglio's findings have only been published as brief reports, and no extra documentation is available in the Soprintendenza's archives.¹²⁴ As a result, it is impossible to reconstruct with precision the sanctuary's archaeological phases or to have a clear idea of the amount and context of discovery of the votive material.

5.5.2 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Architectural and Spatial Distribution
During its earliest period of use, the sacred area does not seem to have been marked by any permanent architectural structure.

the report of the 2001 excavation, where it was possible to identify only three sides of the temenos and an east-west wall running for 11 meters N of the temenos. (Monte Orve 2001, Sergio Occhilupo, saggio 2, p. 2).

122 Bonomi Ponzi 1982, 142; 1985, 213; 2010, 179.

123 Roncalli and Bonfante 1991, 61.

124 The results of the excavations have been briefly summarized in Ciotti 1964, 99–112; Feruglio 1966, 306; Manca and Menichelli 2014. For an overview of the Colfiorito territory and its necropoleis from the Iron Age to the Roman period see in particular the results of the survey and excavation carried out by Bonomi Ponzi (1985 and 1997). See also Bonomi Ponzi 1982; 1998, 9–19; 2010, 73–79. On the settlement of Plestia and the Roman *municipium* see Perna et al. 2011 and Manca and Menichelli 2014, 34–37.

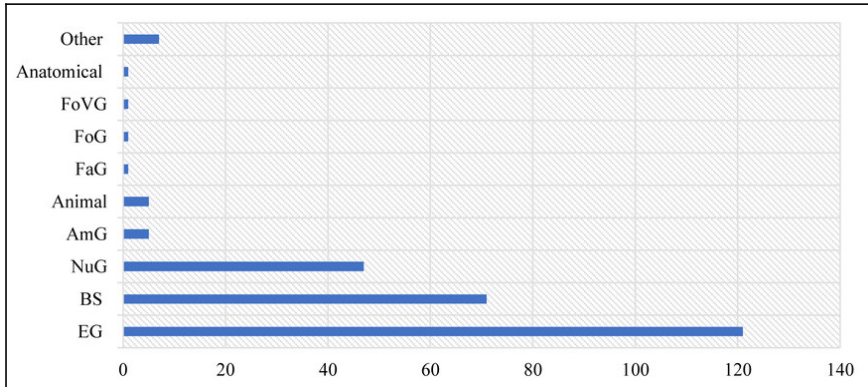


FIGURE 38 Graph showing the type distribution of the Sanctuary of Cupra votive figurines between the sixth and the fourth century BCE.

5.5.3 Sixth–Fourth Century BCE: Votive Material

Particularly noteworthy among the votive material of this phase is the presence of four bronze sheets dated to the fourth century and bearing a dedication to the goddess Cupra, the “mother of the Plestini.”¹²⁵ I have already mentioned in Chapter 4 the importance of this epitaph for the study of ethnic identity. Here it is worth noting that these sheets represent the only archaeological evidence in the region linking a sanctuary site firmly to the goddess to whom it was dedicated.

Alongside the inscribed bronze sheets, the archaic and classical phase is attested by the presence of a wealth of Etruscan red figure pottery, large dolia, and two hundred and sixty bronze figurines (figure 38). Other materials mentioned by Feruglio but difficult to phase in the absence of available records include coins, spindles, and looms. All this material appears to have been found scattered around the sacred area.

The bronze figurines are represented by a wide array of votive types. Those of the EG type, sixty-nine males (figure A109–110) and fifty females (figure A111–112), make up most of the assemblage. The BS type is also well represented, with seventy-one specimens all depicting males (figure A213–214). The NoG type follows with seventeen figurines of females (figure A215–216) and thirty of warriors (figure A217–218). The remaining types are represented by a few figurines. The AmG type comprises five figurines of a male striding forward (figure A219–220), and the Animal type consists of two figurines representing a horse

¹²⁵ On the significance of this inscription as an indication of local identity, see Chapter 4. In general, on this goddess, see Betts 2013 and Capriotti 2020 with previous bibliography.

(figure A221) and three oxen (figure A222). One figure of a warrior belongs to the type FoG (figure A223), one to the Fabriano (FaG; figure A224), and one to the Fossato di Vito (FoVG; figure A225). The FaG type warrior is represented striding forward with the right arm bent upward in the act of throwing a weapon. The body is slender and anatomical details are coarsely rendered; he wears a skirt of *pteruges* or leather straps, greaves, and a crested helmet with raised cheek-pieces. The FoVG type warrior similarly strides forward. He wears a high, thick belt, a large and flat crest, and is represented with his left arm bent upward in the act of throwing a weapon. The front of the helmet ends in an interrupted curve, and a crisscross pattern decorates the defensive skirt. A single anatomical offering, a bronze foot, was also present (figure A226).¹²⁶

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- 126 BS: CupraCF_2 CupraCF_3 CupraCF_4 CupraCF_5 CupraCF_6 CupraCF_7 CupraCF_8 CupraCF_9 CupraCF_10 CupraCF_11 CupraCF_12 CupraCF_13 CupraCF_14 CupraCF_15 CupraCF_16 CupraCF_17 CupraCF_18 CupraCF_19 CupraCF_20 CupraCF_21 CupraCF_22 CupraCF_23 CupraCF_24 CupraCF_25 CupraCF_26 CupraCF_27 CupraCF_28 CupraCF_29 CupraCF_30 CupraCF_31 CupraCF_32 CupraCF_33 CupraCF_34 CupraCF_35 CupraCF_36 CupraCF_37 CupraCF_38 CupraCF_39 CupraCF_40 CupraCF_41 CupraCF_42 CupraCF_43 CupraCF_44 CupraCF_45 CupraCF_46 CupraCF_47 CupraCF_48 CupraCF_49 CupraCF_50 CupraCF_51 CupraCF_52 CupraCF_53 CupraCF_54 CupraCF_55 CupraCF_56 CupraCF_57 CupraCF_58 CupraCF_59 CupraCF_60 CupraCF_61 CupraCF_62 CupraCF_63 CupraCF_64 CupraCF_65 CupraCF_66 CupraCF_67 CupraCF_68 CupraCF_69 CupraCF_70 CupraCF_71 CupraCF_72. EG females: CupraCF_73 CupraCF_74 CupraCF_75 CupraCF_76 CupraCF_77 CupraCF_78 CupraCF_79 CupraCF_80 CupraCF_81 CupraCF_82 CupraCF_83 CupraCF_84 CupraCF_85 CupraCF_86 CupraCF_87 CupraCF_88 CupraCF_89 CupraCF_90 CupraCF_91 CupraCF_92 CupraCF_93 CupraCF_94 CupraCF_95 CupraCF_96 CupraCF_97 CupraCF_98 CupraCF_109 CupraCF_170 CupraCF_171 CupraCF_172 CupraCF_173 CupraCF_174 CupraCF_175 CupraCF_176 CupraCF_177 CupraCF_178 CupraCF_179 CupraCF_180 CupraCF_181 CupraCF_182 CupraCF_183 CupraCF_184 CupraCF_185 CupraCF_186 CupraCF_187 CupraCF_188 CupraCF_189 CupraCF_190 CupraCF_191 CupraCF_192. EG males: CupraCF_1 CupraCF_99 CupraCF_100 CupraCF_101 CupraCF_102 CupraCF_103 CupraCF_104 CupraCF_105 CupraCF_106 CupraCF_107 CupraCF_108 CupraCF_110 CupraCF_111 CupraCF_112 CupraCF_113 CupraCF_114 CupraCF_115 CupraCF_116 CupraCF_117 CupraCF_118 CupraCF_119 CupraCF_120 CupraCF_121 CupraCF_122 CupraCF_123 CupraCF_124 CupraCF_125 CupraCF_126 CupraCF_127 CupraCF_128 CupraCF_129 CupraCF_130 CupraCF_131 CupraCF_132 CupraCF_133 CupraCF_134 CupraCF_135 CupraCF_136 CupraCF_137 CupraCF_138 CupraCF_139 CupraCF_140 CupraCF_141 CupraCF_142 CupraCF_143 CupraCF_144 CupraCF_145 CupraCF_146 CupraCF_147 CupraCF_148 CupraCF_149 CupraCF_150 CupraCF_151 CupraCF_152 CupraCF_153 CupraCF_154 CupraCF_155 CupraCF_156 CupraCF_157 CupraCF_158 CupraCF_159 CupraCF_160 CupraCF_161 CupraCF_162 CupraCF_163 CupraCF_164 CupraCF_165 CupraCF_166 CupraCF_167. NuG: CupraCF_193 CupraCF_194 CupraCF_195 CupraCF_196 CupraCF_197 CupraCF_198 CupraCF_199 CupraCF_200 CupraCF_201 CupraCF_202 CupraCF_203 CupraCF_204 CupraCF_205 CupraCF_206 CupraCF_207 CupraCF_208 CupraCF_209 CupraCF_211

Seven bronze figurines with zoomorphic features belong to the group “Other” (figure A227–230). The characteristic feature of these figurines is the body, schematically rendered as the EG type, with lower limbs ending with spikes. Unlike the EG type, however, the head and the upper limbs do not seem to depict a human figure but rather an animal. Six figurines (figure A227–229) present bird-like features: a small head, with round eyes and a horizontal slit as the mouth, a broad neck and flat upper limbs with incisions that could represent feathers. The remaining one (figure A230) has short upper limbs and an almost monkey-like snout with protruding nose and mouth.¹²⁷

In the absence of direct comparanda, it is difficult to hypothesize what these figurines aimed to represent. Perhaps the closest comparison for the type is with seventh-century BCE clay figurines from Cyprus representing standing males with a bull’s head.¹²⁸ Following a tradition that originated in the Levant, where anthropomorphic clay masks were popular,¹²⁹ the masks from Cyprus have been interpreted as masks worn by priests or worshipers. It is possible that the zoomorphic features of the figurines from the Sanctuary of Cupra were also intended to depict a mask or a costume perhaps worn in connection with a specific local religious festival.

5.5.4 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Architectural Aspects and Spatial Organization

Although the sanctuary’s complete layout is unknown, during this phase it consisted of a temenos, wherein a small *sacellum* was erected. East of the *sacellum* there was a quadrangular basin, most likely a cistern (figure 39).

In terms of architectural decoration, the *sacellum* was covered with Etrusco-Italic architectural slabs depicting floral motifs such as palms, garlands, and

CupraCF_212 CupraCF_213 CupraCF_214 CupraCF_215 CupraCF_216 CupraCF_217
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 CupraCF_236 CupraCF_237 CupraCF_238CupraCF_239 CupraCF_240. FoG: CupraCF_210.
 FaG: CupraCF_248 FoVG: CupraCF_249. Anatomical: CupraCF_266.

127 Bird-like figurines: CupraCF_255 CupraCF_256 CupraCF_257 CupraCF_258 CupraCF_259;
 monkey-like figurines: CupraCF_260CupraCF_261.

128 Karageorghis 2012, 146.

129 Depictions of human figures wearing masks were common from the proto-historic Near East. Masks are exaggerated into an unrealistic size or shape or resemble human heads. Unlike the depiction of human heads, where anatomical details are not represented, masks are characterized by eyes and open mouths: Renfrew et al. 2018, 153.

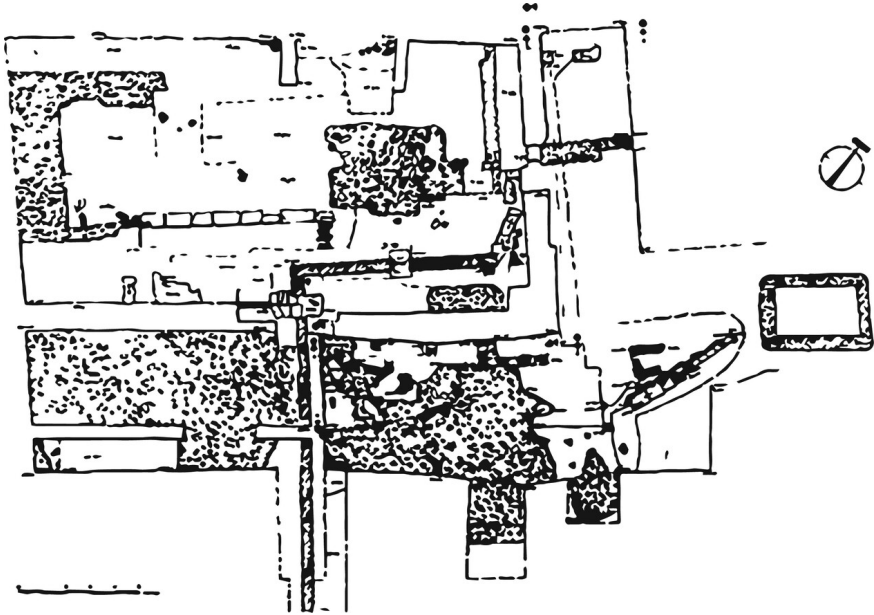


FIGURE 39 Plan of the Sanctuary of Cupra (after Bonomi Ponzi 2010, 180 fig. 21).



FIGURE 40
Revetment slab from the Sanctuary of Cupra (after Manca and
Menichelli 2014, 27).

lotus flowers, as well as antefixes with male and female heads.¹³⁰ Of particular interest is a slab that shows a winged female figure riding a chariot, which is dated to the first half of the second century BCE; no similar examples are found in central Italic regions (figure 40).¹³¹

130 On Etrusco-Italic revetment slabs and antefixes with human head see *supra* in this chapter.

131 These fragments are briefly mentioned by Manca and Menichelli (2014, 26–27) but not elsewhere published or displayed.

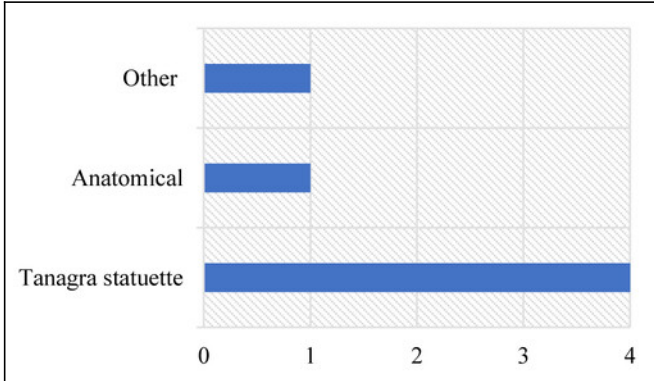


FIGURE 41 Graph showing the type distribution of the Sanctuary of Cupra figurative votive offerings between the late fourth and the early first century BCE.

5.5.5 Late Fourth–Early First Century BCE: Votive Material

A large quantity of pottery and six figurative offerings belong to this phase (figure 41). The ceramic material consists of Etruscan red figure pottery, over-painted Etruscan/Faliscan vases, and black gloss vessels. Five coroplastic objects are dated to the third–second century BCE and include one terracotta left foot and four heads of now-lost Tanagra statuettes. The terracotta foot terminates halfway up the calf in an irregular break. It is realized in a summary way without any attention to most anatomical details, except for the toes which are rendered through horizontal incisions (figure A231).¹³² The Tanagra statuettes' heads have the hair gathered in a low bun; on the heads is a wreath of ivy leaves, with a circular element in the center. The faces have a small, fleshy mouth and a prominent nose. They wear large circular earrings (figure A232).¹³³

One last figurine belongs to the “Other” type. It is dated to the third–second century BCE and represents Heracles (figure A233). The demigod is represented in the nude, with the left leg forward and the left arm bent and raised in the act of holding a spear/club. The lionskin is wrapped around his left forearm; on his head he wears a Phrygian cap.¹³⁴

¹³² CupraCF_267.

¹³³ CupraCF_262 CupraCF_263 CupraCF_264 CupraCF_265.

¹³⁴ CupraCF_268.

6 Conclusions

This chapter presents a thorough and current examination of the archaeological findings related to Umbrian sanctuaries from the sixth century to the early first century BCE. Through this analysis, we are able to challenge two commonly held beliefs about the relationship between Umbrian sacred sites and Roman interference. The first assumption is that the presence of Romans resulted in a decline in the use of rural sanctuaries, particularly those located near Romanized regions. However, the evidence suggests that sanctuaries located in internal, Apennine areas were more likely to persist. The second assumption is that the presence of anatomical votives and terracotta heads is evidence of Roman influence and a shift in the Umbrian people's religious practices. However, the archaeological evidence from Umbrian sanctuaries contradicts these claims.

During the period between the sixth and fourth centuries BCE, anatomical parts and heads were commonly found in Umbrian sanctuaries, mostly made of bronze but sometimes also of terracotta, as the heads from Monte Ansciano and Colle Moro show. Their occurrence in Umbria shows that the practice of dedicating anatomicals before the fourth century was not limited to a few sites of the Adriatic Etruscan region (Marzabotto and Adria) and, therefore, should not be considered a sporadic phenomenon, as Turfa and Fenelli held.¹³⁵ A similar observation can be made for the presence of archaic heads. Their presence at Colle Mori and Monte Ansciano suggests that the dedication of clay heads was not limited to the areas of southern Etruria (especially Falerii and Veii). Most importantly, these votives demonstrate an earlier ritual practice of dedicating parts of the body and heads—one that existed in Umbria before the beginning of the Roman expansion at the end of the fourth century BCE. In approaching the change that followed the conquest, it therefore seems necessary to abandon the old paradigm that sees in the terracotta anatomicals of the Roman period a wholesale change in the religiosity of the Italic peoples connected to the spread of *romanitas* through the foundation of Roman colonies. In sum, the evidence of pre-Roman anatomical votive figurines from Umbrian sanctuaries shows a vital and widespread ritual practice during the sixth–fourth century BCE, rather than an isolated phenomenon limited to a few sites in northern Etruria.

135 Turfa 2004 359–336; Comella 1981, 767; cf. Appendix 1. As recently demonstrated (Zapelloni Pavia, 2024), the practice of dedicating anatomicals in bronze during the pre-Roman period was a widespread phenomenon that involved regions such as Umbria, Etruria, and Veneto.

Second, the archaeological evidence shows that the use of rural sanctuaries and the distribution of terracotta votive heads and anatomicals during the period from the late fourth to the early first century BCE were not related to the political status of communities in relation to Rome. While the level of usage may have changed, all rural sanctuaries in the region were still being used at least until the end of the second century or early in the first century BCE. This includes not only sanctuaries located in Apennine areas but also those near more Romanized territories, such as the sanctuaries of Monte Torre Maggiore, Monte San Pancrazio, and Colle Mori. These sacred sites continued to be used during the Roman period and were even given monumental structures. In the next chapter, I test Bradley's hypothesis that the usage of Umbrian sanctuaries during this period may have been linked to their proximity to urban centers.¹³⁶

Concerning the terracotta anatomicals and heads, their presence in Umbrian sanctuaries during the Hellenistic period is independent of the Roman presence in the region. These objects can be found in areas under direct Roman rule (La Rocca), but also in remote rural sanctuaries within a day's walk from a Roman praefectura (Monte Torre Maggiore, Monte Moro) or near a *civitas sine suffragio* (Cancelli and Sanctuary of Cupra), as well as in those areas that remained independent until the Social War (Monte San Pancrazio, Pantanelli). That the presence of anatomical votives has little to do with the Roman conquest is also supported by the absence of anatomical votives in areas geographically closer to colonies, where we might expect these artifacts to be more present. As Scopacasa rightly points out, neither heads nor anatomicals have been retrieved at the sanctuary of Monte Subasio, despite its proximity to areas where Roman citizens received plots of land in the third century BCE and to the Roman center of Forum Flaminii.¹³⁷ Similarly, the sanctuary of La Rocca, located in the Latin colony of Spoletium, did not yield significantly more anatomical votives than sanctuaries that were significantly far from colonized territories, such as Pantanelli and Monte Moro. All of this shows no intrinsic connection between terracotta anatomical votives and the Roman expansion and colonization, confirming Glinister's idea that their spread was a product of different variables.¹³⁸

All this suggests the need to revisit the traditional interpretation of the role of sanctuaries in Umbria during the Roman period and the alleged cultural change indicated by the presence of anatomical votives and heads. Rather than viewing Umbrian sanctuaries from the perspective of one-way influences from

136 Bradley's argument is explained in Chapter 2.

137 Scopacasa 2015b, 9.

138 Glinister 2006a, 23–27.

Rome into central Italy, it is more useful to examine the context of the sanctuaries and their votive objects to identify broader patterns in cultural practices that spread through the region following Roman expansion. Points of reflection include: What is the significance of the deposition of anatomical votives and figurines before the fourth century BCE? What motives led to the frequentation and monumentalization of certain sanctuaries during the Hellenistic period? If anatomical votives and heads were already in use in Umbria prior to the fourth century BCE, what does their continued presence tell us about the ritual practices of the Umbrian peoples during the centuries of Roman conquest?

The upcoming chapter will delve into the questions raised in this chapter and interpret the data using a macro-scale approach that considers all of the sacred spaces of Umbria together. In the next chapter, I will propose a hypothesis to explain not only the continuation and monumentalization of Umbrian sacred places during the Roman period but also the continued use of anatomical votives and heads.