Archeologia stratigrafica di un paesaggio emiliano. La pianura a nord-est di Bologna tra tarda Antichità e Medioevo. (Serie dell'Insegnamento di Archeologia Medievale, Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia). By Alessandro A Rucco. 21 x 29 cm. 103 pp, 47 colour and b&w pls and figs, 3 tables. Sesto Fiorentino: All'Insegna del Giglio, 2020. ISBN 978-88-7814-993-9; epub: 978-88-7814-994-6. Price: €34.00 pb

Rucco here models a deep analysis of landscapes 10–15 km north-east of Bologna in the zones of the comuni of Minerbio and Budrio, highlighting the value and potential of carefully designed geoarchaeological investigations to understand the interplay between (changing) environment and land-use across the Roman to medieval periods. This compact, clearly written monograph is articulated in seven chapters following the introduction: Chapter 1 outlines the known (topographic) archaeology for Roman to medieval sites/finds/activity and communications in the study zone, while Ch 2 reveals the scope to draw information together from early modern to modern maps and air photographs for the evolving hydrography (the old and recent lines of the Savena and Idice waterways) alongside data for Roman centuriation. Central is Ch 3's detailing of Rucco's field methodology, comprising sampling transects across the plain's main depositional *facies*: for example, section *18–7 Budrio* runs for 7 km; *10–19 Budrio* extends 9.5 km; and *20–18 Minerbio* is 5 km (cross-sections and DTMs are illustrated on pp 39–43). Rucco undertook 41 cores (catalogued in the Appendix), mainly of 3–5 m depth, helping to map the changing waterways, their control and levels of sedimentation, and clarifying the modes of centuriation, post-Roman dislocation and medieval exploitation, but also explaining the masking of sites. Chapter 4 uses medieval charter documentation to reveal the distribution of 11th- to 13th-century ploughland, vineyards, farms, marshes, canals and woodland. Refining and modelling the stratigraphic dataset from the cores through geostatistical algorithms in Ch 5 (two main methods are outlined) enables generation of a predictive depth map for the historic-period deposits — a mode of mapping better known for busy urban contexts — which can be compared and added to existing geomorphological, archaeological and textual images. The Ch 6 Discussion summarises the results in terms of morphological reconstruction and associated activity levels (correcting some 'site' chronologies), as well as providing better guidance on the medieval landscape (showing uncultivated risk-zones and woodland spaces). Finally, in his Conclusion, Rucco rightly emphasises the 'micro-invasive' and highly (low-)cost-effective character of his methodology in interrogating modified historic landscapes.

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