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## THE FALERII NOVI PROJECT: THE 2022 SEASON

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The summer of 2022 saw the continuation of a multi-year fieldwork programme initiated in 2021 at the site of Falerii Novi, in the Middle Tiber Valley. A four-week campaign built upon the results of the previous season (Bernard et al., 2022), as well as long-standing exploration of the site by means of non-invasive methodologies (Keay et al., 2000; Verdonck et al., 2020). The 'Falerii Novi Project' (FNP) explores the development of this substantial urban site over the *longue durée* from its Republican origins through Imperial and late antique transformations and the reoccupation in the medieval period. The FNP is driven by socio-economic historical questions and by a desire to evaluate urban changes within their broader regional landscape (Andrews et al., 2023). The campaign from 30 May to 24 June 2022 consisted of stratigraphic excavation in three locations within the intramural area. This work represented a multi-institutional collaboration between the British School at Rome, Harvard University and the University of Toronto, along with researchers from Ghent University and the University of Florence, under the authorization of the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la Provincia di Viterbo e per l'Etruria Meridionale.

Using the results of earlier magnetometry (Keay et al., 2000) and more recent ground-penetrating radar (GPR) (Verdonck et al., 2020), three trenches were strategically located within the intramural area in order to capture evidence from a range of urban activities and spaces. One trench covered what was interpreted as a *macellum* structure (Area 1); a second explored a large *domus* south of the forum (Area 2); and a third investigated a mixed-use streetside intersection along the Via Amerina close to the South Gate (Area 3). The campaign also included restudy of the standing remains immediately west of the forum (Area 4), which were excavated by the Soprintendenza from 1969 to 1975; further GPR to the south of the city, east of the Via Amerina; and further coring within the walls.<sup>1</sup>

Excavation in Area 1 was located over a structure that could be identified as a *macellum* due to its form in the GPR survey. Investigation of this area aims to understand how the

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<sup>1</sup> For the location of the trenches, see Andrews et al., 2023: fig. 3.

meat market was embedded into the city's broader infrastructure, specifically its streets, water provisioning and drainage system. The structure, measuring 29 m × 17 m, consists of an octagonal perimeter surrounding an open space with two small concentric structures at its centre. A 15 m × 6 m trench was opened in the northern area, where the GPR showed a series of six rooms measuring *c.* 3 m × 3 m. The trench covered the entrance corridor and two flanking shops. The earliest of several construction phases was represented by ashlar *opus quadratum* that extended to a depth of over 5 m and served as foundations for subsequent phases. At least two later phases were constructed in brick and *opus vittatum*. At the northern limit of the trench, work uncovered an apparently earlier structure made of poorly preserved tuff that was abutted by the *macellum*. This structure was not present in either of the earlier magnetometry or GPR results, but animal bones, many with cut and butcher marks, along with glass, were found in abundance. Pottery from the trench reflected a wide range of dates, from the third century BC through the early modern period. Noteworthy, however, was the ratio of late antique and, in particular, medieval pottery compared to the other areas, suggesting occupation or at least frequentation of this location across a wider arc of time than previously proposed for the site as a whole (cf. Keay et al., 2000: 73; Patterson, Witcher and Di Giuseppe, 2020: 265). This later activity may be attributed in part to the *macellum*'s proximity to the medieval church and monastery of Santa Maria di Falleri.

Area 2 explored what appeared in the magnetometry survey to be a house of canonical form with atrium and peristyle, oriented east–west and extending across the full *c.* 60 m width of *insula* XLIV, south of the forum (Keay et al., 2000: 42). A 10 m × 10 m trench was opened over a rectangular room at the southwest corner of the house, south of the main entrance corridor or *fauces*. The structure's walls of finely drafted ashlar blocks were visible in the magnetometry data but did not appear on the GPR survey of the same area (see Verdonck et al., 2020). No trace of the original floor levels of the *domus* survived, but the destruction of this part of the house was evinced by a thick fill with signs of burning along with building rubble, including fragments of painted wall plaster, a badly weathered tuff Doric capital, and floor preparation of Republican *opus scutulatum*. On top of this destruction fill was a layer rich with fragments of glass, coins, iron nails and a variety of small finds. Related to this fill, the walls of this part of the *domus* were rebuilt with weathered or reused ashlar blocks placed directly atop the destruction debris. In this phase, part of the room's western wall was finished with an unusual preparation of roof tiles set into a light clay mortar. The lack of any floor surface atop the destruction fill may suggest material fell from a collapsed second storey. Ceramics provide a narrow chronological horizon of the mid-fifth to early sixth century AD, with a concentration of coins and etched glass from the fourth century AD. Noteworthy is the absence of material of late Republican and early Imperial date, suggesting a gap in occupation. Medieval reoccupation is confirmed by ceramics from a rectangular context, possibly a structure of perishable materials, made in the centre of the room. This phase of medieval activity included a series of low *pisé de terre* walls, presumably to support a building of raised wooden slats, perhaps a granary, built perpendicular to the *domus*, abutting its façade and running across the area of the north–south street bounding the west side of the *insula*. The street itself was completely removed at some intervening date, as an auger-hole immediately west of the *domus* found no traces of the original road surface or preparation.

Area 3 was located 50 m north of the South Gate, on the eastern side of the Via Amerina, the so-called *cardo maximus*, where the magnetometry indicated several linear

features to the immediate east of the road. The area was chosen because of its position at an intersection of the city's principal north–south axis of transport and movement and a secondary east–west road, as well as its potential to expose an area of potential non-elite commercial and domestic activity. Within a 15 m × 15 m trench, the secondary east–west road, paved in two different types of basalt, was found to be well worn with deep ruts and was evidently blocked in a final phase with large, reused architectural elements together with ceramic material dating to the sixth century AD. A series of small rooms lay to the south of the road, the easternmost of which had a floor of *opus spicatum*. Against the north–south wall extending the length of the western side of this room, a deep layer still occupied in the late sixth / early seventh century AD contained coins (ranging from the first to sixth century AD) along with quantities of bone, charcoal, gaming pieces, one die, and coloured glass. The room immediately to the west and near the centre of the trench yielded another coin (dating to the fourth century AD), reused marble architectural fragments, and contained a deep-set feature with plastered walls clearly related to hydraulic activity, perhaps a cistern, of which the fill suggests a date of mid- to late sixth century AD (Fig. 1). A small hearth built into the beaten earth floor of the room contained animal bones and charcoal, and indicated the application of intense heat. These spaces may tentatively be interpreted as a roadside *taberna*, or spaces generally associated with late antique commercial and domestic activities, although traces of the second to first century BC were also identified. In the western half of the trench, two distinct concrete features may reflect modest roadside features or monuments. A small extension was made on the western limit of the trench and revealed a basalt-paved section of the Via Amerina, which had suffered some modern tree-growth damage but maintained a well-preserved curb and sidewalk pavement. A longitudinal feature clearly visible in the GPR survey was revealed to be a long drain constructed from roof tiles running along the Via Amerina for the length of the trench.



Fig. 1. Late antique assemblage from the fill of a possible cistern (photo: S. Kay).

In Area 4 the University of Florence and the British School at Rome began a systematic topographical study of the monumental *insula*, partially excavated by the Soprintendenza from 1969 to 1975 (Andrews et al., 2023). *Insula XXXI* (Keay et al., 2000) is located at the crossroads of the main east–west and north–south city roads, west of the southwestern flank of the forum and east of the *macellum* (Area 1). The lack of stratigraphic data necessitated an interdisciplinary methodological approach. The entire area of the *insula* (c. 62 m × 42 m) has been systematically surveyed using various methods. Photogrammetry, supplemented by a topographic survey of 220 georeferenced levels, was used to record the standing remains of the excavated eastern half. Over 100 structural contexts were identified, documented and interpreted stratigraphically through a systematic structural analysis. In the unexcavated western half, an area of 426 m<sup>2</sup> was surveyed using GPR, completing the understanding of the *insula* and filling a gap in previous geophysical survey. The research was supported by a series of hand-augers. Archival data, historical and aerial photographs have been cross-referenced with data collected in the field. The 2022 research in Area 4 led to significant results, with the identification of a temple of great urban significance. The complex is east–west oriented and occupies the whole *insula*'s surface. Significantly, it faces the forum, from which it is divided by the Via Amerina. The research identified the existence of two building phases in *opus quadratum*, one related to a first building phase, the other to a significant rebuilding of the complex at a monumental scale. A series of *opus caementicium* structures and later modifications were also identified, including a massive spoliation phase related to the de-functionalization of the complex. Study of the *insula* will continue in 2023 with the cross-referencing of archival excavation data ahead of publication.

At the same time as these excavation activities, a team from Ghent University carried out a GPR campaign and continued hand-augering across the intramural site initiated during the summer of 2021 (Bernard et al., 2022). The GPR survey of 2022 intended to build on previous prospection by extending coverage to an extramural field south of the city walls and east of the Via Amerina. The results confirmed some indications provided by the earlier study of aerial and satellite photography (Mastroianni, 2016) of the possible presence of a large suburban building or villa and related structures. Surface materials were noted but not collected during this work and suggest activity in this location from the Republican period to late antiquity. The continued intramural hand-augering campaign used Eijelkamp augers to make a total of twenty new boreholes, including ten along a north–south transect from the northwest corner of the forum to the walls, seven within the area of the old excavations (Area 4), two within the trench of Area 2 and one in Area 3. Augerings were stopped when either natural soils or obstructions were reached. Recovered archaeological materials included fragments of pottery and mosaic tesserae, as well as building materials.

In June 2023, the FNP will continue excavation in Area 1 of the *macellum* and Area 2 of the *domus*. Area 3, which revealed excellent data for the later phases of city life but contained limited earlier stratigraphy, will be closed, and a new trench (Area 5) will be opened towards the northwestern corner of the forum, where test pits in 2021 reported a high density of artefacts (Bernard et al., 2022).

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### INTERAMNA LIRENAS AND ITS TERRITORY (COMUNE DI PIGNATARO INTERAMNA, PROVINCIA DI FROSINONE, REGIONE LAZIO)

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A decade has passed since the Faculty of Classics of the University of Cambridge first began a series of systematic excavations at the Roman town of Interamna Lirenas. These have been guided and informed by the remarkable results of several seasons of geophysical prospection carried out in collaboration with the British School at Rome (magnetometry in 2010–12; GPR in 2013–14) and Ghent University (GPR in 2015–17) (Launaro and Millett, 2023). Following a first phase of excavations centred on the theatre (Area 1000 / 2013–18), the last four years (2019–22) have focused on the exploration of the adjacent basilica (Area 2000), with smaller trenches opened