The Memory of the Little Things: Mobility and Encounters as Constitutive Elements of Memoryscapes in the Iron Age Apennines

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Small things are easy to carry and consequently a useful proxy for determining human mobility. In particular, small votive offerings such as miniature pottery and bronze figurines can be seen as constitutive elements in the construction and preservation of memories of human mobility in the northern Apennines. Between the 6th and the 4th century BCE, these objects were deposited in huge numbers in rural cult places across the region, such as groves, caves, and lakes, and they display great typological variety. Miniaturising elements of daily life, such as pots and animals, the votive objects were not only a means of religious communication, but also a medium for preserving the memory of mobility across the Apennines. Material signs of the sacralisation of tangible and intangible resources, these small objects established a link between paths, travel experience, social representation, and collective cultural memories, creating shared memoryscapes in the mountains and the surrounding areas. The rural sanctuaries, due to their significant reserves of water and other raw materials, and their proximity to the regional routes through the Apennines, were thus not only markers of memory in the landscape, but also places of encounters and repositories of collective cultural memories.

There are several approaches to the collective cultural memory in archaeology, ranging from the more general and theoretic (Assmann 1992) to the more pragmatic (Lillios, Tsamis 2010). Most of these approaches focus on the funerary landscape, since graves, funerary monuments, and assemblages can be intuitively linked to the perception and construction of collective cultural memory in ancient societies. A less explored, but also promising field of archaeological studies on collective cultural memory, concerns the spatialisation of memories ('*localisation*': Halbwachs 1925 (1952): 106-107; '*Verräumlichung*': Assmann 1992: 38-39) and their embedding in a landscape, and even more specifically in a sacred landscape[1]. As Anca Dan observed in a recent contribution on the concept of ancient sacred space in the Mediterranean, each sacred space, even if it was not built or marked by a statue or an inscription, is intrinsically a place within which memory is constructed, negotiated, and preserved[2]. The present paper is positioned within this last field of interest, and will approach the relationship between memory and human mobility by reframing the construction and dialogical preservation of memories in a ResourceCulture of mobility and encounters, which defines and characterises the Iron Age northern Apennines[3]. The immaterial aspects of the construction and preservation or intergenerational transmission of memories are partially preserved and only indirectly traceable in the archaeological record. An attempt may be made to retrieve some of these immaterial aspects through the contextual analysis of certain objects, which served to 'materialise' the collective cultural memory. Since the intention here is to discuss the relationship between memory and mobility, the objects considered in the following – miniature pottery and bronze votive figurines – have been chosen as particularly 'pocketable' and

1 Assmann 2007: 19-20; Clack 2011; Kristan-Graham 2015. More recently, these concepts were applied to study the Alpine Bronze Age and the Iron Age: Ballmer 2017. See also the volume: Hansen, Neumann, Vachta 2016.

2 «Sans être toujours construit, ni même marqué par une statue ou une inscription, cet espace est implicitement, un lieu de mémoire. La consécration change son status juridique et entraîne des constructions et de pratiques culturelles nouvelles» (Dan 2020: 296).

3 Here, 'ResourceCulture' is intended to refer to models that represent the cultural evaluation of resources, their concrete forms and dynamics of use, as well as the social unities and identities in their interaction with the resources (Bartelheim, Hardenberg, Scholten 2021: 16). With the term 'resources' are here not intended raw materials or economic means, but rather «all means able to create, maintain, and transform social relationships, orders and identities» (*ibid.*: 9).

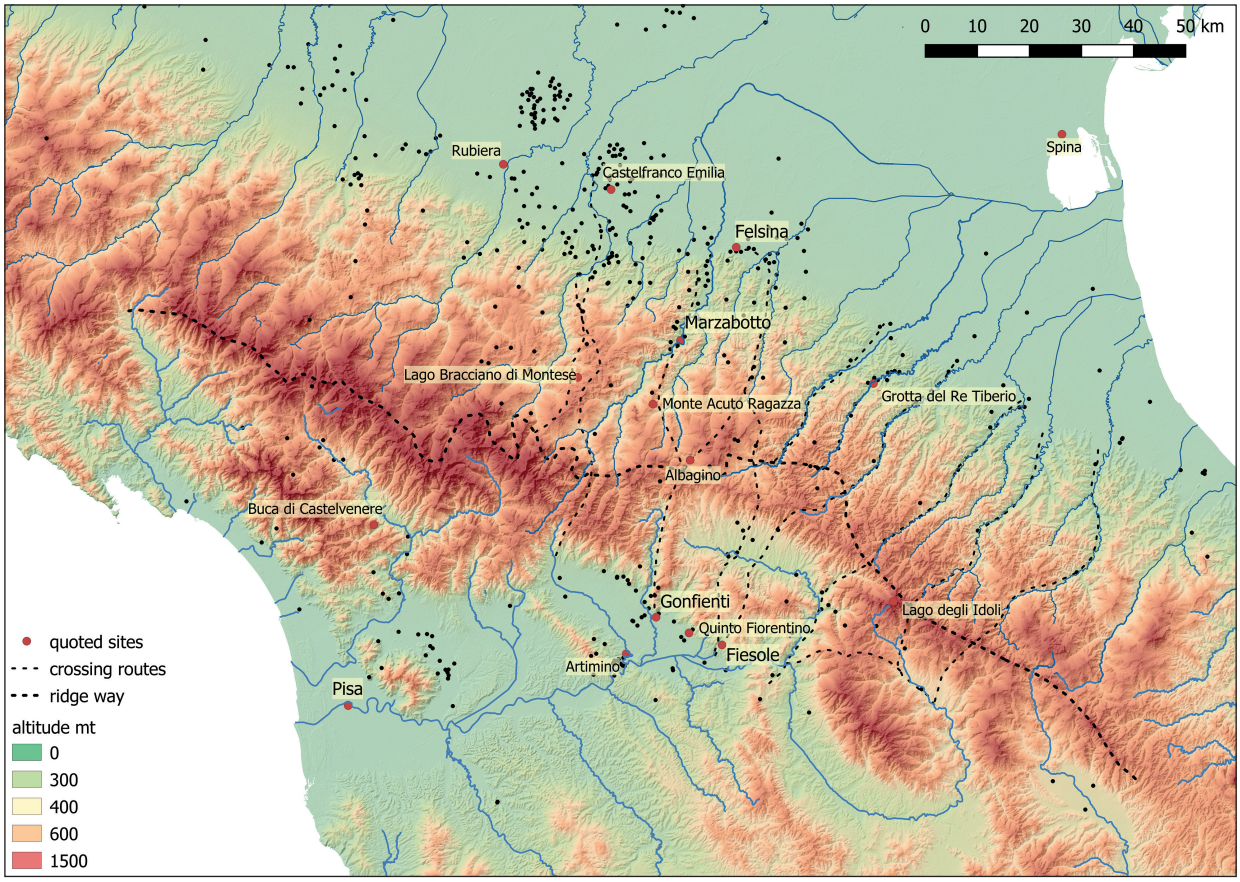

Fig. 1. The northern Apennines as a Resource Landscape (author with QGIS 3.8; DEM Copernicus EU-DEM v1.1; vectorial data: points author s. bibliographic references; rivers: Copernicus EU; locator's vectorial data: @EuroGeographics).

easy to carry over long distances. Moreover, these objects were not meant for everyday use, but were rather media of religious communication, which was linked to ritualised social representation and to the preservation of collective experiences (Assmann 1992: 56-59).

The Northern Apennines: A Cultural Resource Landscape

The Apennines are a mountain chain crossing Italy longitudinally from the Alps to Sicily, forming the backbone of the Italian Peninsula. The northern part of the range extends about 250 km from the north-west, where it joins the Alps as far as the Casentine in the south-east (Fig. 1). The dual perception of the Apennines, on one hand as a boundary, on the other as a connecting area between both eastern and western, and northern and central Italy, was already present in ancient literary sources (Diana 1987). In the 1st century CE, Strabo described the Apennines as a connection between different cultural regions (Str. V 2, 1), while Livy accentuated the element of division more heavily (Liv. XXXVI 15, 6). This duality is only apparently contradictory, since these mountains were, from prehistory onwards, a cultural landscape in which the perception of geographical and topographical features was determined by the social evaluation of their functional or symbolic aspects. Among the notable physical features of the Apennines, we can recall here the abundance of raw materials (waters, stones, wood, minerals). These commodities could have been triggers for contrastive valuation processes in those societies living in and near the mountains, since the exploitation of raw materials would require cooperation, but could also cause conflicts around appropriation and control of access. A further, intangible, resource is the high visibility of the surrounding landscapes from the peaks and along the ridge trails, which could increase contacts, communication, trade, and exchange of knowledge, but might also be used to

facilitate territorial control. Symbolic aspects of the mountains include their role in shaping religious landscapes around the presence of lakes, groves, caves, and other natural features with particular morphologies or properties within these areas, which were considered privileged places for transcendent encounters. These symbolic aspects can be seen as active participants in the duality of the Apennines: they could be inclusive, making the open-air sanctuaries reference points for the mobility of people and domesticated animals and turning them into gathering points. However, they could also be exclusive and potentially conflictual when these cult places were controlled by groups acting solely in their own interests, aiming for privileged communication with the gods, or when they were appropriated by communities as border sanctuaries (Amann 2015: 12-13).

When discussing the relationship between mobility and memory in the Iron Age northern Apennines, this dual role in connecting and dividing communities dwelling the valleys and the hill belts south and north of mountains cannot be ignored. Both aspects, connectivity and boundaries, are intertwined with potential mobility and with their own definition in the cultural memory of the communities involved. Moreover, our increasing knowledge of the archaeological record in the Apennines suggests that the mountainous areas themselves were well-populated places, rich in settlements and cult places. As such, they cannot be reduced to mere sites for infrastructure or liminal zones passed through in order to reach the other side, or to be controlled for economic purposes. For this reason, the present contribution focuses on the mountains themselves, approaching the Apennines as a cultural resource landscape.

This cultural resource landscape, constituted by natural physical features, settlements, infrastructures and sacred places was organised into different climatic zones and can be analysed as a ResourceComplex, namely a network of tangible and intangible resources and resource-related sociocultural dynamics (Klocke-Daffa 2017: 253-269; Teuber, Schweizer 2020; Bartelheim, Hardenberg, Scholten 2021: 13-15). The mobility of humans and animals was among the most significant sociocultural dynamics, and was characterised by seasonality, since the upper climatic zone of the mountains (900 to 2165 mt altitude) was mostly covered by snow in winter. Orientation when traversing the mountainous areas was probably easier on the slope- and ridge trails, where the visibility was higher, but this visibility would have been affected by some seasonal factors too: humidity and fog could have made mobility difficult, perhaps impossible, even in the mid-seasons. The hill belts (mostly karst, at 300 to 900 mt altitude) and the mid- and lower river valleys running along the streams springing from the Apennines could be travelled all year round. These rivers were mostly tributaries of the two main rivers, the Po in the north and the Arno in the south, whose plains were largely occupied by wetlands. Current knowledge of the settlement patterns in the area shows an adaptation to these climatic conditions, since the most densely populated zones were in the hill belts, the fertile colluvial and alluvial valleys, and the plains, partially reclaimed through use of man-made canals. The infrastructures facilitating mobility were also largely located along or parallel to the river valleys, as the urban growth in the Bisenzio and Reno valleys during the mid- 6th century BCE and the frequency of exchange along the trans-Apennines routes suggest. Moreover, it is reasonable to suppose that also the upper ridge routes, offering a high visibility on both sides of the mountains, were frequented during the summer. The ResourceComplex of the Apennines therefore cannot be studied without considering the impact of personal mobility, the exchange of goods and ideas, and the consequent dynamics of the resulting encounters upon the resource landscape.

Between the 8th and the 3rd century BCE, the material record attesting the exchange of goods and ideas indicates a discontinuous, non-linear transformation in both quality and quantity. This suggests that personal mobility and the dynamics of exchange, although recurrent and seasonal, were not exclusively dependent upon tangible resources and natural conditions, but were rather strongly affected by sociocultural dynamics and intangible resources. As is to be expected, infrastructural resources had a strong impact on mobility. Here, the term infrastructural resources refers to each form of infrastructure able to create, change, and maintain identities and social relationships for local communities, namely settlement strategies, dwelling forms, occupation of the land and agricultural exploitation, organisation of the craft production (in particular of pottery, textiles and metal processing), trade networks, and even the sacred landscape, considered here as a form of religious and social communication embedded in the landscape. This infrastructure indeed displays very articulated dynamics of change, primarily linked to the negotiation of power relationships at the local level, and to the Mediterranean social networks of the local elites.

If we consider the urban turn, for example, this had already begun in Bologna during the Villanovan period (Sassatelli 2010: 208) with the aggregation of different villages, similar to other centres in southern Etruria and Veneto (Pacciarelli 2017). Later on in the 6th century BCE, a proper urban 'revolution' can be observed in Marzabotto and Gonfienti, both founded on a regular plan[4]. The new urban form led to embedded and centralised forms of production both within the city (Morpurgo, Pizzirani, Mattioli 2017: 113-118). These developments in urban forms ran parallel to the emergence of the harbour of Spina on the Adriatic Sea and Pisa on the Tyrrhenian coast, following the loss of power of the southern Etruscan harbours, which lost the conflict with the Greek *poleis* for the control of the Mediterranean Sea routes and trade (Poggesi 2014: 87; Sassatelli 2010: 208; Bargiacchi 2007). Consequently, the ResourceComplex of the Apennines should be regarded as a longitudinal, dynamic network (ResourceAssemblage: Bartelheim, Hardenberg, Scholten 2021: 15-16), in which the rhythms of change were affected by sociocultural dynamics and interactions on different scales: within the local communities, along regional networks, as well as within the frame of supra-regional, Mediterranean dynamics.

Rural Sanctuaries as Places of Encounters

To approach the relationship between memory and mobility, a particular type of infrastructural resource linked to religious communication, namely the rural sanctuaries, will be analysed in detail. The sanctuaries considered here are listed from east to west: the Idol's lake in the Casentine mountains near the sources of the Arno river; the Re Tiberio cave in a section of the karst hill belt along the Senio Valley; the Albagino lake, by the Futa pass; the Bracciano di Montese lake, overlooking the Panaro valley; and the cave of Castelvenere in the Apuan Alps, in the Serchio valley[5]. These rural sanctuaries, which include caves with underground waters and lakes within sacred groves, present two main properties that make them particularly suitable for this purpose: their geographic position and the number and quality of objects in the votive deposits. Geographically, these sites are all located along the main communication routes of the Apennines, and are frequently also found in proximity to crossing points between the ridge trail (Alta Via) and the routes leading along the river valleys.

Concerning these aspects of the sanctuaries' locations, the high variability in the typology, the quantity, and the chronology of the votive objects, which can mostly be stylistically or typologically dated between the middle of the 6th century BCE and the 4th century BCE, contribute to a characterisation of these sanctuaries as religious hubs founded along the routes used by mobile, travelling people, and probably their domesticated animals as well. The number of individual votives found in the Idols' lake, mostly comprising bronze figurines, is over 800, and more than 600 individual votives (mostly miniature vessels) were found in the Re Tiberio cave. The Idols' lake (Fig. 2) is an alluvial lake on Mount Falterona, which along with the adjacent Mount Falco is one of the two highest peaks in the eastern Apennines. In the Iron Age the lake was surrounded by a beech forest, with some firs and oaks (Ricciardi, Calò 2007), and was situated in close proximity to the springs of the river Arno (Bargiacchi 2007: 171-174). This river was the primary natural stream of northern Etruria, which flowed through the territories of the main Etruscan cities of Arezzo, Fiesole, Pisa, and several other important centres, such as Artimino, connecting the inland cities to the Tyrrhenian sea and the Tiber valley. An ideological value should thus probably be added to the lake and sacred grove, linked to the presence of the river-source springs, since the Arno river not only marked the landscape but also affected the identities of the northern Etruscan city-states. Moreover, the Arno's whole riverine network, including its tributaries, can be considered one of the most important trade and cultural route networks in ancient Etruria. In this lake, a large number of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic bronze figurines, stylistically dated to between the 6th and the 4th century BCE (Settesoldi 2007), as well as small iron spearheads and few fragments of pottery have been found[6]. The few indications found

[4] For the religious and sociopolitical implications of the new urban form: Govi 2017: 89. For the similarities between Gonfienti and Marzabotto: Poggesi 2011: 40-44; Poggesi 2014: 87.

[5] See Fig. 1. All the lakes mentioned here have now dried out, and their existence can only be demonstrated through pedological analysis (Pallecchi *et alii* 2007; Perkins, Nocentini, Warden 2020: 414; Badiali 2013: 327-329). The Idol's lake was recently restored (Bartolini, Miozzo, Toni 2007).

[6] From the first casual discovery in 1838, many non-scientific excavations were conducted here with the sole pur-

Fig. 2. The Idol's lake (Foto: Author).

Fig. 3. The Re Tiberio cave (Foto: Author).

during recent excavations (Fedeli 2007: 40-45) suggest that the votive objects were thrown into the water during the cult practices, exhibited at the water's edge on wooden bases, or hung from tree branches[7].

The second sanctuary, the Re Tiberio cave (Miari *et alii* 2013; Negrini, Poli 2018), presents a very different topographic location, set in the hill belts of the Vena del Gesso Romagnola, a very complex geological assemblage with eroded karst rock areas and sandstone hills (Martini 2007: 14-18; Lugli, Manzi, Roveri 2015). The cave is part of a system of caves within Mount Tondo that have only been partially investigated, looking over the river Senio Valley. In this case, the sanctuary is also close to a nodal point of the regional route network connecting the mountain passes to a long trail on the ridge of the hills, which leads down to the plain. Here, there is a clear view of the plain, looking toward the Adriatic Sea and the harbour of Spina. During the Iron Age the cave, already used as a funerary site in the Copper and Bronze ages, was restructured to facilitate cult activities (Miari *et alii* 2013: 349-353). A channel for water and some niches (Fig. 3) were carved into the floor and walls of the cave by the entrance (Negrini, Poli 2018: 123-125). Several hundred small pots with diameters of between 0.5 and 5 cm have been found. Some of the vessels contained small quantities of precious materials, such as hematite or metals, and others were probably offered empty, or containing perishable offerings (Bertani 1997: 85). The vessels were crowded at the edges of a stream or rill of channelled water flowing into the cave. They can be tentatively dated to between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE, based on typological comparison with other miniature pots of the region, as well as some scant stratigraphic data (Miari 2000: 254-264).

The cult place at Albagino lake (Nocentini, Sarti, Warden 2018) occupies a similar geographical position as the Idols' lake, located as it is in close proximity to the Futa pass, on the route between the ancient cities of Gonfienti, Marzabotto, and Bologna. Although it has only been partially investigated at this time, the context has yielded several bronze figurines whose typologies are similar to those found at the Idols' lake: it should be noted that both contexts show a great variety of types.

The Bracciano di Montese lake, on the opposite side of the mountain range to the Idols' lake and the Albagino lake and further to the northwest, is situated on the connecting route between the districts of Pisa in the south and the densely populated zone between Felsina and Modena, in particular Castelfranco Emilia, in the north (Badiali 2013). This sacred place presents a more homogeneous spectrum of bronze figurines, though only found here in very small quantities (Neri, Campagnari forth.).

Finally, the most western context examined here is the Grotta di Castelvenere, situated in a subregion along the route connecting Pisa and the Emilian and Ligurian centres, where the remains of the material culture present both Etruscan and Ligurian aspects (Ciampoltrini 2018; Krämer 2022a: 96-97; 210-211). The microtopography of the cult context displays strong resonances with the Re Tiberio cave, since here both the pottery – including several imported black and red figured painted vases – and a group of bronze figurines were all deposited by the cave entrance along the

pose of recovering the statuettes in order to sell them on the international art market. Archaeological research on the rest of the context was first undertaken in 2003-2006 (Fedeli 2007).

edges of a stream flowing through it (Mencacci, Zecchini 1975: 121). These figurines were only found here in small numbers, just as in the Re Tiberio cave (where it should also be noted that they are only known by old excavation records) (Bertani 1997: 81).

The topographical contexts of these sanctuaries, constantly linked to the water as a relevant natural element, are all linked to specific natural features connected to the concept of liminality, such as groves, enclosed waters and cave entrances. They are also all placed in proximity to significant transport and communication routes, even though they all require some deviation to be reached. This suggests a semantic aspect in the passage between different existential dimensions, as well as the idea of travel as a form of initiation. The pragmatic embedding of these places in the concrete routes across the Apennines and its impact on mobility should however also be taken into account, since freshwater and caves played an important role in the life of travellers, especially given the above-mentioned seasonality of travel, trade, and transhumance, as well as the particularly hot summers occurring in the hills and foothills.

The Memory of the Little Things

The high number, great variety, and chronological distribution of the offerings over many centuries indicate the role of these sanctuaries as meeting places along the regional mobility routes, and as places of encounters and negotiation between different local identities. Given current research, it is difficult to say whether these meetings were formalized into festivals, as is known for the same period in Greece (Howe 2003; McInerney 1999: 100-108) and in the large gatherings at sanctuaries in central and southern Etruria (such as Campo della Fiera: Cherici 2012; or the coastal *emporia*: Krämer 2016; Krämer forth.). They may only have been sporadically frequented, and each pilgrim could thus only perceive the 'presence' of previous visitors to these sanctuaries indirectly, by admiring their offerings left on the edges of the streams and rills, or shining beneath their waters, just as is known for certain Roman sanctuaries in Umbria (De Cazanove 2015: 184-185). In this case, the encounters would have been limited to the symbolic dimension of shared practices and a shared cult place, but would not have had a communitarian aspect. In both cases, the role of these places as hubs for mobility is certain, not only because of the topographical positions of these sanctuaries mentioned above, but also based on particular details of the relevant objects. For example, there are the so-called anatomical votive statuettes (Settesoldi 2007: 68-69; 2018: 73-74), which synthesized the anthropomorphic figurines as *pars pro toto* in the forms of legs and feet. There are also the small holes performing the function of an atrophic handle in many types of miniature pottery (Bertani 1997: 83-84), which could be used to secure the pots to a belt, a necklace, or to the wrist during transportation. In conclusion, small objects with a prestigious social connotation gained from the value of the material and/or craftsmanship (as in the case of bronze figurines) as well as a social-traditional or symbolic value (as in the case of miniature pots) were clearly suitable to be transported, and should thus be viewed as linked to the mobility of people and possibly domestic animals along the regional communication, travel, and transhumance routes.

A further step can be taken if we analyse the role of these votive objects in constructing individual and collective memories. To understand this point, it is necessary to position the objects in the context of their social use and value in the broader Apennines region. Bronze figurines and miniature pottery have been also found in other ritual contexts (Fig. 4), namely urban and suburban sanctuaries, settlements, in communitarian and domestic cults, and more rarely and only in the case of the bronze objects, at particular natural geographical features, such as rivers or springs. In this last case, there was not a large number of accumulated offerings, and they seem to be related to a single ritual act (Miari 2000: 317-318).

In settlements or urban sanctuaries, the particular connotation of the objects as media for the transmission of memory is made clear by their contexts: the miniature pottery was used in founding and disposal rituals. Both rituals are connected with the history of the buildings and the small pots are a material, actualized expression of the collective memory of the performance of those rituals, most especially in public buildings, but also in private houses. This assumes that with the term collective we can define not only the community as a whole, but also particular subgroups of it, such as the extended family or even artisanal subcommunities, performing disposal rituals of pottery workshops with miniature pottery (Da Vela 2022). Concerning the bronze figurines, most of the original contexts have been lost, though it is claimed that some of the single objects were found by rivers and springs (Miari 2000: 370-371; Macellari 2019: 114-116; Edlund-Berry 2018: 37).

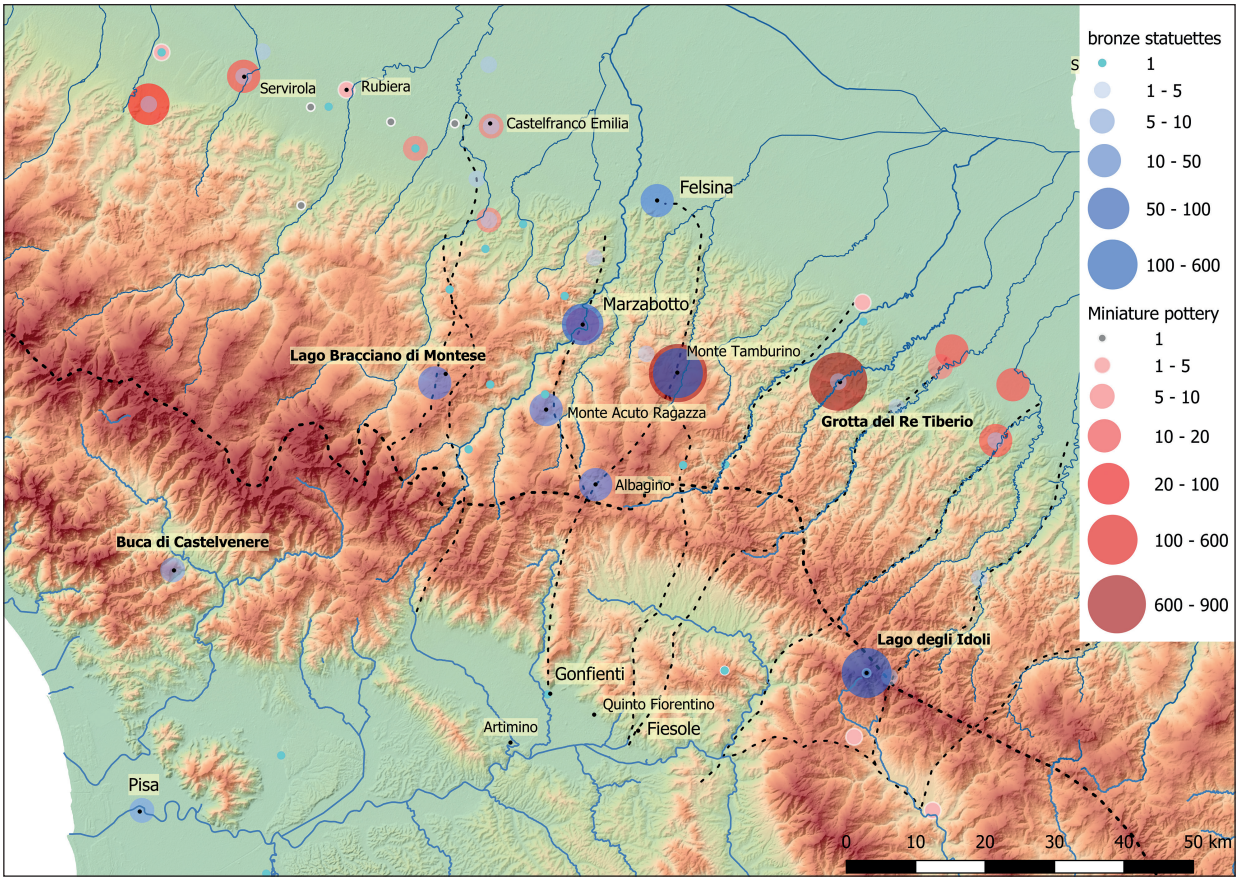

Fig. 4. Distribution of votive bronze figurines and miniature pottery in the region of the Apennines (author with QGIS 3.8; DEM Copernicus EU-DEM v1.1; vectorial data: points author s. bibliographic references; rivers: Copernicus EU; locator's vectorial data: @EuroGeographics).

The deposits that can be traced back to specific contexts and ritual actions are those found in the common wells in settlements (Miari 2000: 86-109; Macellari 2019: 184-196) and in the urban sanctuaries (Romagnoli *et alii* 2014: 138-143). In Marzabotto, bronze figurines were produced in an urban workshop (Miari 2000: 205-206; Morpurgo 2017: 361-363).

The remaining question can therefore be formulated as follows: should the depositing of bronze figurines or miniature vessels in the rural sanctuaries be considered an act of individual memory, or the expression of a collective cultural memory? Even if we do not know the exact dynamics of the ritual offering, the presence of anthropomorphic figurines and the dimensions of the miniature vessels allow us to suggest that these were individual offerings made, for example, during travel or a pilgrimage. However, a collective act of offering and depositing of votives during a festival cannot be excluded. The ritual act can be seen as a complex interaction between natural settings, the materiality of the votive objects, the immateriality of the symbolic communication with the divine, and the worshippers themselves. Here, the role of the individual memory of the worshipper or the collective memory of a specific social group represent an attempt to fix or eternalize the communication achieved with the gods, by donating a figurine that reproduced the devotees' own social identities. In this sense, the choice of Greek models (for example of *kouroi* and *korai* including different attributes and richly decorated clothes) also implies a form of social communication and commemoration concerned not only with the encounter of addressing the deities, but also with the social status of the donors. To a certain degree, the same could be also said for the small figurines which underline sexual attributes, expressing a particular form of gender identity alongside possible religious implications. These, however, are not the focus of the present discussion.

The social embedding of the individual memory was the focus of the French sociologist Maurice

Halbwachs' work (1925). According to Halbwachs, there is no individual memory outside of the social experience and cultural codification, with the consequence that the '*cadres sociaux*' or sociocultural frames in which individual memory is built, make each individual memory a constitutive part of the collective identity. The social frame is in turn reshaped by the selective choices made by the individual memories within it. The collective cultural memory is thus the result of reciprocal interaction between individual memories and the social frame that produced them (Erll 2005: 15-16; Halbwachs 1925 (1952): 198-211 in particular). Applying this theoretical frame to the votive deposits of the Apennines, these miniature vessels and bronze figurines can be considered as media or resources of collective cultural memory. These small, portable votive objects expressed the social perception of the sacrality of the places where they were offered, and made tangible the sacralisation of the infrastructural resources facilitating mobility. Through the votive gifts, the presence of pilgrims and travellers was materialised, creating a memorial of encounters between humans and the divine, as well as between different social actors. Moreover, the accumulation of votive objects over three centuries contributed to the maintenance of community identities (here referring to communities of practices) throughout the Apennines, making the old offerings and rites visible and present over many generations[8].

The Memory of Whom? The Wayfarer and the City

Given the assumption that no memory is exclusively individual and private but always has a collective element, especially if performed in a public space, such as a rural sanctuary, we must then address the question of how to define the 'collective', meaning the social dimension of the memory, in the Iron Age Apennines. In particular, the relationship between the memories of mobility in the rural sanctuaries and the collective memories in settlements and cities appears quite complex, since some votive objects and practices in urban and rural contexts display strong similarities[9]. Some practices in the rural sanctuaries can be framed as symbols of conspicuous consumption (Krämer 2022a: 99) and can be traced back to the *habitus* of a social elite (Papadimitriou 2019: 245 'habitual memory'). The presence of Greek painted pottery in the Cave of Castelvenere and the Greek models of some small bronze figurines at Albagino and the Idols' lakes seem to display codes and references strongly associated with powerful, leading urban and suburban groups. In Castelvenere, the Greek pottery was symbolic not only of the economic power of the donor, but also of their cultural capital and involvement in Mediterranean trade networks. On the other hand, the absence of large known centres in these part of the Apennines discourages us from considering this sanctuary as extra-urban, or as an emanation from a specific city-state. Furthermore, the schematic bronze figurines dedicated here present a very limited spectrum of locally produced types (type Castelvenere). These points make it very plausible to suggest that this was a cult of subregional scale, involving the social elites of one or more centres of the western Apennines[10].

Here, the Mediterranean dimension of the offerings was an expression of the consumption habits of the worshippers and not a consequence of a long-distance mobility. In other contexts, such as Albagino lake and the Idols' lake, some information about the social groups involved in the construction of collective memory can be acquired through examination of the iconography of the bronze figurines. In particular, the types inspired by the Greek *kouroi* and *korai* make reference to a collective imagery shared with painted pottery and funerary monuments. From the end of the 7th century BCE, the use of this kind of imagery was one of the most appreciated means for the construction of collective memory for local families and the expression of their social identities in the funerary context. During this early period, we can already observe the use of 'exotic' orientalizing motives in exceptional funerary monuments, such as the *cippi*

7 Settesoldi 2018: 74. For a similar hypothesis on Umbrian rural cult places, see Amann 2015: 12.

8 In the modern context of the refugee camp of Shatila in Lebanon, the social anthropologist Wulf Frauen studied how intergenerational dynamics of collective memories and memory construction are linked to human mobility (Frauen 2019: 46-53).

9 Similarities in cult behaviors do not necessarily indicate a form of appropriation of the rural cult places by the urban institutions, since they could also be the result of a form of religious competition between urban and rural cult places, as proposed by Petra Amann for the Umbrian sanctuaries (Amann 2015: 25).

10 Robinson Krämer has studied this context from the point of view of the economies of Etruscan sanctuaries (Krämer 2022a: 96-99) and of the re-semantization of images and objects in the Arno Valley and the Apennine region (Krämer 2022b), interpreting the presence of monumental Greek vases as part of an institutionalized religious practice.

of Rubiera (Amann 2008), and in the precious engraved ivory plaques from the tombs of Comeana, Montefortini (Bettini, Poggesi 2020: 744-746) and Quinto Fiorentino (Poggesi 2014: 84-86), but also in public cult buildings, such as the monumental stones of via Fondazza at Felsina (Neri *et alii* 2018: 53-86). The use of Greek models as media for the social memory of local families became increasingly popular from the second half of the 6th century BCE onward via the tradition of the so-called *pietre fiesolane* (Amann 2017) and *stele felsinee* (Govi, Sassatelli 2004; Govi 2014): this shift happened in the context of the new formation of urban elites.

In the second half of the 7th and first half of the 6th century BCE, precious materials and particular iconographies form part of a coherent symbolic system, which has its origins in the *habitus* of leading urban groups or of their urban and non-urban *clientes* or *sodales*, who applied similar strategies of communication in their funerary representation (Maras 2018). Moreover, the individualisation of single types of bronze votive figurines, with fine, delicate decorations engraved on the womens' clothes, or refined details, as observed in the hairstyles, indicate the wish to reproduce the aesthetic values of the known models, as well as to personalise single votive objects. The display of economic power by single social segments within the community through the disposal of precious metals and craftworks in the forest or the waters was accompanied by the investment of cultural capital in the ritual performance, which materialised the memory of a social ideal of beauty and belonging. Moreover, the materialisation and consequently the 'eternalization' of this ideal was only one part of social and religious rituals, which probably involved even more complex conceptual frames and sociocultural dynamics, such as the reciprocation of hospitality between human and divine (Kyrieleis 2016: 238-240).

In the second half of the 6th and especially in the following 5th century BCE, this kind of imagery became widespread in the urban upper classes[11]. The recent analysis of Andrea Gaucci (2021) of some inscribed bases for votive objects in urban and suburban sanctuaries in the northern Apennine, and in particular of a base from the mountainous sanctuary of Monteacuto Ragazza (*ibid.*: 171-177), is enlightening in terms of the impact of urban social elites and their *habitus* expressed in the epigraphic formulary on rural sanctuaries in the northern Apennines. The introduction of new images, linked to the concepts of citizenship and urban lifestyles, which could be reflected for example in the ephebic, chiastic bronze figurines, suggests a wider accessibility of the Greek models. Up to this century, the term 'collective' could also be extended to urban society. It must however be underlined that these strategies for communicating memory do not include all the forms of interaction between humans and the transcendental at these sanctuaries, involving for example the dedication of geometric typologies, the highlighting of sexual features of men, women, and hermaphrodites, the dedicating of animal figurines and figurines of *Hercle*/Hercules, which could eventually express worship on the part of other social actors. The meaning of miniature pottery in sacred caves is more evanescent. This class of materials has been newly evaluated in recent research, which suggests that small pottery was not necessarily a form of offering for poor people (Ekroth 2003), but a re-functionalisation of drinking vessels that shifted them from a pragmatic to a connotative value (Pilz 2011). This could have been conceived of in order to communicate a sense of conviviality to the supernatural power being addressed. The exhibition and preservation of the pottery could in this case be considered a form of commemoration of this communication, and at the same time a sacralisation of resources donated or collected in the sacred caves. It also has to be said that the spread of types of miniature pottery for domestic cults and the above-mentioned rituals of founding and obliteration could also imply, as observed elsewhere (Da Vela 2022), an opposing form of memory preservation. The mobility of pilgrims returning home from the sanctuaries with the miniature vessels, perhaps containing some special materials (such as sacred water or water captured dripping from the cave walls) could also provide an explanation for the spread of types in the form of pilgrimage souvenirs[12].

The Importance of the Little Things in the Formation of Memoryscapes of the Iron Age Apennines

Personal mobility and the construction, preservation, and negotiation of collective cultural memory emerge as strong and inseparable constitutive elements of social and religious communication in

[11] For the funerary stones from Fiesole and northern Etruria (*stele fiesolane*): Amann 2017: 63-66; for the social implications of this imagery on the funerary stones from Bologna (*stele felsinee*): Govi, Sassatelli 2004: 227-229.

[12] A similar function has been proposed for the miniature vessels in the Roman sanctuary of Hercules at Corfino (Dionisio 2013).

the rural sanctuaries of the northern Apennines. Here, the geographical memory of local communities is marked by cult practices performed at the sites of particular infrastructural resources along the regional routes. In this case, these practices can be considered a form of spatialisation of collective memories concerning the resources necessary for mobility. Through their votive assemblages, these sanctuaries constitute sacralised orientation points within the landscape, but also within the social representation of individuals and local communities. Through the spatialisation of the collective cultural memories of local communities, these objects facilitated the intersection of different social, gender, generational, and cultural identities. The relationship between mobility and memory has been already approached in prehistoric archaeology by Ariane Ballmer (2017), who analysed the deposition of metals and 'Brandopferplätze' during the Bronze Age in the Central Alps, establishing a relationship in the landscape between collective memories, mobility, and social structures. The author presented the evolution from a first form of open access memorialization, called a memoryscape, based on individual and flexible metal offerings near significant water reserves in the mountains, towards a second form, the memory of the landscape, consisting in an institutional appropriation of the memorialization and linked to an increasing social complexity, whose media were communitarian 'Brandopferplätze'. Her interesting model cannot be applied to our case study, since in the Iron Age Apennines the same types of bronze figurines and miniature vessels are found accumulated in central hubs, or in single (but not necessarily individual) offering acts or deposits. Consequently, the formation of shared and collective cultural memories in these sanctuaries can be properly considered as memoryscapes[13], including not only an individual, but also an institutional presence in the rural sanctuaries as part of a unique religious network. The small votive objects, placed in their contexts of votive assemblages and embedded in natural settings, made a fundamental contribution to the formation of these memoryscapes as part of a human-artefactual interaction able to transfer knowledge and meanings (Hahn 2015: 46-54; Papadimitriou 2019: 246-247). These small significant objects became media of the collective cultural memory of human mobility and of the encounters between worshippers and the supernatural, between social groups, and between the local communities of the region.

[13] After Clack 2011: 116 these memoryscapes are dwelled landscapes, produced «through the inhabitation of spaces by cultural bodies».

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