

*Archeologia e storia dei paesaggi senesi. Territorio, risorse, commerci tra età romana e Medioevo.* (Biblioteca del Dipartimento di Archeologia e Storia delle Arte – Sezione Archeologica, Università di Siena, 21). By Stefano Bertoldi, Manuele Putti & Edoardo Vanni. 21 x 29 cm. 138 pp, 57 colour and b&w pls and figs, 1 table. Sesto Fiorentino: All’Insegna del Giglio, 2019. ISBN 978-88-7814-937-3 (ISSN 2035-5351). Price: €28.00 pb.

Most scholars engaged in exploring rural landscape evolution are aware of the extensive mapping and investigative efforts of the Progetto Carta Archeologica della Provincia di Siena, pursued by diverse archaeologists at the University of Siena (alongside colleagues from further afield) for over two decades since 1989, who developed innovative methods of study, recording and archiving, especially via GIS. Surveys extended over 1300 sq km (34% of the territory — a heavily ruralised one, featuring only two main urban foci), revealing 638 sites; there were associated excavations at sites such as the early medieval village of Poggibonsi, the castle community at Miranduolo and within Siena itself. As well as multiple publications, the project has spawned numerous doctoral theses and helped develop museums and local awareness of the ‘Modello Toscano’ of landscape change, especially in the historic era. This volume is a very welcome synthesis of data (archaeological, historical/archival, cartographic, environmental), approaches, ideas and models centred on landscape evolution and exploitation.

The three authors draw on their doctoral theses and on work since, first outlining in an introductory paper the combined project approaches and recent theoretical leanings. Three chapters by Bertoldi provide essential (and well-illustrated) overviews and discussions, first on the settlement data in the 1st millennium AD (showing, for example, 1st-century peaks, the 7th-century low, 10th-century expansion) and site types (including 39 villas, mostly quitted in the 5th century, but a number seeing partial reuse/exploitation; and village formation); then on road and river networks and site connections; and then on economic indicators via ceramic industries and imports. Putti’s two contributions comprise a compact assessment of lands and ownership in the middle Ombrone valley and a composite analysis of agricultural activity based on the archaeobotanical evidence linked to four elevated early medieval sites, informed by the early 19th-century Catasto Leopoldino landuse maps. Vanni cleverly pieces together and reflects on the evidence for the nature, extent and strategies of transhumance (or, more broadly, ‘sistemi agro-silvo-pastorali’) in southern Tuscany, assessing routeways or ‘economic corridors’ as well as the scattered built, material and ethnographic evidence. Combined — as stated in the Conclusions — these diverse papers successfully merge different types of data, method and analysis to generate a long-term image of the historic Sienese landscapes and point to specific period trends and issues of much wider relevance.

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*San Paragorio di Noli. Le fasi del complesso di culto e l’insediamento circostante dalle origini all’XI secolo.* (Biblioteca di Archeologia Medievale, 26). Edited by Alessandra Frondoni. 21 x 29 cm. 551 pp, 483 colour and b&w pls and figs, 54 tables. Sesto Fiorentino: All’Insegna del Giglio, 2018. ISBN 978-88-7814-804-8 (ISSN 2035-5319). Price: €76.00 pb.

Noli is located c 50 km south-west of Genoa in Liguria province (NW Italy). This monograph details excavations within, around and in the environs of the elegant early 11th-century church of San Paragorio (a cathedral since 1239) and brings to the fore a fascinating sequence of cult, burial, economic, settlement and industrial activity across the Roman to early medieval centuries, highlighting an unexpected maritime connectivity to this sheltered centre. The church’s late-Roman period and Byzantine roots were revealed through restorations following earthquake damage in 1887, and in diverse excavations since (early 1970s, late 1980s, from 1990 and to 2004 — the latter campaigns