

## Cetamura 2000 – 2006 Results

A major project during the years 2000-2006 was the excavation to bedrock of two large and deep units located on an escarpment between Zone I and Zone II ([fig. 1](#) and [fig. 2](#)); these were 3x6 meter rectangles which in places were sunk to depths of two or more meters. These units on the edge of Zone I (Area G) provided an excellent cross section of stratigraphy of the site; at the bottom were traces of two parallel Etruscan sandstone walls, 4.5 m. distant, dating ca. 325-300 BCE, interpreted as the sides of an entrance gate to the citadel ([fig. 3](#) and [fig. 4](#)). Within the same level were found two large pits in the bedrock (Trashpit I, 2002; Trashpit II, 2005) filled with discarded debris from the Etruscan kitchen and table: animal bones, local wares for cooking and storing, and fragments of fine table wares. The pits actually probably join, but it was not possible to excavate them entirely, since they run underneath a wall of the baths of the Roman villa. Among the special finds were two tools made from the worked antlers of a deer, possibly a pestle and an awl (Trashpit I; [fig. 5](#)). Near Trashpit II were found 30 joining fragments of a ceramic **mortarium**, including the spout on the rim ([fig. 6](#)); the vessel was sufficiently preserved to show the diameter at ca. 52cm.

Just above the level of the trashpits were found a number of examples of large Etruscan bricks, fired at a low temperature and orange in color, of the same date or a little later. These are similar to examples found earlier at Cetamura, still lying in the kiln where they were made, Structure K on Zone II. Resting on an irregular clump of such bricks ([fig. 7](#)) were the remains of a sandstone wall from the Roman baths, dated to the Augustan period by numerous fragments of Roman red-gloss pottery found in the terracing for the wall. At a slightly higher level was a fairly well preserved segment of fortification, again sandstone, belonging to the medieval period, but not precisely datable (see Previous Discoveries). It may belong to the period in the twelfth century when Cetamura was referred to in medieval documents as a **castrum**.

In a smaller unit to the west of these, the goal was to find material that would help to give a precise date for one of the walls of Room 4 of the Roman baths. Only medieval and Roman stratigraphy was identified. In the Roman level were found fragments of **cocciopesto** and painted plaster, suggesting that the wall, and Room 4, belonged to a secondary phase of the baths, probably the first century CE. Above this was a section of a medieval rampart or earthwork (**agger**) within which have been found objects of a much earlier date. Of particular interest were fragments of Etruscan bucchero probably dating to the sixth century BCE, testifying to activity on the site during this period even though so far relatively little bucchero has been found in its original context. In the most recent probe of the **agger** was discovered an amphora stamp with the name EVTACHEI, dating to the late third century BCE, almost certainly part of the same amphora with the stamp M.LVRI found in 1993 in an adjacent unit ([fig. 8](#)). The two stamps, among the earliest Roman amphora stamps known, are from the amphora type known as "Greco-Italic."

Another major project of these years involved excavations in the well cut into the sandstone bedrock near the center of Zone I, hypothesized to be Etruscan (see [Previous Discoveries](#), [figs. 4-6](#)). Excavations in this area began at 19 m. below ground level, under the supervision of Claudio Bizzarri, and have now been suspended at a depth of ca. 25 m. below ground level. The excavations have reached the water table and a special apparatus will be needed to continue the

work and pump the water out. Almost all finds were from episodes of dumping in the well, and included mostly Roman material, such as coins, glass, red-gloss pottery and box flue tiles. At the level of the water table, several vessels have been found having multiple pieces, such as a pitcher with some 39 sherds ([fig. 9](#)). The amount of material preserved suggests that these were vessels that fell in when the well was actually in use.

Excavations in Zone II at Cetamura del Chianti up to 2006 have now made clear much of Area L (=Building L), a monumental Etruscan building evidently dating to the final century of Etruscan civilization (2nd half of the second century/1st half of the first century BCE; [fig. 10](#)). The building has a highly irregular plan, with some foundations often one meter or more in thickness. The interior of the building features walls running at right angles and trending north/south or east/west ([fig. 11](#)). Other walls run at a diagonal to this plan, including one wall or wing of the building on the southwest about 21 meters long. There are paved areas alternating beaten earth floors of yellow clay and what is probably a large courtyard in the middle. Some of the foundations are so heavy and thick that they could easily have supported multistoried elements.

Within the building's courtyard is a sandstone platform that likely served as an altar. It has a tetragonal shape, measuring 2.46 x 1.32 x 1.94 x 1.85 m. ([fig. 12](#)). Nearby was found a sacrificial pit, sunk into the beaten earth floor, measuring ca. 1.00 m x 0.90 m, with a depth of ca. 0.25m. Of the many items found in the pit, some were clearly ritually burned and others probably intentionally broken.

Most of the finds from the pit have been consigned to Studio Arts Centre International (SACI), Florence, for conservation and restoration under the direction of Nora Marosi and Renzo Giachetti. The exact number of pots present will not be clear until restoration has sorted out the various shards, but it is evident that the pit contained approximately 10 vessels, including 4 miniatures. Several of the vases were quite large, including one storage vessel, probably for grain, and a large pitcher, probably for wine ([fig. 13](#)). There also were little cups for drinking and a bowl for eating, as well as a small beaker of the type that holds oil or spices. All of these vessels were ceramic, most of them broken, but with most or all of the fragments buried together in the pit. Further, most of the pots seem to be locally made rather than imported. No painted wares were included.

Also of considerable interest was the discovery of some 10 iron nails deposited in the pit, probably indicative of ritual practice, in a relatively good state of preservation. Among the metal objects was a coin of bronze clad with silver, now legible as a result of Giachetti's cleaning ([fig. 14](#)), as a type of coin struck in a silver denarius series at the Roman colony of Narbo ca 118 BCE, providing a terminus post quem for the sacrificial pit, as well as an index for dating the altar and Building L.

In the same Zone of Cetamura (Zone II; [fig. 15](#)), investigations continued in the area of the kiln, Structure K, which had itself been fully excavated by 1996 (see [Previous Discoveries](#), [fig. 13](#)). This structure was begun in the third century BCE, contemporary with a nearby paved room, structure C, and the first phase of the nearby cistern Structure B. A 3x3 m. unit on the north of the kiln was designed to investigate the area in front of the kiln that served for stoking it. The two praefurnia of the kiln were completely uncovered and dense layers of carbon were found

immediately outside the channels, containing pottery dating to the Hellenistic Phase I (ca. 300-150 BCE). In 2006 in the deep stratigraphy adjacent to the kiln were found several fragments of pottery with graffiti. One of these has the name of the Etruscan god Lurs incised upon it ([fig. 16](#)). While this belongs to an earlier phase than Building L and was found about 20 m. north of the altar within L, it certainly shows religious activity on the site, along with a number of other graffiti and miniature vessels found through the years in the area of the kiln and cisterns Structure A and Structure B. Building L may represent an ambitious attempt to monumentalize an already existing sacred area in the final years of Etruscan habitation at Cetamura.

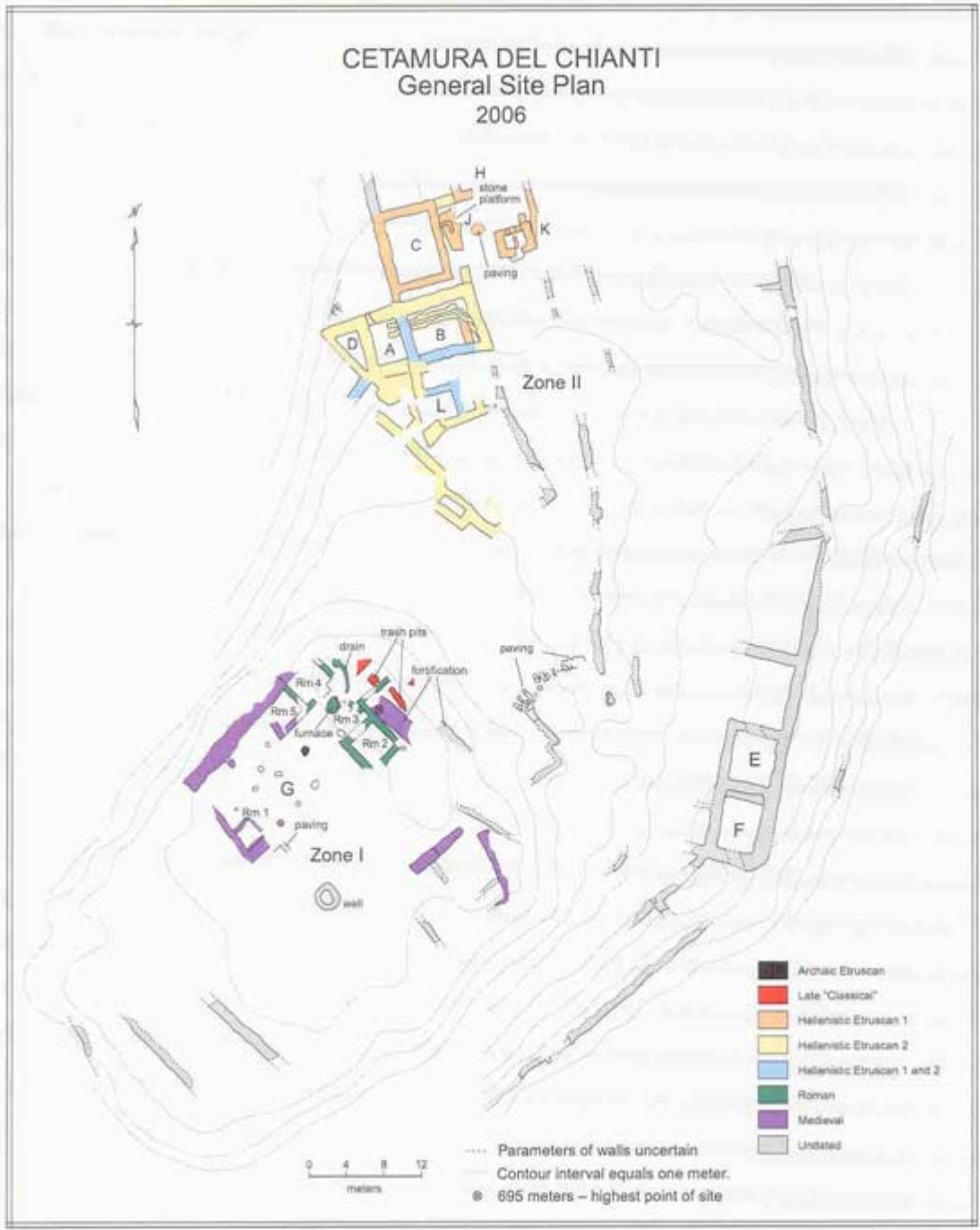


Fig. 1. Cetamura del Chianti, Site Map

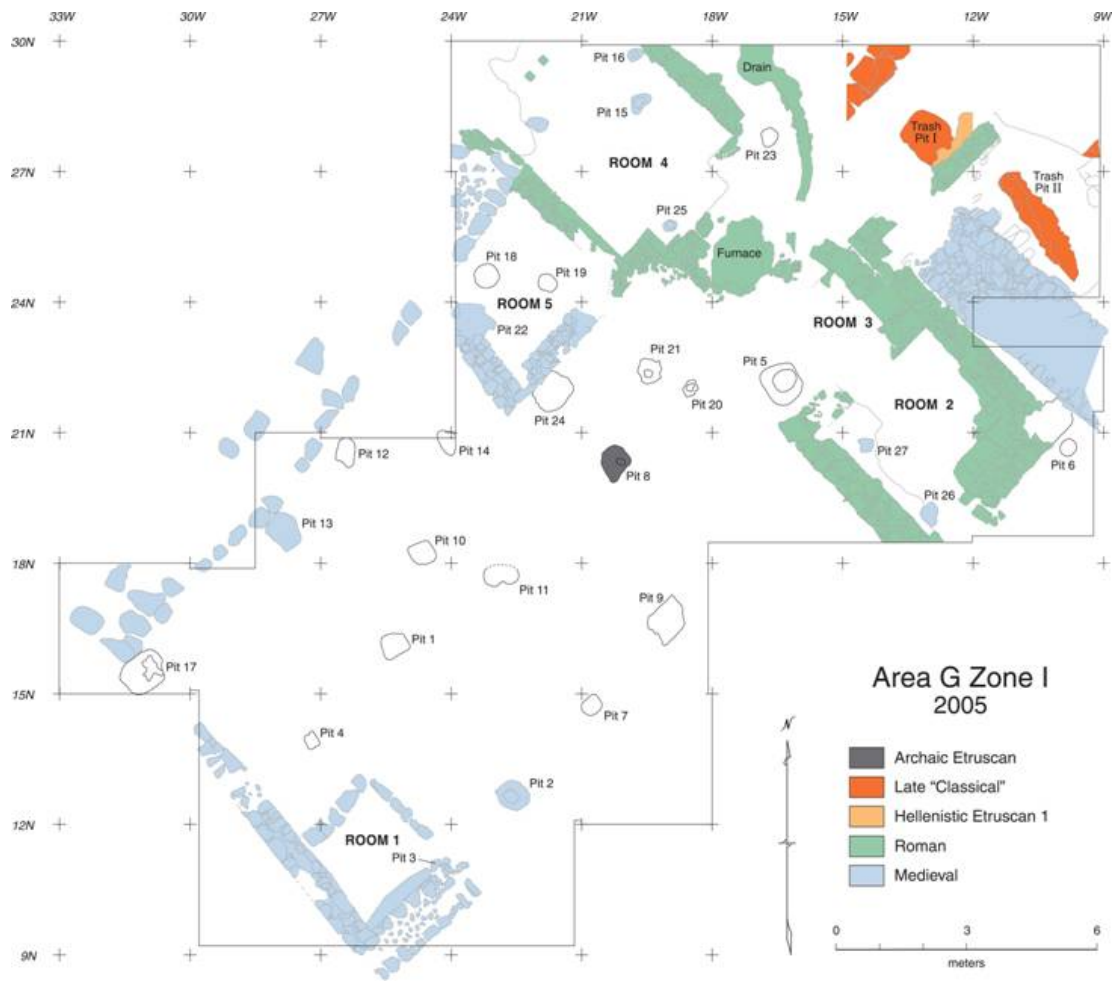


Fig. 2. Map of Area G



Fig. 3. Citadel entrance gate (?), east wall



Fig. 4. Citadel entrance gate (?), west wall



Fig. 5. Worked antlers of a deer





Fig. 6. Ceramic *mortarium* during excavation



Fig. 7. View of wall of Roman baths resting on Etruscan bricks

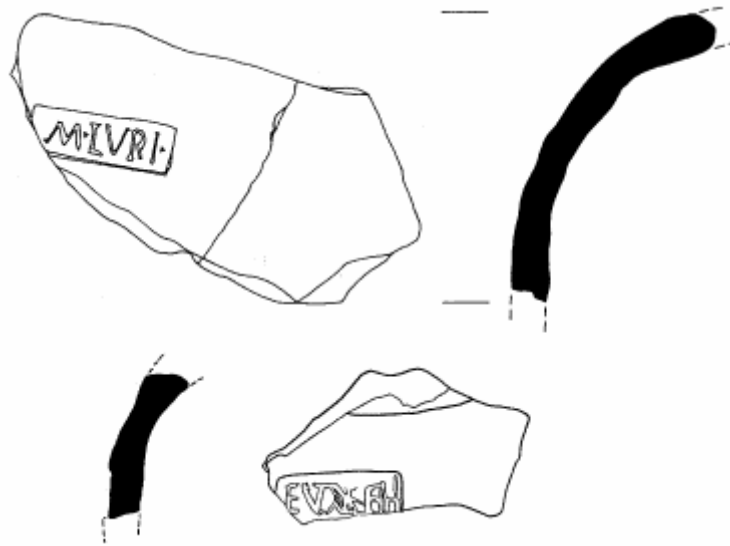


Fig. 8. Amphora stamps, EVTACHEI and M.LVRI



Fig. 9. Pitcher found in well  
(restored by Studio Arts Centre International, Florence)



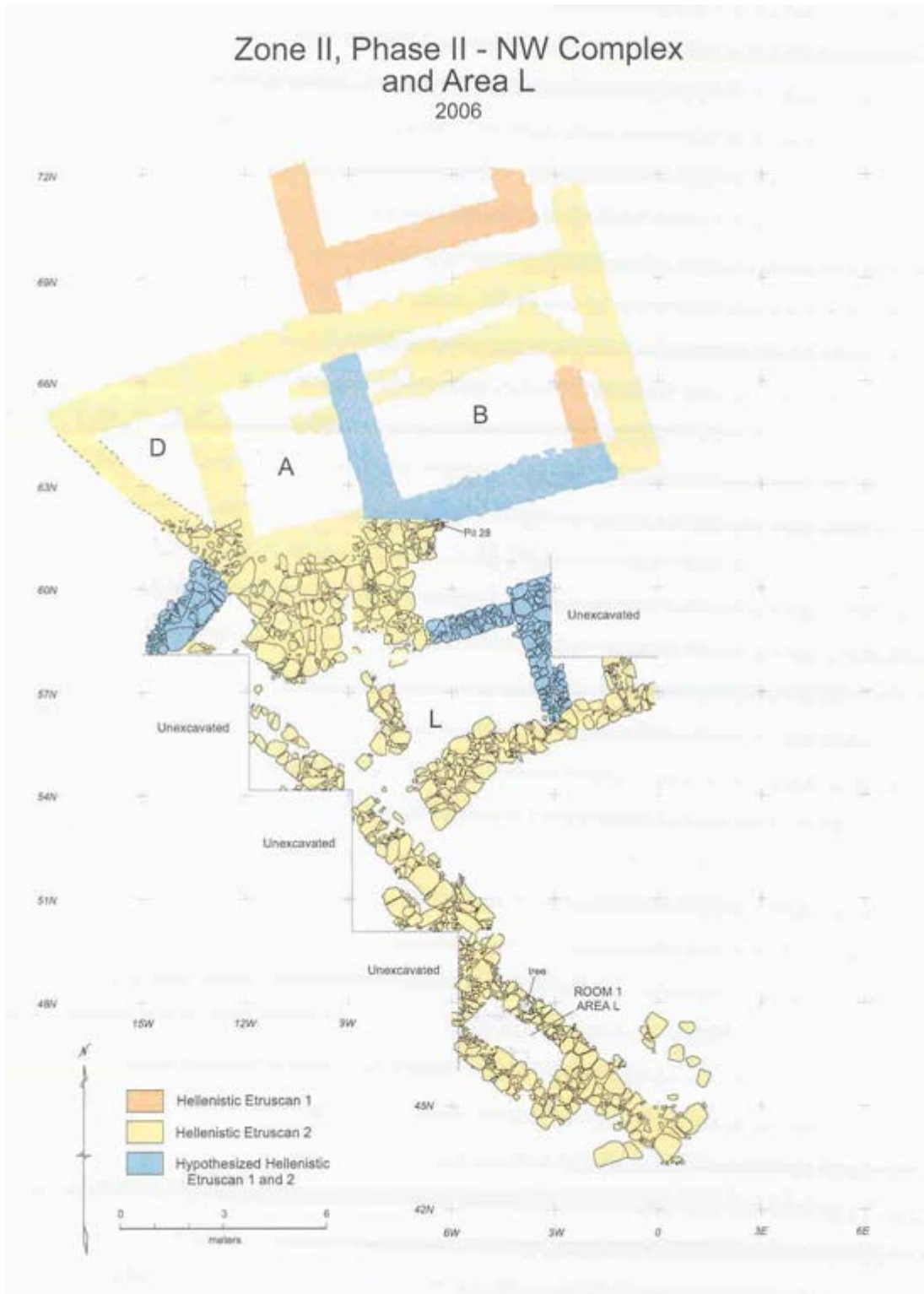


Fig. 10. Cetamura del Chianti, Map of Zone II,  
Northwest Complex and Area L



Fig. 11. North/south wall in Area L extending from Structures A and B (in background)



Fig. 12. Diagonal wall and tetragon (altar) in Area L



Fig. 13. Pitcher found in sacrificial pit



Fig. 14. Silvered bronze coin found in sacrificial pit;  
rev. with Gaul riding biga



Fig. 15. Cetamura del Chianti, Map of Zone II, Northwest Complex including Structure K





Fig. 16. Fragment of black-gloss vessel with inscription LURS