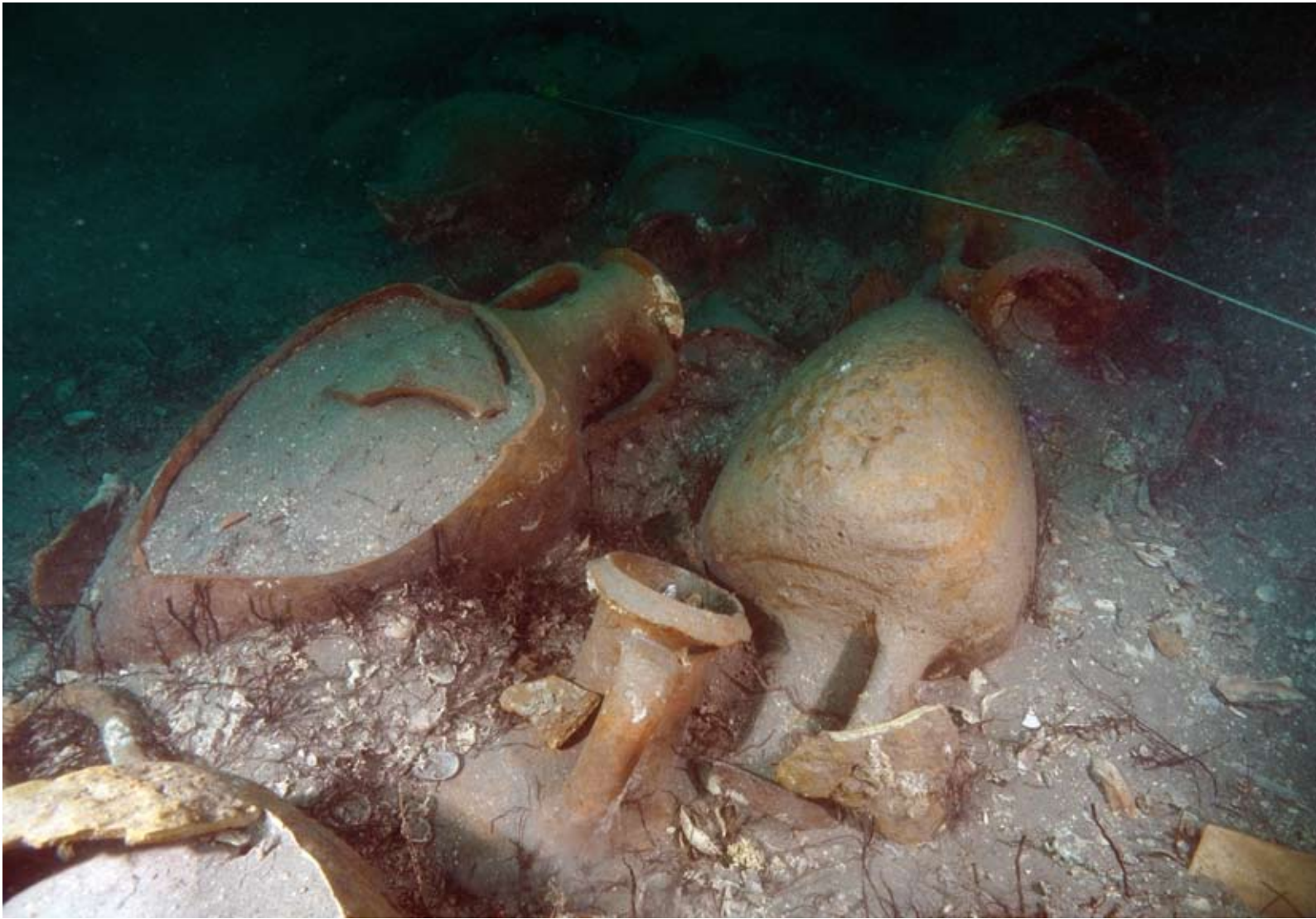




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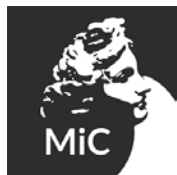
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INDICE

Monika Verzár, <i>Editoriale «Aquileia Nostra» 2021</i>	p.	5
Claudio Zaccaria, <i>Ezio Buchi (Verona, 28 giugno 1934 - 12 dicembre 2020)</i>	p.	9

ARTICOLI

Antonella Testa, <i>Tracce del mito “fascista” di Roma a Gorizia: due monumenti</i>	»	15
Paola Maggi, Flaviana Oriolo, <i>Contributo alla ricostruzione del paesaggio funerario di Aquileia. Le esplorazioni di inizio Novecento a Sant’Egidio</i>	»	25
Rita Auriemma, Carlo Beltrame, Simonetta Bonomi, Massimo Capulli, Elisa Costa, Anna Del Bianco, Dario Gaddi, Claudia Pizzinato, <i>The Roman Shipwreck Grado 2 and the UnderwaterMuse Project. Challenges for the Enhancement of Underwater Cultural Heritage</i>	»	47
Klaudia Bartolić Sirotić, Gaetano Benčić, <i>Archaeological discoveries on the waterfront of Poreč in 2020</i>	»	67
Andrea Stella, <i>Coins and Rural Settlements in the Roman Age: New Data from the Southern Venetia et Histria</i>	»	81
Fulvia Mainardis, Susanna Sgoifo, <i>Opus latericium inscriptum in Christian Aquileia: Epigraphy on terracotta in Late Antiquity</i>	»	95

AQUILEIA NOSTRA 1930-2020

Giulio Simeoni, <i>I contributi sulla Preistoria in «Aquileia Nostra»</i>	»	111
Monica Chiabà, Fulvia Mainardis, <i>Novant’anni di scritti di Epigrafia e Storia in «Aquileia Nostra» (1930-2020)</i>	»	115
Marta Novello, <i>Mosaici e affreschi in «Aquileia Nostra» (1930-2020)</i>	»	137
Annalisa Giovannini, <i>Arti minori. Presenza ed evoluzione degli studi attraverso «Aquileia Nostra»</i>	»	147
Luciana Mandruzzato, <i>Studi sul vetro antico in «Aquileia Nostra»</i>	»	169
Paola Ventura, <i>Sulle produzioni ceramiche in «Aquileia Nostra» (1930-2020)</i>	»	175
Giulio Carraro, <i>I contributi di numismatica romana pubblicati in «Aquileia Nostra»</i>	»	183
Andrea Gariboldi, <i>Studi di numismatica medievale in «Aquileia Nostra»</i>	»	187
Elisa Possenti, <i>90 anni di «Aquileia Nostra»: le ricerche sul tardoantico e il medioevo</i>	»	191
Norme redazionali	»	206

ANDREA STELLA

COINS AND RURAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE ROMAN AGE: NEW DATA FROM THE SOUTHERN VENETIA ET HISTRIA

The topic of coin finds from Roman rural landscapes, with respect to the area of *Venetia et Histria*, has been already investigated in the past through several works¹. Now, a new ongoing research wants to contribute on this subject thanks to new evidence drawn from a specific case study. The aim of this paper is to present some preliminary results, as well as some research perspectives.

The starting point has been the collection of data for a new book of the series *Ritrovamenti monetali di età romana nel Veneto/Coin finds of the Roman age in Veneto*². Beginning in 1992, this editorial project aims at the systematic edition of the ancient coins, including the Ostrogothic, Byzantine and Lombard ones, recovered in the area of the today Veneto region in the northeast of Italy³. The new volume will cover the finds from the western part of the modern province of Rovigo, while a book published in 2000 presents the coins found in the eastern one⁴.

This gave the opportunity to analyze, among others, a large set of at least 3,000 coin finds, mainly Roman Republican and Imperial denominations, coming from surface surveys conducted by volunteer archaeologists since the end of the 1980s on a

wide area which is still nowadays extensively cultivated (fig. 1). The first investigated sector is located between the town of Rovigo to the west, the site of the Roman *municipium* of *Atria* to the east and the rivers Adige, to the north, and Po to the south⁵. With 22,400 hectares covered since 1988, the survey of the Gruppo Archeologico di Villadose (GAV) is the largest carried out so far and led to the discovery of more than 860 archaeological sites spanning from the Bronze age to the Modern one⁶. Given the number of data available, most of the preliminary results presented here are drawn from this area⁷. In fact, since the beginning, this research was intended to cover systematically the entire area mentioned above, and this eventually led to a larger number of finds, recovered from more sites.

A second sector of interest, corresponding to the western part of the province of Rovigo, has been researched since the end of the 1990s by the Gruppo Archeologico Trecentano (GAT)⁸. At the current stage, more than 85 sites have been unveiled, mostly belonging to the Roman age⁹. In this case, the research focused, at first, on the area of the modern town of Trecenta, and it has been lately extended to the surroundings.

¹ GORINI 1984; GORINI 1990; GORINI 1994; CALLEGHER 1994; CALLEGHER 1996-1997; PAVONI 2002-2003; PAVONI 2003; PAVONI 2004-2005; PAVONI 2008; PAVONI 2009a; PAVONI 2009b.

² *RMRVe*.

³ At the present time, 15 volumes have been published featuring nearly 80,000 specimens; GORINI 2005; CALOMINO 2009; ASOLATI 2019, pp. 211-212.

⁴ *RMRVe* VII/2.

⁵ This area will be mentioned from now on as Area 1.

⁶ GRIGATO, MARAGNO 1993; GRIGATO, MARAGNO 1996; GRIGATO, MARAGNO 2000.

⁷ For a first overview on the coin finds collected here see CALLEGHER 1993; CALLEGHER 2000.

⁸ MELLONI 2002; MELLONI, VALLICELLI 2018, pp. 47-48. This area will be mentioned from now on as Area 2.

⁹ See above note 8.

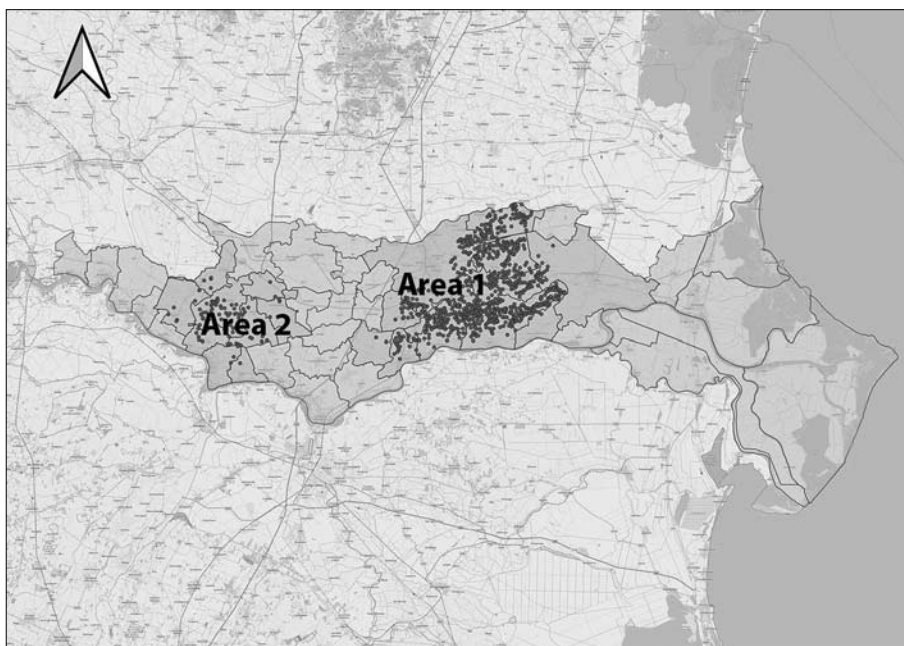


Fig. 1. The location of the two investigated areas (Area 1 and Area 2) within the province of Rovigo, southern Veneto region; sites dating to the Roman age found during surface surveys are in evidence. Pattern: Open Street Map, Regione Veneto, modified by the author.

Even if a proper archaeological context is missing, since surface surveying implies no recording of stratigraphy¹⁰, coin finds recovered in such a large number over a wide area (thanks to the extensive use of metal detectors) trigger not only new numismatic research, but also, and possibly most importantly, new investigations on the economy of this sector of Northern Italy during the Roman age. Coins can provide significant information concerning the chronological and, to some extent, spatial development of settlement and land exploitation patterns.

The work in progress is currently focussing on the complete recording and georeferentiation of the finds coming from the two areas considered¹¹. Furthermore, as regards the Area 1, thanks to a database in which information regarding every archaeological site discovered have been recorded, coin finds are currently processed according to different parameters, including the associated finds. In the absence of stratigraphy, this cross analysis could provide useful information to understand the function of the coins in relation to their findspot.

An example is given by the spatial analysis of the findspots of Venetic drachms, silver issues imitating the coinage of Massalia minted between the end of the 3rd and the 1st century BC by the population of Veneti¹². These coins, 6 specimens recorded so far, together with some votive bronze statuettes, mostly depicting worshippers, are the only known materials dating to the Pre-Roman period found in the northern part of the Area 1¹³, where aerial photographs revealed traces of a Roman centuriation, a discovery that triggered the first survey in this area back to the end of the 1980s¹⁴. These finds of Venetic drachms are peculiar because they are not directly connected to any known Iron Age settlements, in contrast to the pattern of distribution defined in the past¹⁵. To understand the reason for this presence and the nature of the sites which yielded these coins, findspots of Venetic drachms and of votive statuettes have been compared applying GIS mapping (fig. 2). As it can be noted, the occurrence of these silver denominations is strictly connected to the finds of votive statuettes, and the findspots are arranged according to peculiar align-

¹⁰ On field survey methods see KELLER, RUPP 1983; BARKER, LLOYD 1991; TARTARON 2003.

¹¹ At the present time, 2,050 published and unpublished coins from Area 1 have been recorded with the support of a database as well as 1,431 unpublished finds from Area 2.

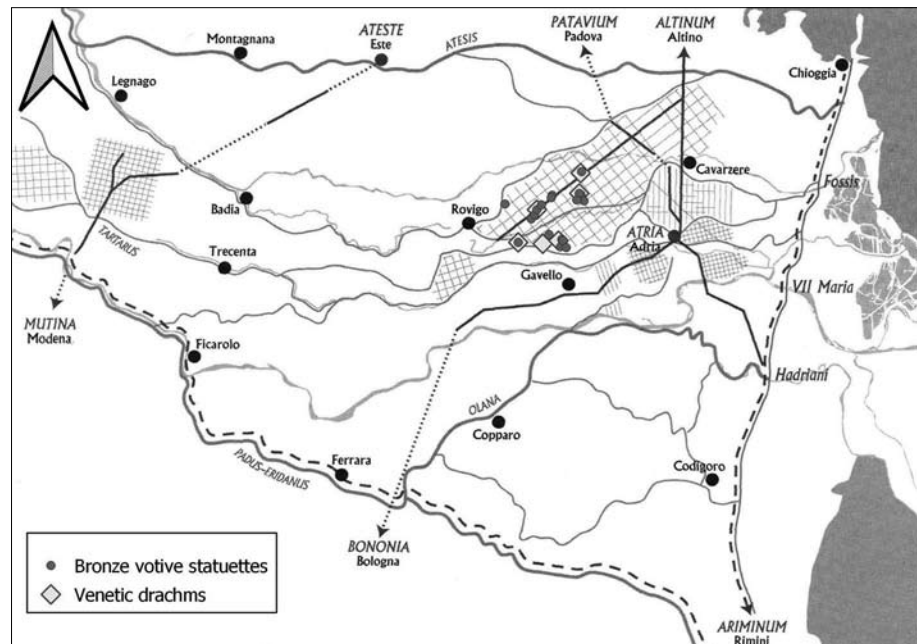
¹² For an extensive and updated summary on this coinage see GORINI 2014 with further bibliography.

¹³ A further specimen from site V67 (Ceregnano, località Lama) belongs to the issues of the Celtic tribe of Cenomani; *RMRV* VII/2, 4/4/1. So far, no finds of imitations of Massalia drachm are known for the southern part of Area 1.

¹⁴ PERETTO, ZERBINATI 1984, pp. 75-82; PERETTO 1987; ZERBINATI 2010; PERETTO, BEDETTI 2013, pp. 78-87; MATTEAZZI 2017; PERETTO 2018, pp. 12-14.

¹⁵ CALLEGHER 1993, pp. 221-222; CALLEGHER 2000, p. 131. Now, recently acquired data have widened the circulation pool of this coinage; cfr. CALLEGHER 2001, pp. 288-290.

Fig. 2. Distribution pattern of sites according to the presence of bronze votive statuettes and Venetic drachms in evidence. Pattern: PERETTO 2018, p. 12, fig. 1, modified by the author.



	TOT. n. coins	N. Republican asses	N. sites involved	N. halved specimens	%
Area 1	2050	203	80	95	46,80
Area 2	1431	91	15	71	78,02

Tab. 1. Distribution of halved and unhalved Republican asses between the Area 1 and 2 in comparison.

ments. An unpublished research devoted to the finds of votive statuettes in the same area has revealed a close correlation between this category of finds and the *limites*, i.e. the boundaries of the aforementioned centuriation¹⁶. The reason is to be found in the presence of small rural votive sites, similar to the Roman *compita*, connected to the sacral delimitation of the territory¹⁷. Therefore, the combined presence of bronze statuettes and Venetic drachms, can be interpreted as the result of votive offerings¹⁸. Given the absence of a proper stratigraphical context and of further materials dating to the Iron Age, such as pottery, it remains unclear if these religious practices are the evidence of a Pre-Roman frequentation of the area or a consequence of the land division which led to the early Roman colonization.

Regarding this very last aspect, coin finds could provide further insights, as shown by the analysis of the Roman Republican bronze denominations. In particular, the occurrence of halved specimens could be regarded as a chronological marker in order to establish the first phase of occupation of the area by the Romans. In fact, the halving of the Republican asses in the north-eastern part of Cisalpine Gaul is a phenomenon connected to the Augustan monetary reform occurring during the 20s of the 1st century BC¹⁹. If we compare the percentage of halved specimens attested in Area 1 and 2, a different distribution pattern emerges (tab. 1). Since in Area 2 a higher percentage of halved Republican asses is recorded (78 %), we could assume that the extensive circulation of Republican bronze in this territory did not

¹⁶ LOVATO 2017-2018; 35 bronze statuettes have been considered ranging from the 5th to the 2nd century BC.

¹⁷ On this aspect see GAMBA, GAMBACURTA, RUTA SERAFINI 2008. On rural Roman *compita* see STEK 2008.

¹⁸ CALLEGHER 2000, p. 131 suggests a possible use in everyday transactions in the light of the relationship between the Pre-Roman silver denominations and the Roman Republican ones which were in some cases hoarded together; on this aspect see CALLEGHER 2001, pp. 286-288.

¹⁹ GORINI 1987, pp. 244-245; GORINI 2002, p. 182; ASOLATI 2011, p. 144, note 2; GORINI 2015, pp. 188-189. In general, on the halving of republican asses see BUTTREY 1972; MARTIN 2017.

start before the Augustan age. Epigraphical sources attest the colonization of the area by veterans of the Augustan army after the battle of *Actium* (31 BC), when a Roman colony was established in the former *municipium* of *Ateste* ²⁰. The evidence of coin finds could be decisive in supporting the hypothesis of a first, extensive occupation of this area during the last two decades of the 1st century BC. Examining the coins from the Area 1, it turns out that only 46 % of the Republican asses attested here is halved. This percentage could be related to an earlier beginning of the monetary circulation, as opposed to Area 2. The establishment of the Roman centuriation located to the northwest of *Atria* is dated over a period ranging between the end of the 2nd and the second half of the 1st century BC ²¹. In this case, a higher amount of unhalved specimens could be the evidence of an early beginning of the monetary circulation in this sector, possibly connected to the first settlement of the area after the foundation of the Roman *municipium* of *Atria*, between 49 and 42 BC or even before ²². Nevertheless, given the recovery of a much larger number of coins, from a wider number of sites, in

Area 1, as opposed to the smaller numbers of Area 2, the evidence of coin finds as a mean to unveil the early Roman colonization must be evaluated with extreme caution, and need to be reconsidered in the future.

The spatial distribution of coin finds has been examined as a way to reconstruct the organization of sites as well as their function. Firstly, less than 30 % of the sites dating to the Roman age presents coins (fig. 3) ²³. This depends on many factors and one of them, of course, is the kind of activities carried out in each site, implying or not, the use of coin. Sites have been divided into different categories, according to the number of coins attested, and then analyzed through GIS mapping (fig. 4). It can be appreciated that the greatest majority of sites belong to the range 1-10, in which the presence of coins is mainly the result of coin offerings in graves ²⁴. This picture is confirmed by the spatial analysis of the sites which yielded, or not, coins (see fig. 3 above). In many cases, a site without coins is closely connected to one or more presenting numismatic finds. To some extent, this pattern should

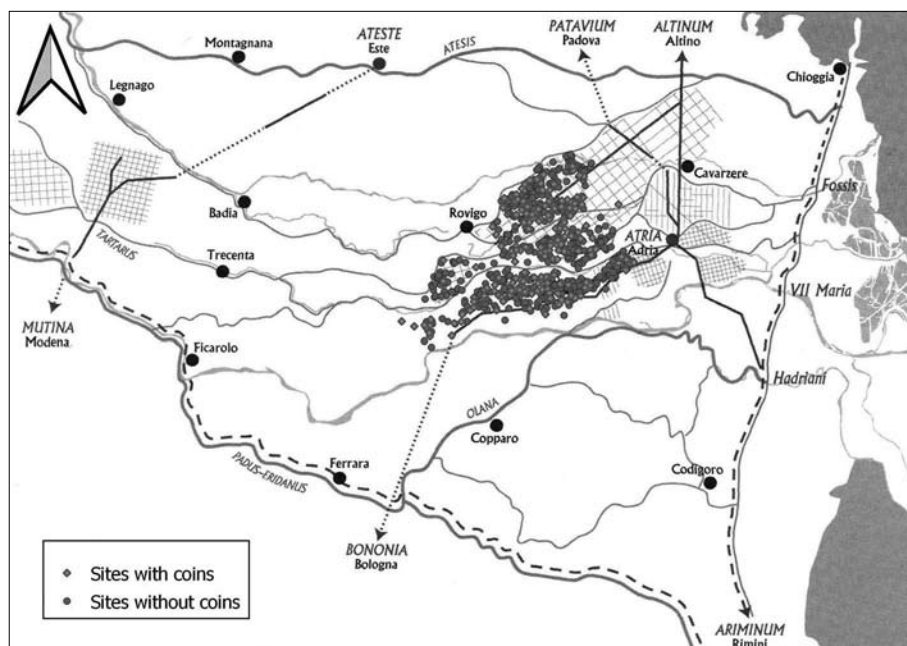


Fig. 3. Distribution pattern of sites dating to the Roman age according to the presence/absence of coin finds in evidence. Pattern: PERETTO 2018, p. 12, fig. 1, modified by the author.

²⁰ ZERBINI 2000, 46-47; MELLONI, VALLICELLI 2018, pp. 48-49. On the military colony of *Ateste* see BOSCOLO 2016. Some veterans of the legio *V Urbana* could have been settled in *Ateste* already after the battle of *Mutina* of 43 BC; cfr. GREGORI 2014, pp. 206-207; BOSCOLO 2015, p. 339; BOSCOLO 2016, p. 124.

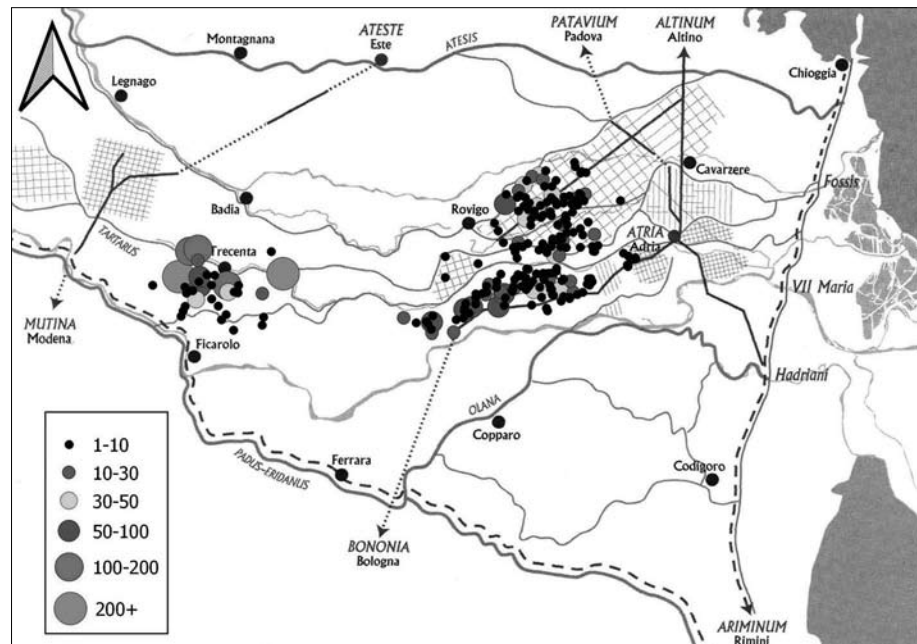
²¹ See MATTEAZZI 2017, pp. 133-135 with further bibliography.

²² Cfr. PERETTO, ZERBINATI 1984, p. 82; PERETTO, ZERBINATI 1987, pp. 278-279; MASIERO 1999, p. 96.

²³ Only Area 1 has been considered.

²⁴ In several cases this interpretation is supported also by the analysis of associated finds (fragments of fine wear, oil lamps, glass) and by the presence of dark soil marks resulting from the cremation process.

Fig. 4. Distribution pattern of sites dating to the Roman age according to the number of coin finds in evidence. Pattern: PERETTO 2018, p. 12, fig. 1, modified by the author.



reflect the presence of farms and their cemeteries. In fact, in the case of the smallest rural settlements, coins are mostly related to burial grounds. Another significant category is that of sites producing more than 50 finds²⁵. Their disposition is quite peculiar since it follows a linear arrangement due to the connection with secondary roads and river routes. The combination of these features suggests that this kind of settlements had a key function. After their foundation as farms, like the majority of the sites in this area, they developed into “service providers” for travellers or into marketplaces because of their position alongside the route system. An example is provided by the site of Chiunsano, located in Area 2, which underwent extensive archaeological excavations revealing the transformation of a large farm into a *mansio*, stopping place, active from the 1st century AD up to the early Medieval period²⁶. The excavations on this site produced more than 600 coins²⁷. The concentration of finds on these settlements should be the result of small transactions connected to the activities carried out onsite.

The spatial distribution of coin finds, in particular its development over time, can be analyzed also from a chronological point of view. Even if the long-lasting circulation to which many coins were subjected must be considered, some distinctive patterns can be observed.

A first map shows the findspots of coins dated between the reign of Augustus and that of Domitian, extensively distributed over the entire area considered (fig. 5)²⁸. Two are the main reasons for this pattern. As demonstrated by a preliminary analysis of other archaeological artefacts, such as pottery, the 1st century AD constitutes the period in which the settlement rate reached its peak²⁹. Furthermore, in the same period, the spread of the ritual of coin offering in graves is at the highest level in Cisalpine Gaul³⁰ and, as seen before, a large set of sites presenting coins must be regarded as rural necropolises.

A change in the distribution pattern can be seen among issues of the 2nd century AD (Nerva to Commodus) (fig. 6) and of the 3rd AD (Septimius Severus to Valerian I) in particular (fig. 7)³¹, which

²⁵ The concentration of sites with more than 100 coins in the Area 2 is just the result of a more extensive use of metal detector.

²⁶ BUSING 2016a. A site from Area 1, A09 (Villadose, Cà Motte), underwent archaeological excavations by the University of Verona as well; FACCHINI, COLLARIN 2008; FACCHINI, MORATELLO 2011; FACCHINI, LONARDI 2012.

²⁷ A preliminary catalogue is provided in BUSING 2000; BUSING 2016b. The complete recording of the coin finds from Chiunsano kept in the Museo dei Grandi Fiumi (Rovigo) has been carried out by the author. Coin finds from the excavations on the site A09 (Villadose, Cà Motte) are still unpublished.

²⁸ Cfr. CALLEGHER 1993, p. 224; CALLEGHER 2000, p. 135. Roman republican coins have not been considered since most of them belong to the early Imperial monetary circulation; see the example of Roman republican asses; DOBREVA, STELLA 2018.

²⁹ BONOMI 1993, p. 214; TONIOLO 2000, pp. 88-89.

³⁰ GORINI 1999, p. 75; STELLA 2020, p. 121.

³¹ Coins of the second half of the 3rd century AD, mainly antoniniani, have not been considered here since most of them could have been circulating during the early 4th century; cfr. CALLEGHER 2000, p. 136.

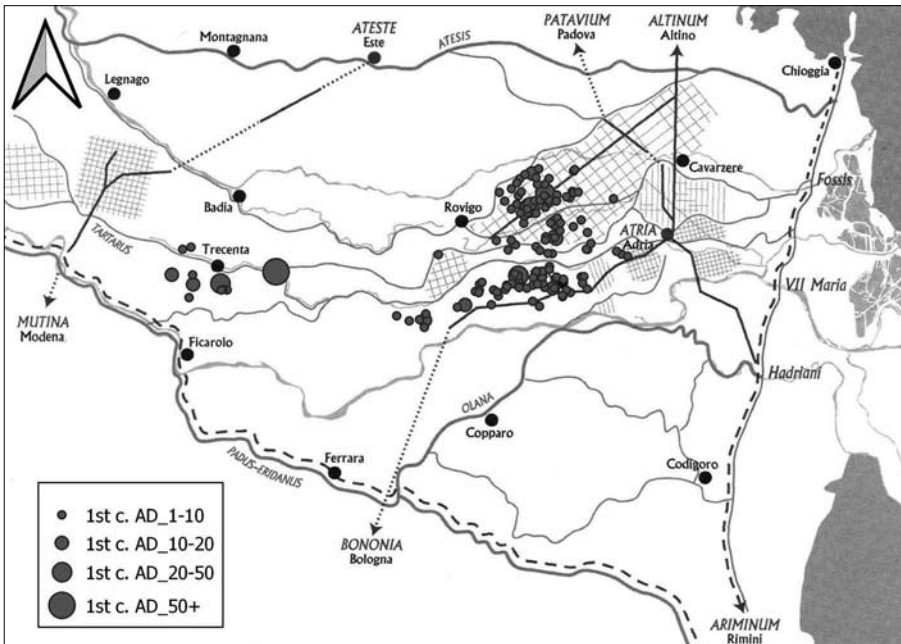


Fig. 5. Distribution pattern of sites dating to the Roman age according to the number of coin finds from Augustus to Domitian in evidence. Pattern: PERETTO 2018, p. 12, fig. 1, modified by the author.

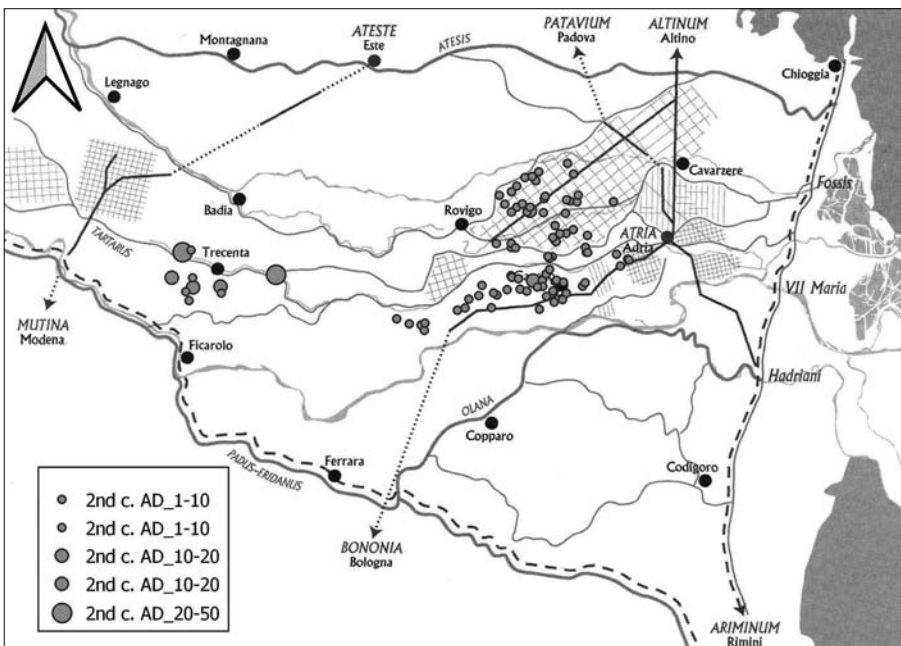


Fig. 6. Distribution pattern of sites dating to the Roman age according to the number of coin finds from Nerva to Commodus in evidence. Pattern: PERETTO 2018, p. 12, fig. 1, modified by the author.

are attested in a limited number of settlements³². On the contrary, coins of the 4th century are recorded in a larger set of sites, in some cases for the first time or after a long hiatus (fig. 8)³³. A further evidence of this changing pattern is provided by the chronological analysis of coin finds from the excavated site of

Chiunsano mentioned above and from Area 1 and Area 2 in comparison (fig. 9).

The different coin distribution between the early and the middle Imperial period should reflect a change in the local economy, with particular regard to land exploitation, instead of a sign of crisis and

³² Cfr. CALLEGHER 1993, pp. 224-225; CALLEGHER 2000, pp. 135-136.

³³ Cfr. CALLEGHER 1993, p. 226; CALLEGHER 2000, pp. 136-137.

Fig. 7. Distribution pattern of sites dating to the Roman age according to the number of coin finds from Septimius Severus to Valerian I in evidence. Pattern: PERETTO 2018, p. 12, fig. 1, modified by the author.

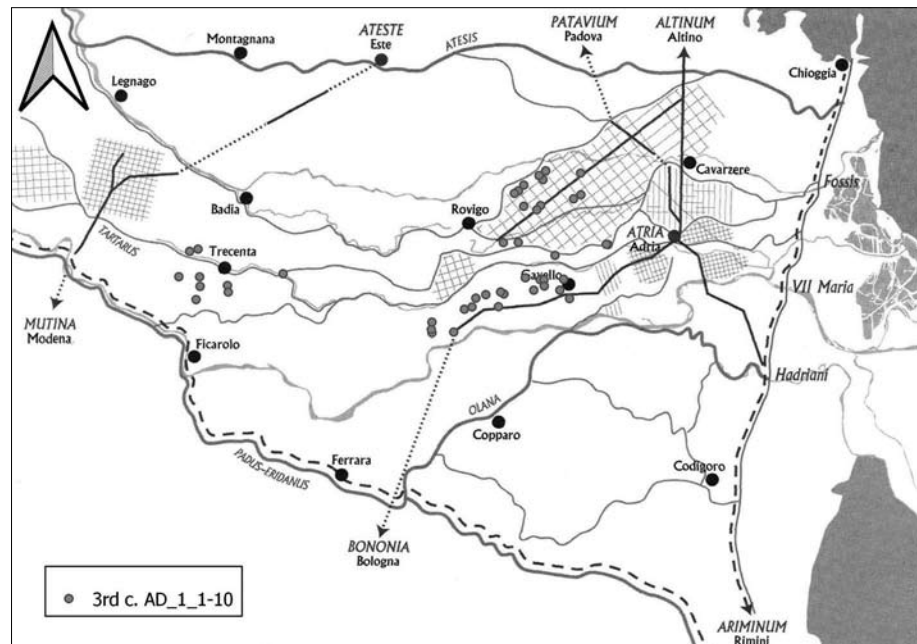
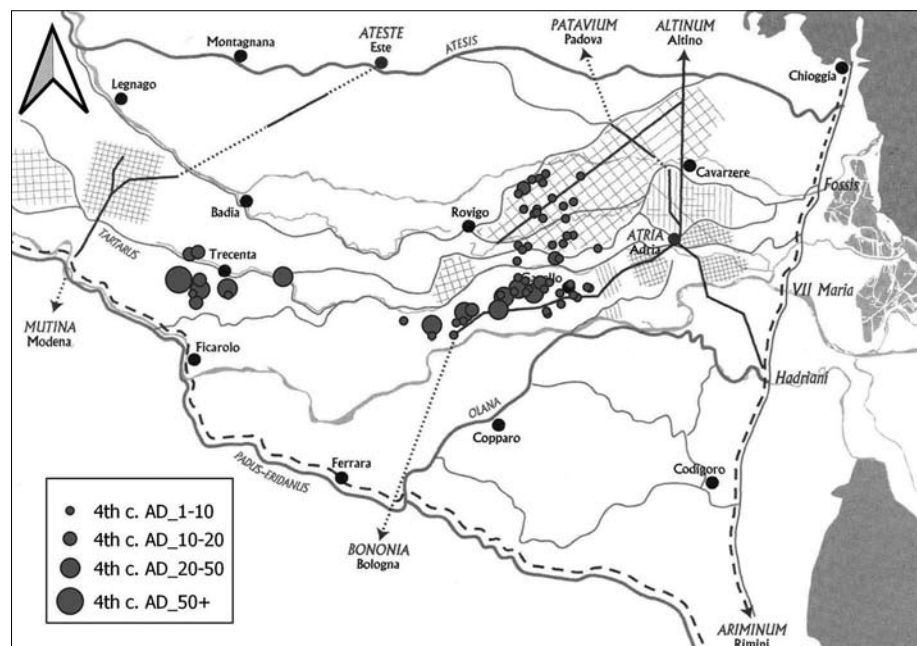


Fig. 8. Distribution pattern of sites dating to the Roman age according to the number of coin finds of the 4th century AD in evidence. Pattern: PERETTO 2018, p. 12, fig. 1, modified by the author.



depopulation³⁴. This process implied the transition from small rural properties to *latifundia*, large estates devoted to extensive grain production and animal husbandry, according to new farming practices involving the whole peninsula during the middle Imperial age³⁵. Following the new arrangement, the

occupation regarded only those settlements located in a favorable position for the management of the new *latifundia*; the coin distribution pattern observed seems to be a direct consequence of this situation. In fact, the sites yielding a larger set of coin finds (see fig. 4 above), usually spanning without interruption

³⁴ On this point cfr. CALLEGHER 1993, pp. 224-225; CALLEGHER 2000, p. 136. See also TONIOLO 2000, p. 91.

³⁵ Cfr. CARANDINI 1989, pp. 517-520; FENTRESS 2002, pp. 196-221.

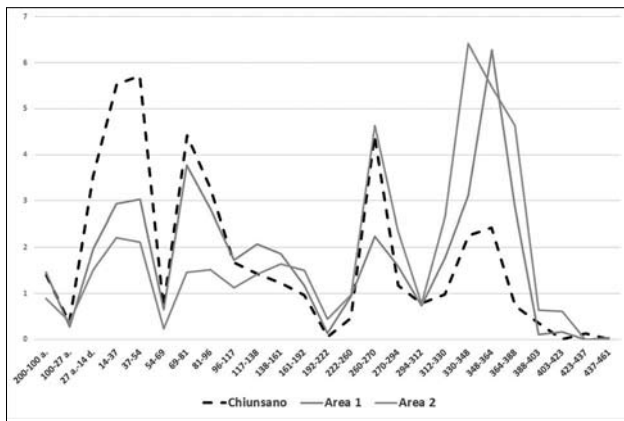


Fig. 9. Chronological distribution of coin finds from the site of Chiunsano and from Area 1 and Area 2 in comparison.

Findspot	Chronology	Unit	References
Voghenza (Ferrara)	100 AD	<i>Classis Ravennas</i>	BOLLINI 1989; ROXAN 1994, n. 142
San Bellino (Rovigo)	182-184 AD	?	ZERBINATI 1996; BASSIGNANO 1997, pp. 156-157; <i>RMD IV</i> , n. 297
Settepolesini (Bondeno, Ferrara)	197-211 AD	?	ZERBINI 2010
Ceneselli (Rovigo)	213-217 AD	<i>Classis Ravennas</i>	One fragment published in MELLONI, VALLICELLI 2018, p. 52, 54; a second fragment unpublished
Chiunsano (Gaiba, Rovigo)	226 AD	<i>Classis Ravennas</i> (?)	ZERBINATI 1988; ROXAN 1994, n. 196
Chiunsano (Gaiba, Rovigo)	2nd-3rd century AD (?)	?	2 fragments from the excavations 1992-2000 of the University of Bochum kept at the Museo dei Grandi Fiumi, Rovigo; BÜSING-KOLBE 2016, pp. 135-136

Tab. 2. List of the Roman military diplomas found in the area of the lower Po valley.

from the Republic to the early Medieval age, are placed alongside the major river and land routes connecting the area with the neighboring regions³⁶. This new settlement pattern confirms the adoption of a new productive system devoted to the exportation of the goods produced in the newly formed *latifundia*, in contrast to the small scale, subsistence farming practiced during the early Imperial age³⁷.

Thanks to the epigraphic evidence, it is possible to frame this economic process more in depth. The area to the north of the city of Ravenna and to the west of the ancient river Po delta has revealed a quite high number of Roman military diplomas, usually found fragmented. In most cases they belonged to members

of the Roman military fleet garrisoned in Classe, near Ravenna, the so called *classiarii*, and can be dated from the time of Trajan to the reign of Severus Alexander (tab. 2)³⁸. Further inscriptions from the same area mention veterans of both the eastern fleet of Classe and the western one of *Misenum*, together with members of other military units³⁹. According to the inscriptions, this sector of the Po valley experienced, during the middle Imperial period, a new era of colonization by veterans of the Roman army and their presence can be connected with quite certainty to the development of *latifundia* in the same period and to the economic and employment opportunities which followed⁴⁰. Moreover, epigraphy attests the

³⁶ On this settlement pattern cfr. ZERBINI 2007a, p. 191; ORTALLI 2007, p. 241.

³⁷ Cfr. TONIOLO 2000, p. 91.

³⁸ On the Imperial fleet stationed in Ravenna see BOLLINI 1990; BOLLINI 2005; FABBRI 2005.

³⁹ Cfr. ZERBINI 2007a, pp. 200-201; ZERBINI 2007b, p. 357; ORTALLI 2007, p. 253.

⁴⁰ A sign of the economic wealth reached by some of these veterans is represented by the the sarcophagus of *M. Aurelius Marinus*, veteran of the *Classis Ravennas*, dated to the mid 3rd century and found in Voghenza (Ferrara); BOLLINI 2007, pp. 181-183, 188; ZERBINI 2007a, p. 199; ORTALLI 2007, p. 255.

presence of large Imperial properties depending on an administrative center, the *Vicus Habentia*, a settlement which flourished from the 2nd century AD, eventually becoming a bishopric in the 5th century AD⁴¹. It can be assumed that the aforementioned development of the *latifundia* is the sign of the enlargement of the Imperial estates over time⁴² and the main reason for this was securing the supply to the city of Ravenna, to the fleet stationed in Classe and to the Roman army during the military campaigns on the Danube, in this case thanks to maritime routes crossing the Adriatic Sea⁴³. During the late Roman period, following the emerging of Ravenna, which eventually became the new capital of the Western Empire in 402 AD, the exploitation of the southeastern Po valley increased significantly⁴⁴. Besides the supply of the city, the lower Po basin played a key role as a natural defense system for Ravenna and Rome against the incipient barbarian raids and, thanks to the hydrographic network, the area was directly connected to the maritime trade routes on the Adriatic Sea which allowed the local production to be distributed on a larger scale⁴⁵. The increase in the number of settlements between the 4th and the 5th century AD is reflected in the development of the coin distribution pattern seen before and it is confirmed by the evidence provided by other artifacts, such as pottery⁴⁶.

The present contribution constitutes only a brief overview of the research carried on and further steps will follow. The complete catalogue of the coins will be published in the new volume of *RMRVe* series mentioned above. Such a large number of finds will enable further numismatic analysis in order to understand, for instance, the features of the monetary circulation in a rural landscape of the *Regio X Venetia et Histria* in comparison to the major settlements. The analysis of other sources (epigraphy, archaeology, etc.) will be enhanced, to pursue the reconstruction of the economic development of this part of the southeastern Po valley, over time and space, with particular regard to the system involving the *classarii*, the Imperial properties, the city of Ravenna and the harbour of Classe.

Concerning the numismatic aspects, a further research perspective will be the comparison between the local coin distribution pattern and that of other well investigated rural landscapes, such as Roman Etruria, in order to detect similarities or differences concerning economic and social aspects⁴⁷.

To conclude, the aim of this research is also to demonstrate how coin finds, even if without a proper archaeological context (stratigraphy), can provide us with evidence concerning not only the monetary sphere but, more importantly, the economic history of ancient times.

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⁴¹ BOLLINI 1995; RIGHINI 2007; PUPILLO 2007a. On the site of *Vicus Habentia* see BACILIERI 1994; UGGERI 2001.

⁴² PUPILLO 2007a, p. 394; PUPILLO 2007b, pp. 218-219.

⁴³ BOLLINI 2007, pp. 185-186; ORTALLI 2007, p. 249; PUPILLO 2007a, pp. 394-395.

⁴⁴ A further explanation for the increasing exploitation of the area can be found in the interruption of the corn supply from Egypt to the Western Mediterranean, in favour of the newly established city of Constantinopolis. On the beginning of the supply with Egyptian corn of the new Eastern capital see RICKMAN 1980, pp. 68-69, 198.

⁴⁵ BOLLINI 2007, 189-190.

⁴⁶ Cfr. TONIOLO 2000, 92. The surveys considered here yielded also coins dating to the 6th and 7th century AD. The analysis of Byzantine finds is currently carried out by Bruno Callegher.

⁴⁷ At the present time, the complete list of coin finds from the British-Italian project which investigated the *ager Cosanus*, see CARANDINI *et al.* 2002, is not available. Nevertheless, significant data derive from the *The Roman Peasant Project*, thanks to an exhaustive edition of small finds, including coins; see BOWES 2020.

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ABSTRACT

The contribution provides an overview of an ongoing research concerning coin finds coming from Roman rural settlements uncovered in the area of the southern Veneto region.

Over 3,000 coins collected during extensive surface surveys have been analyzed through GIS mapping, providing information on the evolution of the settlement and land exploitation dynamics during the Roman age. Among others, a change in the distribution of coin finds, between the early and the middle Imperial age, can be seen. It can be related to the development of a new settlement pattern which followed the expansion of the Imperial *latifundia* and the introduction of new farming practices. As attested by epigraphy, the veterans of the Imperial fleet stationed in Ravenna played an active role in the economic development of the area, which ultimately led to the designation of the city as capital of the western Empire in 402 AD.

Keywords: rural settlements; coin finds; *Venetia et Histria*; Ravenna; *classarii*.

RIASSUNTO

MONETE E INSEDIAMENTI RURALI DI ETÀ ROMANA: NUOVI DATI DALLA *VENETIA ET HISTRIA* MERIDIONALE

Il contributo fornisce una panoramica di uno studio in corso d'opera relativo ai rinvenimenti monetali provenienti da insediamenti rurali di età romana messi in luce nel settore meridionale della regione Veneto.

Oltre 3,000 monete recuperate nel corso di ricerche di superficie estensive sono state analizzate attraverso la mappatura GIS, fornendo informazioni sulle dinamiche insediative e produttive di età romana. Tra queste, un cambio nella distribuzione dei rinvenimenti monetali tra età alto e medio imperiale può essere correlato al nuovo modello insediativo conseguente all'espansione dei latifondi di proprietà imperiale e all'introduzione di nuove pratiche agrarie. Come attesta l'epigrafia, i veterani della flotta imperiale stanziata a Ravenna ebbero un ruolo fondamentale nello sviluppo economico dell'area, che culminò nella designazione della città a capitale dell'Impero Romano d'Occidente nel 402.

Parole chiave: insediamenti rurali; rinvenimenti monetali; *Venetia et Histria*; Ravenna; *classarii*.