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Castrum Inui: il santuario di Inuus alla Foce del Fosso dell'Incastro

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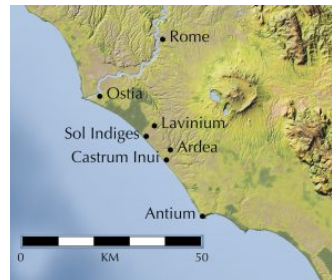
Review by

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[Authors and titles are listed at the end of the review.]

Centuries of research and excavation have brought to light the structures and fortification walls of the ancient sites of coastal Latium, but until recently the precise location of Castrum Inui has remained elusive.

The site itself is rarely named in ancient texts, and where it appears in a list of Latin cities at *Aeneid* 6.775, we find a comment by Servius that mistakenly points us toward Castrum Novum in coastal Etruria. In recent decades, archaeologists have confirmed that Castrum Inui was actually located on the south bank of the Incastro river near Ardea. Although aspects of the discovery and excavations have been widely documented and published, this volume represents the most comprehensive publication of the site to date. Yet this is not only an archaeological excavation volume: the contributions found within its three sections span a breathtaking array of interests and specializations which will appeal to scholars of many subdisciplines. Latinists, historians, prehistorians, Vergilian scholars, antiquarians, geoarchaeologists and landscape archaeologists should also find something useful in these pages. To this end, I hope that this brief review can serve as your *Cicerone*.



Castrum Inui in relation to significant sites of ancient Latium.

Section I encompasses the archaeology and geology of the territory as well as the discovery and excavation of the site. The first chapter covers the ancient literature and foundation myths about Ardea. Here, Di Mario attempts to place the ancient sources in conversation with discoveries of recent excavations; for example, although Greek and Roman authors claimed that Ardea was in decline during the middle republic, archaeological evidence shows that the city engaged in lively and substantial cultural and commercial trade in this period. Unfortunately, this claim is difficult to evaluate because the ancient sources are not specifically cited, nor are references to the relevant archaeological studies provided. Next, Di Mario and Ronchi present a summary of the research and excavations that have been carried out in the greater territory of Ardea since the 18th century. Especially noteworthy are the detailed find-catalogues of Carlo Fea, and the bitter ownership disputes, such as British excavator Robert Fagan's claim ("with threats," 15) to an exquisite statue of Venus from the

Campo Iemini, a claim which Fea vehemently rejected (the statue stands today in the British Museum). Alessandri skilfully and concisely outlines the geological history of central-southern Lazio and the evidence for the pre- and proto-historic human occupation of *Latium vetus*.

The section concludes with the results of the archaeological excavations at the site of Castrum Inui, with three chapters focusing on specific areas of the site: i) Temples A and B; ii) Temple C; and iii) The *statio maritima*.

Di Mario and Ronchi's study of Temples A and B outlines the principal phases of the structures through descriptions of the stratigraphic units and their spatial relationships, supplemented by copious dense footnotes, as well as some plans and photographs at the end of the chapter and the volume (I will comment more on this format later). According to their analysis, construction of the podium of Temple A took place in the late 3rd or first half of the 2nd century BCE. The length of the podium was shortened around the middle of the 2nd century BCE, at which time a squared *cippus* was buried inside the podium's fill and a temple *in antis* was constructed, consisting of a single *cella* with two columns in front (the form of the previous temple, if known, is not discussed). An additional renovation took place in the 1st century BCE or a little later. By the end of the 2nd century CE, the structure no longer functioned as a temple, but remained in use until the 4th/5th century CE.

Temple B is the more ancient structure. At its lowest levels the remains of two foundation walls were identified, whose construction is dated between 530-520 BCE. These probably supported a small temple. At the beginning of the 5th century, a larger temple was constructed over these earlier foundations. The wealth of architectural decorations associated with this second temple attest to several substantial renovations over the course of two centuries. At the beginning of the 3rd century BCE the temple was reconstructed, while maintaining its orientation and size, and two altars were placed in front of the building on a paved square. Subsequent renovations took place in the second half of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd century. The architectural terracottas of these phases, although published elsewhere, are not part of this volume.^[1] In the Augustan period the entire site of Castrum Inui was renovated and transformed—this included the construction of Temple C. After this time, Temple B suffered much the same fate as Temple A, as the area slowly took on new functions as a harbor. By the 3rd/4th century CE, the *cella* of Temple B had become the final resting place for two young children, each interred in an African amphora.

Temple C, a *sacellum* of Aesculapius, was a modestly-sized space constructed in the Augustan period, along the same axis as that of Temple B, immediately adjacent to the southwestern wall of the much larger temple. During the Julio-Claudian period an *enkoimeterion* was built directly behind the *sacellum*, providing a dormitory where health-seeking visitors, most likely sailors, could participate in the ritual of *incubatio*. The entire structure was built on top of a middle-republican cistern, with two wells to provide water for healing rituals. Tortarella takes us through a fascinating overview of the literary and archaeological evidence for the rituals associated with *Asklepieia*, both within central Italy and in the greater Mediterranean. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of associated finds: a marble statue of Aesculapius, mosaics and frescoes, and terracotta architectural fragments depicting Scythian Arimaspi and griffins. Ritual activity at this temple continued into late antiquity.

Statio maritima is the name given to the complex of structures lying between the *area sacra* and the Incastro river. Marroni provides a diachronic and functional reconstruction of this area, a task that is complicated by the fact that sections of the stratigraphy have been compromised by clandestine (illegal) excavations. Although this area contains what remains of the middle republican *castrum* and a commercial structure (a boat landing?), the study focuses mainly on the Augustan and imperial phases. The chapter begins with a description of the structures dating from the Augustan period through the 2nd century, which can be divided into three functional sectors: a commercial sector with *horrea* along the banks; a

residential area for workers or slaves (here termed an *ergastulum*); and an elite seaside residential sector with a substantial bath complex. The entire site underwent a large-scale functional and structural change at the end of the 2nd century, when the ground level was raised (likely due to encroaching seas and a rising water table). This ground-raising signalled the final obliteration of Temples A and B, but it also entailed substantial renovation and rebuilding in the *statio maritima*, particularly in the bath complex. The final significant renovations date to the middle of the 5th century, and ceramic evidence as well as an inhumation indicate that the *statio* ceased any commercial function by the late 5th or early 6th century. This archaeological description is presented in just 14 pages; the remaining 27+ pages are devoted to functional analysis, with a principal focus on exploring the possibility that Castrum Inui may have served as a station along the *cursus publicus*, the Roman imperial postal and transport service.

Section II analyzes (a selection of) the excavation materials: architectural terracottas, coins, and pottery. The Archaic ceramic vessels associated with the earliest phases of Temples A and B are presented by Ceccarelli. This material is highly fragmentary and probably found in secondary deposition. The scholar suggests that it originated from votive contexts, and that the material associated with the substantial reconstruction of Temple B was deposited as an expiatory *piaculum*. The material dates to the 6th century BCE and consists of both local and imported ware including bucchero, Attic pottery, and Etrusco-Corinthian ware. Most notably, Ceccarelli establishes Ardea as a production center for bucchero (based on the presence of ceramic wasters) although the location of the kilns has yet to be determined.

The late Archaic architectural terracottas of Temple B are published here by Rescigno. He begins with a survey of the substantial body of literature produced by Ceccarelli and others in their earlier studies of these objects. A detailed catalogue organizes the 222 fragments into typological groups according to fabric analysis and stylistic considerations. Each group is associated with one of several different roof phases. A splendid Amazonomachy, the head of a bearded man wearing a helmet covered with cow-hide and horns (Inuus? Memnon?), and Iuno Sospita are among the iconographic elements.

Rossi presents the handful of architectural terracotta fragments associated with Temple A. Three fragments formed part of a *Potnia Theron* antefix, which is dated stylistically to the first half of the 2nd century BCE. Other decorative elements, such as a floral-and-acanthus *sima*, are dated stylistically to the middle of the 2nd century BCE, thus belonging to the second decorative phase of the temple.

Arena presents a selection of ceramic contexts dating from the late republic through late antiquity, expertly guiding us through centuries of site occupation with contexts that are representative of key phases. In addition to the usual breakdown of ceramic assemblages by date, type, and provenance, Arena discusses details of stratigraphy and explains the logic behind the dating of each context. This is a model chapter, which could benefit graduate students in archaeology (or indeed anyone grappling with how best to present complex archaeological data in a clear and relevant way).

Nicolai has studied and catalogued the 140 coins dating from the 4th century BCE through the 4th century, presenting them chronologically, by emperor, by area, and even by stratigraphic unit. The coins, however, are not illustrated.

The two chapters of Section III examine the archaeological evidence through the lens of our ancient written sources. Torelli explores the myriad etymological possibilities for the infrequently attested divinity Inuus before making a case that Castrum Inui was the site of *locus Solis Indigetis*. Of course, this problematizes the identity of Lavinium's port to the north (see Figure 1), which has been identified as Sol Indiges for many years now.^[2]

The volume concludes with a fine essay by Micco, who reviews the evidence for the origin and meanings of the tricky terms *Latini* and *Aborigines*. The Latin place-names in the *Aeneid*

are also presented, along with discussions of their possible locations in the modern landscape. In her final paragraphs, Micco also sounds a wise note of caution, reminding us that Vergil's work drew upon many traditions, resulting in a 'geography' of Latium that is "full of conflicts and contradictions" (561).

The interdisciplinary nature of this undertaking is certainly a credit to this project, however the individual contributions, excellent as they are, do not sufficiently interact with each other. Taken as a whole, the volume lacks a certain cohesiveness and structure, making it difficult to navigate. The layout is not ideal for an archaeological publication. Rather than placing relevant plans and photographs within or near the texts in which they are discussed, they are found at the end of the individual chapters or at the end of the book, and the constant back-and-forth flipping makes it difficult to follow the arguments carefully. From an editorial perspective, cross-references between the individual contributions are inconsistent and sometimes non-existent. From an archaeological perspective, the addition of baulk drawings, Harris Matrices, and/or a list of stratigraphic units with descriptions would have been welcome—without these, it is virtually impossible to reconstruct the context of the individual finds. Also, many of the photographs and plans lack a scale and north arrow. Yet overall, this publication is promising, and I hope we can anticipate future volumes featuring much more of the pottery (there is no chapter on middle republican pottery) as well as other materials such as the faunal and archaeobotanical remains, the glass, metal and other small finds, as well as a complete study of the late antique inhumations.

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Notes

[1] L. Ceccarelli, "Considerazioni sui sistemi decorativi dei santuari di Ardea", in E. Marroni (ed.), *Sacra nominis latini: i santuari del Lazio arcaico e repubblicano: atti del Convegno internazionale, Roma, Palazzo Massimo, 19-21 febbraio 2009*. Loffredo Editore Napoli (2012), 489-500.

[2] E.g. F. Castagnoli, “I luoghi connessi con l’arrivo di Enea nel Lazio (Troia, Sol Indiges, Nunicus)”, *Archeologia Classica* 19 (1967), 1-13.