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AN ETRUSCAN ARTISANS' ZONE AT CETAMURA DEL CHIANTI (CIVITAMURA)



Nancy T. de Grummond and
Charles Ewell

Excavations by the Department of Classics at Florida State University in the Northwest Complex of Zone II at Cetamura have concentrated on the uncovering of Structure K, a Hellenistic Etruscan kiln (third century B.C.) for making brick, tile, and loomweights. The structure is rectangular (exterior 3.99/3.86 x 2.68 m.), and features a central partition or *mastio*, with a subpartition on each side of the *mastio*. There are two stoking channels. Nearby is Structure J, a rough stone platform on top of which were found ash, carbon, refractory brick, and other byproducts of the ceramic industry, as well as two low stone walls that may have been part of a small kiln for making pottery. A deep pit for discarded material and debris lies between the structures.

Relatively few kilns have been excavated on Etruscan sites (around 30 are known) and of these, even fewer have been published or remain visible. All the information obtained at Cetamura is thus of considerable significance for drawing conclusions about the Etruscan industry of brick and tile, which seems to have begun in the seventh century B.C. and which had a major influence in ancient Italy. Especially interesting comparisons may be made with a series of kilns of Hellenistic date excavated at Chiusi by the University of Siena (Cynthia Mascione and Giuseppe Pucci). Some of these have a ground plan similar to the one at Cetamura. Unique so far at Cetamura is the evidence, from a votive cup and an intentionally shattered patera found within the kiln, that the structure and its contents were blessed by the Etruscans, probably to ward off evils spirits and ensure success in firing.

Also found in the NW Complex at Cetamura were pieces of metal slag as well as numerous implements for weaving (spindle whorls, spools, loomweights, and handgrinders). The latter seem associated closely with the Hellenistic paved room Structure C. In conjunction with the cisterns Structures A and B, also Hellenistic,

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the ensemble seems to constitute a well-defined Etruscan Artisans' Zone of the third to first centuries B.C. The presence of such an area on a habitation site evokes a comparison with the Archaic workshop area at Poggio Civitate (Murlo), where numerous crafts were practiced, including the making of tile and the working of bronze, bone, and ivory.

A full excavation report on Cetamura appeared in *Etruscan Studies* 6 (1999)163–184, with numerous illustrations.

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