

# I. RURAL SETTLEMENT THE NEPI SURVEY PROJECT

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## 1. Introduction

The main aim of the Nepi survey was to collect a coherent body of data to study the changes in the local settlement patterns from the Bronze Age onwards. The target was to improve the quality of the data existing for the area. The trajectory of this minor Faliscan centre was approached by looking at the territory around it (Fig.1). The territory was sampled by drawing transects to cardinal directions radiating out from the town along the grid of the *Istituto Geografico Militare* (I.G.M.) map. The outer boundary of the projected survey area was defined by the hypothetical territory drawn by Thiessen polygons. The result was a series of transects 1 kilometre wide up to 5 kilometres from the town.

Teams were in the field during three seasons in 1999 and 2000. In 1999, during a two-week blanket survey in the area nearest to Nepi, 92 units were studied. During Easter 2000 the study focused on the locality of Il Pizzo. Firstly, a systematic collection was performed along a SW - NE baseline on the top of the promontory. General maps were drawn of the promontory and a 3-D model of the summit was created (Fig. 2). In September 2000 the blanket survey was undertaken for three weeks. The research strategy was revised so that the main focus was on selected areas on the boundary of the supposed territory. In total, 141 units were covered. During the first season, the team included Dr John Hayes and Nicholas Whitehead and in September 2000 Elena Lorenzetti. All material has now been deposited in the museum of Civita Castellana.

## 2. The blanket survey: the results

The Nepi survey revealed the extensive presence of low density prehistoric finds in the territory. Most of the flints were from the long period between Upper Palaeolithic and Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. Only a few finds were from earlier phases of the Palaeolithic.

It is simplistic to group all prehistoric, Faliscan or Roman pottery into wide groups, but most prehistoric pottery was generically from the period between the Late Neolithic and early Middle Bronze Age, and Faliscan pottery was relatively scarce (Fig. 4). A series of new prehistoric sites were found. There were only a few signs of Archaic settlements in the territory.

The quantity and wide distribution of Roman finds overshadowed all other periods. The distributions of Faliscan pottery and Roman pottery were very similar and showed continuity and increasing intensity in the use of the same areas. Nevertheless, the settlement pattern changed during the Republic.

## 3. Il Pizzo (Nepi, VT) – a life history of a site

The promontory of Il Pizzo was used as a settlement site at least from the Middle Bronze Age onwards (di Gennaro *et al.* 2002). During our fieldwork we observed that the Bronze Age pottery was eroded down the slopes from all around the promontory. The first main period was the early Middle Bronze Age, but the Final Bronze Age seems to have been the most important settlement phase. In addition, there might have been a late Iron Age settlement phase (di Gennaro *et al.* 2002).

When the main plateau of the town was settled during the eighth century BC, the northern side of Il Pizzo was used for funerary purposes. This meant an important shift in the importance of the site. Il Pizzo ceased to exist but a new, exclusively ritual and liminal meaning was created.

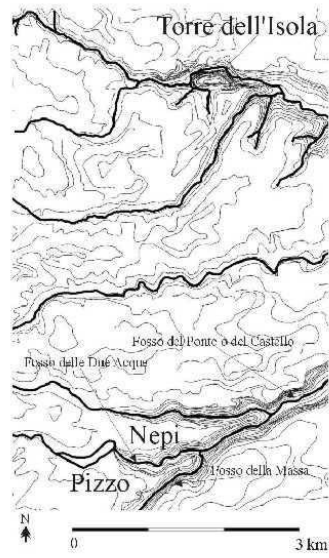
Both the summit and the slopes of the promontory were in use during the Faliscan period. Most major modifications can be dated suggestively to the Late Archaic period or to the beginning of the Roman dominance. The terrace walls were built on the summit and the lower terrace was constructed on the northern side. The site can be interpreted as an outpost.

During Roman domination, Il Pizzo became again a funerary site. Later, during the Medieval and early modern periods, the site was used again as a stronghold and viewing post. The latest use has been agricultural and pastoral. As an archaeological site, it has been forgotten and can regain social meaning only through archaeological interpretation (Rajala 2002).

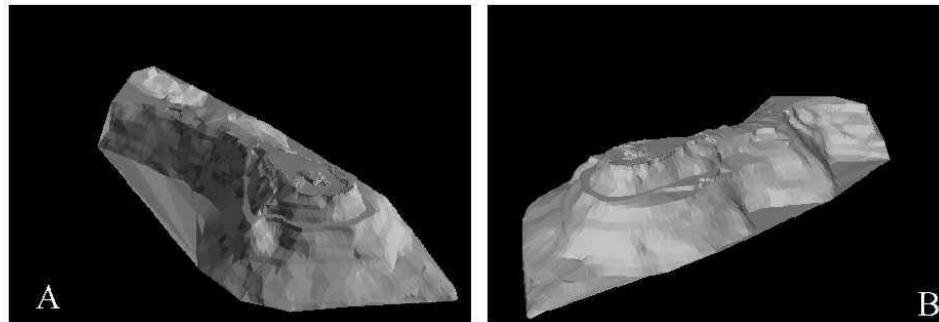
#### **4. Bibliography**

di Gennaro, F., Cerasuolo, O., Colonna, C., Rajala, U., Stoddart, S. and Whitehead, N. (2002) The city and territory of Nepi, *Papers of the British School at Rome* 70: 29-77.

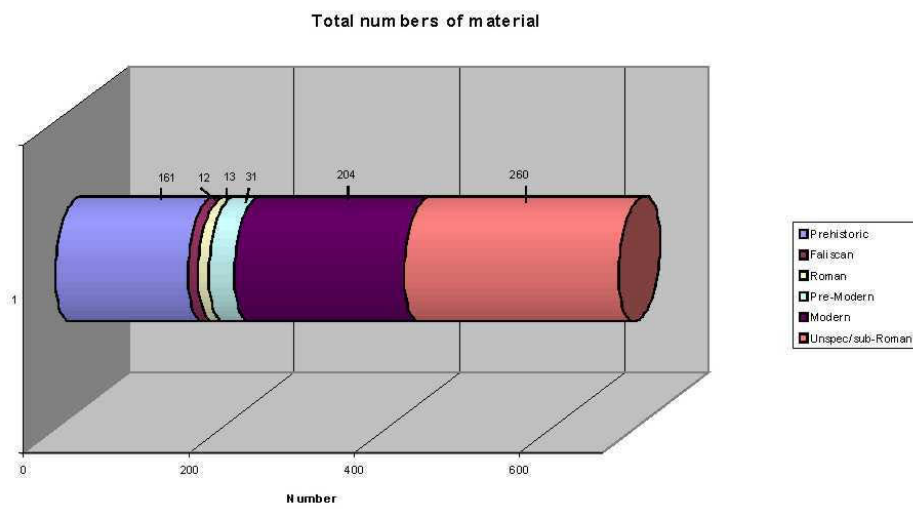
Rajala, U. (2002) Life history approach to a site: working on Il Pizzo (Nepi, VT, Italy) *Antiquity* 76, no. 293: 625-626.



**Fig. 1.** The location of Il Pizzo.



**Fig. 2.** The 3D model of Il Pizzo. A. Southern slope. B. Northern slope.



**Fig. 4.** The total numbers of material.