

SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Whereas the Picenum (today part of the Marches) has been the subject of extensive archaeological research and presentations during recent years, the Abruzzo region with its exceptional findings (e. g. the »Capes-trano Warrior« stone figure) has rarely been discussed in academic and public discourse. Due to a lack of published sites and finds of significance, contacts between the Abruzzo region and central Europe have hardly seemed likely beyond the south Picene area, although parallels in sculpture, weapons and objects of personal adornment prove contacts to the Hallstatt culture during the 6th century BC.

The present publication on the necropolis of Bazzano near L'Aquila will to some extent address this gap in the existing literature. The cemetery of Bazzano includes more than 1600 excavated burials spread over an area of approx. 40 000 m². One of the largest pre-roman burials sites in the Abruzzo region, it was excavated in sections from 1992 to 2006. Due to its long period of use of 700 years (8th-2nd century BC) there are only a few other cemeteries in Apennine central Italy which parallel Bazzano. Bazzano itself, the nearby cemetery of Fossa, and the necropolis of Campovalano close to the Adriatic coast must be the basis of any modern archaeological and historical approach to research on the Iron Age Abruzzo mountains.

Situated on the western edge of the Conca L'Aquila, the border region of the later Vestine and Sabine areas, the necropolis can be seen even from Gran Sasso, the highest mountain range of the Apennines. Cultural contacts with the south Picene tribes of the Marches, the populations from Umbria and south Abruzzo are evident due to grave goods and burial customs. The ancient settlements of Capena and Falerii connected the region to southern Etruria. No later than the 2nd half of the 6th century BC, contact with inner Etruria, mainly Orvieto, seems to increase. Particularly during the 2002 and 2004 excavations, a number of burials containing genuine Etruscan bucchero were uncovered. This phenomenon is also known, to a lesser extent, at the nearby necropolis of Fossa, and serves as an excellent basis for dating the burials of Bazzano.

At the very beginning of the Bazzano necropolis there are a small number of burials (mainly under big tumuli) dated to the end of the Early Iron Age (it. prima età del ferro), the 2nd half of the 8th century BC. The use of the burial site continues at least until the end of the 5th century BC. Continuity during the 1st half of the 4th century BC can be assumed, but must remain unproven due to a lack of grave goods dating to that period. A second period of use begins during the 2nd half of the 4th century BC and continues during Hellenistic times until the early Roman Empire. Often the Hellenistic burial chambers are aligned with the Iron Age tumuli and, additionally, some are even situated within these burial mounds.

The present publication deals with burials from the first period of use. Approx. 620 pit burials from the Orientalizing and Archaic periods (8th-5th century BC) were analysed using the methods of modern cemetery archaeology and are published for the first time.

New documentation of the grave goods in drawings (by the author) is augmented by a reappraisal and adjustment of information from previous excavation documentation, including the dating of the material and its archaeological as well as cultural classification. A new definitive map of all burials has been drawn which supersedes older maps.

The period of use is divided into four phases (Bazzano I-IV) from the late 8th to the mid-5th century BC, based on the relative and absolute chronology of the Iron Age burials. The numerous overlapping or disturbed burial pits and features enable us to draw a stratigraphic sequence seldom recognizable in cemeteries.

Due to the abundance of objects, seriation and correspondence analyses could be carried out for weapon burials and for male, female and child burials. However, detailed chronological classification is difficult for female and child burials because of diverse burial customs and age specific grave goods. Easily datable im-

ports, like Etrusco-Corinthian pottery and Etruscan bucchero which influenced indigenous craftsmanship, as well as Sabine pottery in impasto, and some bronze vessels of Picene and Etruscan provenance, enable us to date the indigenous finds more closely with regard to other chronological systems. By cross dating the burials of Bazzano, some of the grave inventories could be dated within a quarter of a century. Therefore, the existing chronology of burial contexts from Abruzzo, mainly based on indigenous personal adornments of bronze and iron, as well as local pottery for the Orientalizing and Archaic periods, had to be qualified considerably. In particular, the very traditional elements of those burials (e. g. crescent-shaped bronze razors) give the central Italic communities a supposedly older i.e. »more Archaic« appearance.

Evaluation of the objects of personal adornment enabled us to classify age and gender related assemblages, but also those that indicate chronological and social differentiation. The same was also apparent when evaluating other types of grave goods, such as pottery and weaponry. These results were taken into account when interpreting the seriation and correspondence analysis.

Although Italian archaeology prefers to name the Archaic population as »proto-Vestini« or *Vestini Cismontani*, the ethnic identity of the local population of Bazzano remains hardly determinable at least until the 5th century BC. The hypothesis that the Bazzano population was inhomogeneous seems to be supported by the nature of their grave goods and burial rites. In addition to clearly local elements, to be named »facies aquilana«, traditions from the Sabina Interna (Norcia) and the Sabina Tiberina (Magliano Sabina, Colle del Forno) had a determining influence on parts of the cemetery and their appearance. Moreover, the majority of Etruscan imports, like bucchero, Etrusco-Corinthian pottery and bronze vessels, seem to be traded along the »Sabine route«. Nevertheless, direct contact with Orvieto or other smaller Etruscan settlements cannot be ruled out.

Imported Etruscan goods influenced even the local material culture. The craftworkers of Bazzano imitated Etruscan bucchero and produced indigenous shapes in local bucchero. Furthermore they even adopted other basic Etruscan forms. For instance, they designed studded sandals (it. calzari), pieces of equipment developed on Etruscan models. However, relations with the Picene culture seem less distinct. None of the more than 620 analysed Archaic burials in Bazzano had one of the typical Picene bronze fibulae (Grottazzolina type, San Ginesio type etc.).

However, some of the female burials had objects of personal adornment and jewellery (ivory discs, long bronze chains, bone spools), which prove connections to the south Picene area around Ascoli Piceno. The later »central Italic certosa fibulae« on the other hand seem to be a general central Italic phenomenon. Weaponry provides another opportunity to break down this general central Italic element into separate regions: Thus, the research on central Italic antenna-hilted daggers proved that the production centres of type 1 and type 2 were located mainly within the Abruzzo region, whereas the Picenum produced its own type (type 5). Close contacts to the Sabine area are also proven by variations of antenna-hilted daggers (type 2, daggers with hinged suspension).

Meanwhile, the relations of the area of L'Aquila with other groups of the Abruzzo region remain relatively unclear for the analysed period. The connection to the Abruzzo coastal region, mainly the later area of the *Vestini Transmontani*, is sporadic during the 7th century BC. However, the interaction between these communities becomes more intense during the 2nd half of the 6th century BC and might result, as already suggested by E. Benelli, in a common Vestine »ethnos« in the course of the 5th century BC, as described by the later Roman sources. On the other hand, the relations with the Italic population of the south Abruzzo region seem to have been less distinct. The only evidence for an influence from the south Abruzzo is an iron rectangular fibula and some antenna-hilted daggers belonging to the southern group (type 4 Pennapiedimonte, and variations of type 3). Quite a few material groups have yet to be separated out of the conglomeration of similar central Apennine forms.

The earliest burials with swords (type 2), whose other grave goods are those of the burials with antenna-hilted daggers, first appear during the 2nd quarter of the 6th century BC (Bazzano II B2). There remain a few examples of antenna-hilted daggers and their subsequent typological developments (type 4) until the end of the 6th century BC. This gradual change of weaponry becomes evident due to seriation and correspondence analysis, resulting in a transitional horizon IIB2/III, in which type 1 swords with pommel shape 1 appear together with type 2 antenna-hilted daggers of the variation with a suspension with a hinged belt. Those early sword burials also correspond to the burials with antenna-hilted daggers in terms of their location and orientation. Altogether, the weaponry has more parallels with the areas of Sabina and Lazio (Crustumerium, Riofreddo) than with Picenum or east Abruzzo. Antenna-hilted daggers with a suspension with a hinged belt, which are numerous at Bazzano, have their best parallels in examples from Colle del Forno in the southern Sabina Tiberina. While the early iron long swords have their closest equivalents in Capena and Campovalano.

Jewellery and objects of personal adornment also show different influences. Whereas the distribution of Capena type belt plaques spreads into the regions of Sabina, Lazio and Umbria and finds its quantitative peak at Bazzano and Fossa, other objects, especially pendants set into bronze capsules (teeth of boar, imitations of Neolithic axes), are typical of the area of Campovalano.

These observations underline the impression that Bazzano in contrast to all other cemeteries of the central Adriatic region connects much more to the north and inner Sabine region and therefore also Etruria (Etruria Interna).

Another important research approach is based on general analysis of the cemetery. The necropolis seems to have been divided into separate precincts since the 2nd half of the 8th century BC. Those precincts were in use until the end of the 5th century BC, some even longer. They comprise burial groups, consisting not only of family units, but also of groups of warriors and children.

During the early periods of use, those precincts are orientated along the same alignments as the tumulus burials. Later some groups are arranged »in line«, so that rows of burials form a rectangular burial precinct. These burials include an exceptionally high number of particularly rich grave goods. Just like the »rectangle« within the Arcobaleno precinct, they are spatially separated from the other burials. In the course of the 2nd half of the 6th century BC (Bazzano III) there is a re-structuring of the burial precincts through the construction of a system of separating trenches or ditches (»burial roads«).

It seems that all social classes are represented during Bazzano II B and III. In addition to simple warriors there have obviously been exceptional warriors, too, whose burials are evident due to ritually fragmented pottery, and the high number of cenotaphs with weapons. The local upper class, however, becomes evident due to bigger burial pits with *ripostigli* only as of the end of the 7th until mid-6th century BC. Those burials with storage containers including *ripostigli* are not limited only to richer warrior burials (often with multiple spears), but also include female burials. Social differentiation seems to have begun during childhood, as indicated by some exceptional child burials. These burials of small children and babies are close to exceptional family units. Child burials with small maceheads are often situated within a group of warrior burials. During the 7th century and the 1st half of the 6th century BC, these richer burials are evenly spread over the different burial precincts. Around the mid-6th century BC the upper class burials concentrate in the Otefal 2002 precinct (section i) and especially at the »rectangle« of the Arcobaleno precinct (section h). This burial group shows a continuity from rich warrior burials with antenna-hilted daggers to later burials of similar wealth with iron long swords. Sometimes these swords with cross-shaped hilt are adorned with ivory and bone inlays on their grips and scabbards. The female graves belonging to this burial group are remarkably often equipped with belt plaques with big studs (Capena type).

One of the most important characteristics of the Archaic period at Bazzano concerns the male burials: almost all male individuals were buried as warriors. In comparison to other contemporary Italian cemeteries, the number of burials with weapons (120 antenna-hilted daggers, 63 swords, 230 spears) is extremely high. This very distinct military element might be linked to the role and function the cemetery played among the central Italic tribes. Moreover, it might reflect Bazzano's ideal of a warrior.

It is thanks to this phenomenon that typologies and chronological analyses based on the material from Bazzano were possible. The author of the present publication wishes them to be a solid base for future academic research on central Italy.

Übersetzung: Sarah Scheffler