



## ANCIENT CROSSROADS:

The Rural Population of Classical Italy  
Guide to an Archaeological Exhibition

*Exhibition sponsored by*

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The University of Texas at Austin

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A terra-cotta head of Pan, the Greek god of forests, pastures, flocks and shepherds, was found in the excavation of the Sanctuary at Pizzica, 1977. It dates to the fourth century B.C.

# ANCIENT CROSSROADS: The Rural Population of Classical Italy



## *Preface and Acknowledgements*

The objects you have before you in this exhibition to examine and to enjoy are a sample of the fruits of many years of archaeological investigation in the territory of Metaponto, on the part of the Superintendency of Antiquities for Basilicata and, for the last four years, by the University of Texas. They were chosen, not for their beauty (which in many cases is obvious), nor for their uniqueness, but for the light they shed on the rural population of classical Italy.

The exhibition, like the people it attempts to portray, is in several ways a pioneer. It is the first dedicated exclusively to the large and economically vital segment of the classical world, the farmer; and it is the first exhibit of recently excavated material to have left Italy for the United States in many years.

For this honor and distinction, we are profoundly grateful to the Italian authorities, to the Ministry of Cultural Treasures (Beni Culturali) and above all to the Superintendent of Antiquities for Basilicata, Professor Dinu Adamesteanu.

The exhibition has been made financially possible through a generous grant of the National Endowment for the Humanities; has been organized and designed by the Director of the University of Texas Excavation at Metaponto, in close association with the Superintendent and with the Director of the University Art Museum, and has been realized through their efforts, and those of their colleagues, technical staffs, and students, working together. The inside covers of this guide record the names of collaborators as well as those who have financially supported the project.

Joseph Coleman Carter  
Director, University of Texas  
Excavation at Metaponto

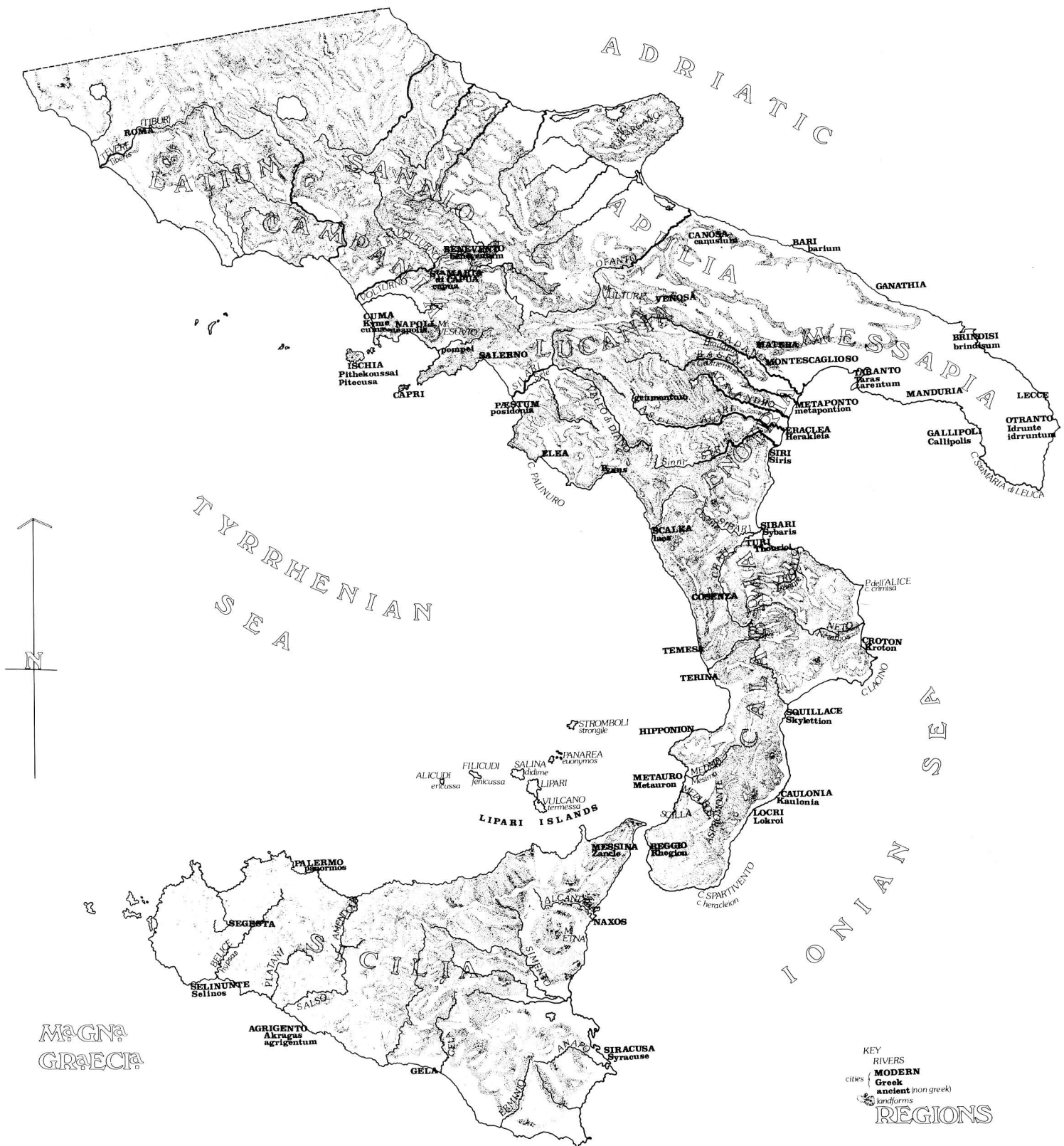


fig. 1—Map of Southern Italy with the principal Greek colonies, indigenous sites and modern cities indicated. (Drawn by Michael Guarino.)



## *I. Orientation and Historical Introduction*

Better than any other classical site, the countryside surrounding the Greek colonial city of Metaponto has preserved traces of the varied activities of the country and city dwellers who made use of it. This is partly the result of its history. The area was abandoned for centuries because of malaria. Ancient farms were not disturbed by modern plows and heavier equipment until forty years ago. The major factor, however, has been the systematic exploration of the territory by Italian and foreign archaeologists under the inspirational guidance of Professor Adamesteanu.

This exhibit aims to tell the story of the rural population through artifacts, and excavation. Each object, pot, or fragment of one comes from a carefully documented context, and from a closely supervised excavation, carried out by the Superintendent, by the University, or jointly. It can therefore, tell us much more about its maker and its user than an object whose provenience is unknown. In this guide you will read about the work that was done to recover the evidence, especially about the University's very productive 1977 excavation season.

The part of southern Italy where these investigations have taken place—on a fertile plain and series of terraces, between the Bradano and Basento Rivers—was a true crossroads of the ancient world. On a low hill overlooking the Basento at Pizzica (excavated by the University), for example, human habitation continued from the Neolithic times to the present. Greeks and Romans left substantial testimony of their agricultural and religious life and industrial activity, and there is clear evidence that the territory was not entirely abandoned in Byzantine times.

The rural population in the ancient world cannot be considered without reference to the city. Territory and city were bound together in complex relationships—cultural, legal, economic, and religious. Archaeology can tell us something about the interdependence and the diversity of city and territory.

Ideally the exhibit should have been comparative. For every religious votive statuette from a rural cult, there should have been a corresponding one from a city sanctuary. Unfortunately, due to limitations of every sort, it has only been possible to make these comparisons as regards methods of burial and grave goods. The interested viewer, in compensation, will have from the exhibit the maximum material from the rural sources with which to make his own comparisons.

Metaponto (the ancient Greek name was Metapontion) was founded as a colony about 650 B.C. by immigrants from Achaea in Greece. It was the result of an organized colonial movement, one of the first if not the first in the world's history. Immigrants seeking a fresh start left Greece in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. By 500 B.C., much of Sicily and southern Italy (though not the hinterlands) was occupied by Greeks.

This part of the world soon began to be known as Megale Hellas, Magna Graecia (or "the Big Greece"). Not only did Greek-held southern Italy occupy more space than Greece, but its inhabitants consciously attempted to outdo the mother country with their public buildings and athletic achievements.

At Metaponto the immigrants found rich agricultural lands and, it appears, little opposition at first from the original inhabitants, who retreated into the interior. In the case of Metaponto, as with the other colonies of Magna Graecia, there is much uncertainty in the historical accounts of the conditions in the early years. Were there Greeks in the area before the Metapontines? What were the relations between Greeks and the indigenous peoples they encountered? Archaeologists, as we shall see, are accumulating evidence, and formulating hypotheses, if not answers.

The first 150 years were decisive. A process of cultural penetration began with the first contacts of Greeks and indigenous populations, and it culminated in the hellenization of much of the Peninsula of Italy, including Rome, with wide-reaching results for the future course of western civilization. That process began in the land around the colonial city, in the territory of dozens of cities similar to Metaponto. It began with direct contacts, with intermarriage. Indigenous peoples may also have been assimilated, voluntarily or otherwise, into the farming population, as the need for manual labor grew. Greek culture spread with startling rapidity through trading contacts along the river valleys.

What is the evidence for this moving frontier? It is largely archaeological, and much of what this exhibition contains could be considered in this light. A Corinthian cup is an object of extreme simplicity, beauty, and high craftsmanship, but you can see how the type loses in some of these respects and gains in others when it is treated by a colonial craftsman, and again in the hands of non-Greek admirer of Greek culture. (The material from Incornata and Montescaglioso below illustrate this point well.)

The rural population played a vital role in an early phase of the Greek colonization of Italy, and it continued to exert an influence on colonial culture in the period of its full development. In an agricultural colony like Metaponto, this could hardly be otherwise. It is important to remember that the coinage of Metaponto (see back cover) is the ear of wheat. When one, as Professor Adamesteanu has pointed out, thought of Metaponto he probably envisioned the territory or *chora* as much or even more than the city (*polis*) within the walls. It is highly likely that in some cases, at least, the inhabitants of the *chora* were also city dwellers.

Where should one look for the contributions to classical civilization of the country dwellers apart from the obvious one of providing the essentials of life? Did unrelenting agricultural labor leave time for anything else? Religion was one area where the western Greek colonies differed markedly from the mother country. For example, beliefs about the after-life were much more highly developed in Magna Graecia. This could—though the point is hotly debated by scholars—have been the result of contacts with cults of the pre-Greek population in the territory. The exhibition is fortunately unusually rich in material from rural sanctuaries. It reflects the material interest—fertility of crops, flocks and humankind, healing—as well as the artistic spirit of the rural people. Scholars will be forced to examine this new evidence.

Much is known of city-life in the classical period, in its public aspects. Relatively less is known of the living and

working conditions, religious concerns, social pursuits, and burial practices of the ordinary person, of the city or the country. The systematic excavation of farmhouses, cult places, and cemeteries in the territory of Metaponto has done much to fill that void. A major aim of the exhibition is to demonstrate some of these results.

The Greek cities of southern Italy remained vital centers and transmitters of culture for four hundred years. In the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. under pressure from the now Greek populations of the interior, and later from the Romans, they began to disintegrate. The population moved into the countryside and continuity was preserved there. The farms in the territory of Metaponto thrived in the fourth century B.C. Then the decline is rapid. When, after the Roman conquest of the South in the third century B.C., a military colony and a camp were erected inside the city walls of Metaponto, there was a revival of antiquity in the territory, with the establishment of a few large estates and of rural industries, such as the tile works at Pizzica. The Roman Period in the territory of Metaponto, and throughout Magna Graecia, is archaeologically very little known. The exhibition will help to fill that gap also.

The exhibition has been organized to present the material both historically (diachronically) and as a cultural cross-section (synchronically), treating separately rural living and working, industry, religious activity and burial. We begin, historically, with the pre-Greek population of the territory.

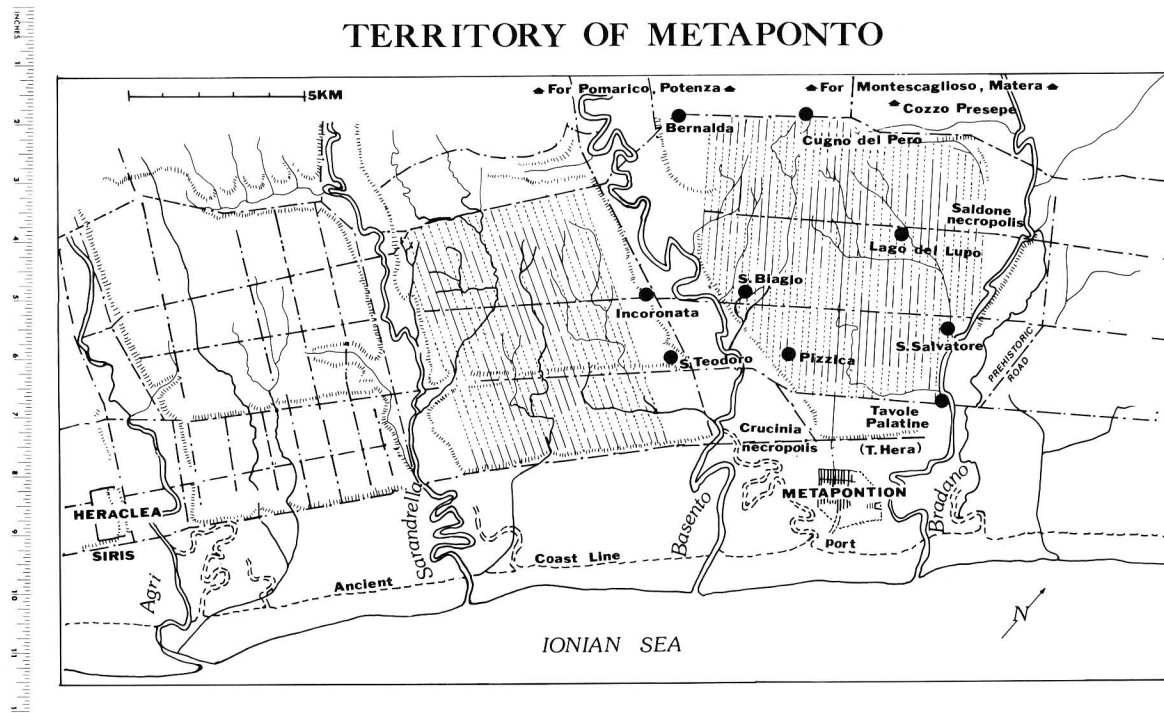


fig. 2—Map of the Territory of Metaponto with the principal sites indicated. (Drawn by Vera Massaro.)



fig. 3—*Impasto* bowl with animal protome, and bronze spear point from the grave of male. Iron age necropolis of San Teodoro, 9th century B.C. Bowl measures 17.5 cm long. (On loan from National Antiquarium, Metaponto.)

## II. The Pre-Greek Population—S. Teodoro

Italy, immediately before the arrival of the Greeks, was culturally in the Early Iron Age. It was in a period of rapid growth in population spurred probably by an increasingly agricultural economy, employing cheap and inefficient iron tools. The iron age inhabitants of the territory of Metaponto were not very advanced in comparison with the Villanovans to the north (in what was to become Etruria). They belonged to the "Inhumation Cultures" of the south, with close contacts with Apulia to the east. What is known about them is deduced from their tombs at S. Teodoro on the south side of the valley of the Basento. The extensive cemetery, on a vast terrace inclined toward the east, dominates the Plain of Metaponto, the Basento, and the Prehistoric road which passed from the region of Herakleia to the sanctuary of Zeus and Artemis at San Biagio and the Temple of Hera (Tavole Palatine). The tombs were small cists covered with mounds of field stones. The body is always in the fetal position. The contents of three of these tombs (unfortunately not including the skeleton) are on display here. Tombs 64 and 117 are rich burials of females, containing much bronze jewelry. Particularly notable are the *fibulae* (pins), which come in a variety of forms—the so-called "serpent," the "spectacle," "xilophone," and the four spiraled types. Also noteworthy are the truncated pyramidal "loom-weights" with geometric design. The finest single piece perhaps is the bronze bracelet with fine engraved decoration. The tombs of men were relatively poor. The single example here contained a bronze spear point and a deep bowl with animal protome. All the vases are *impasto* formed by hand without the use of a wheel. The iron age people of this region (the people of S. Teodoro do not differ from their neighbors in the lower Basento and Bradano Valleys) do not begin to use the wheel and paint the pottery until a later date. The change-over may have been influenced by Greek contacts.

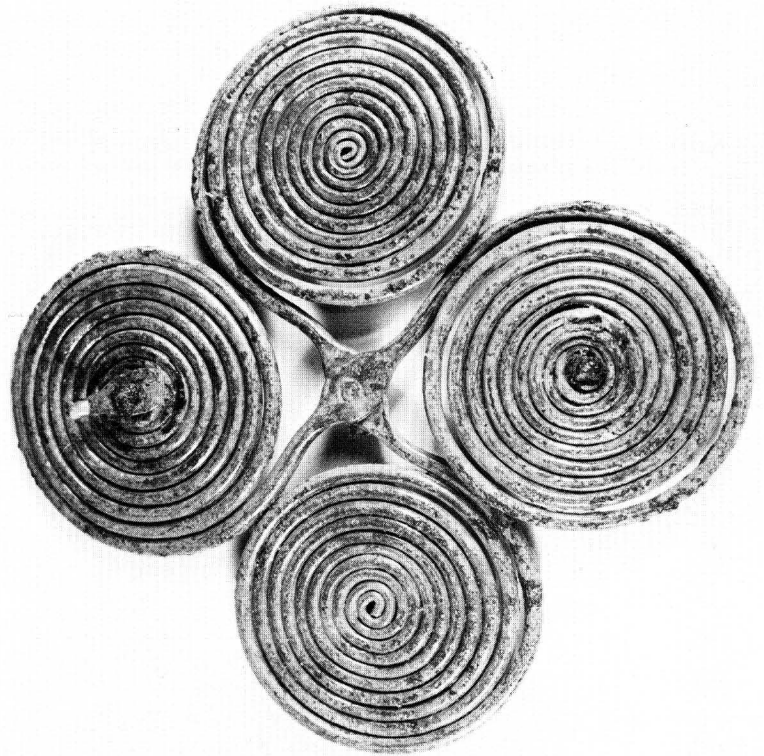


fig. 4—A spiral fibula from the tomb of a woman, San Teodoro, ninth century B.C. It measures 11.3 cm across. (On loan from the National Antiquarium, Metaponto.)





*fig. 5*—Excavation of a deposit of pottery from the earliest Greek settlement in the Territory, at Incononata, University excavation, 1977.

*fig. 6*—Pottery from the excavation seen in *fig. 5*. It includes a proto-Corinthian kotyle (700–625 B.C.), a Corinthian late geometric oinochoe, a miniature aryballos in the proto-Corinthian style, a Rhodian (?) style plate and a late geometric skyphos.







fig 7—Two aryballois and two fragments of larger vessels illustrate the difference between local and imported wares. The fragment with the gryphon is a masterpiece of Chiot or Samian workshops. Gryphon fragment is 14.8 cm high. (On loan from the National Antiquarium of Metaponto.)

### III. The Earliest Greeks—*Incoronata Greca*

A discovery made only five years ago on a small naturally fortified hill a few minutes walk to the north of S. Teodoro has forced us to change our ideas about who were the first Greeks in the territory of Metaponto and when they arrived. Until then it was commonly assumed that Achaean Greeks from the Northern Peloponnesos had claimed Metaponto about 650 B.C. The historian Strabo's account of the founding of the city by the Achaeans, however, suggests that there had been a previous settlement nearby and does not specify the nationality of the inhabitants.

Excavations by the Superintendency, the University of Milan under the direction of Piero Orlandini, and this year by the University of Texas are revealing what is certainly one of the earliest Greek settlements on the south coast of Italy. It clearly preceded the founding of the colony of Metaponto by as much as a half century or more.

The early date is clearly proven by the ceramic material excavated from the pits which honeycomb the three spurs of the hill. The material from Pit B, excavated this year by the University, includes a fine imported skyphos (or drinking cup) made in Corinth about 675 B.C. Among the smaller vessels are a rare squat trefoil oinochoe (wine pitcher) and a plate decorated with a pattern of radiating stylized flower petals. These were either imported or are very good local imitations of the late geometric pottery of Corinth, Rhodes, or the Greek-held coast of Asia Minor. Excavations by the Superintendency have brought to light such outstanding pieces as the fragment with the gryphon and cow, perhaps made on Samos or Chios, and the local charming but amateurish imitation of these schools of Greek vase painting, exemplified by the fragment with the leopard. The great hydria (water pitcher), and the two stamnoi from Pit B were probably inspired by important schools of Greek vase painting. The sources of inspiration, however, are not readily identifiable on the basis of our present knowledge. They stand by themselves, for now, as splendid creations of late geometric Greek colonial art.

The hilltop of Incoronata was jammed with large undecorated or lightly decorated storage vessels, such as the squat

amphora, and the SOS amphora (so-called because of the decoration on the neck) of possible Athenian or Euboean manufacture. The large and shapely pithos with unusual "rope" handles, found this year and expertly restored by graduate student Linda Nance and Professor Don Herron of the University's Art Department, is identical to the earliest examples of pithoi from Corinth. It should be dated to the end of the eighth century B.C.

What kind of people settled Incoronata and why? It is too soon to be able to give a definitive answer, but several facts stand out. First, it is reasonably clear now that there was a pre-existing settlement of indigenous peoples on the hill. Some of the pits contain not only the *impasto* of the natives but also a wheel-made geometrically decorated pottery, also of the natives. As noted above in the discussion of S. Teodoro, none of the decorated pottery was found in the tombs there, and therefore Incoronata's indigenous settlement was undoubtedly of later date. In some of the pits containing predominantly Greek material, the indigenous geometric can also be found, such as the beautiful neck of an olla (a native shape, suggesting a spittoon) from Pit B. Greeks and natives apparently got on together, as they never did in the later settlement at Metaponto. Incoronata, it has been suggested, was a Greek trading emporium, set down in a center of Iron Age Basilicata. But by whom?

A careful analysis of the pottery, particularly the inscribed grey ware, two examples of which are displayed here, suggests an origin on the coast of Asia Minor. Similarities also exist between it and the ceramics of Siris some twenty kilometers to the south of Incoronata, on the coast. Siris was in all probability founded by colonists from Greek Asia Minor and more specifically from Colophon.

The settlement at Incoronata is one more example of trade preceding the flag in a colonial movement. With the establishment of an official colony at Metaponto, however, all activity on the hill seems to have ceased.



fig. 8—Archaic tomb group from Montescaglioso. Dated about 700 B.C. (On loan from the National Museum at Matera.)

#### *IV. The Indigenous Population—Montescaglioso*

The original inhabitants of the coast of Basilicata did not simply vanish with the arrival of the Greeks. They may, as has been suggested, have been partially assimilated into the Greek population of the territory or they could have retreated into the hinterland into well-fortified hilltop towns like Pomarico, or Montescaglioso. At first the hill dwellers provided a receptive market for imported Greek goods and a ready audience for Greek art, which they imitated more or less well. By the fourth century B.C. the art of these centers was almost indistinguishable from that of a Greek town. In the end they outlasted the Greek cities of the coast and contributed to the pressure that brought about their collapse, at the end of the fourth century B.C. The contribution of the indigenous population to the civilization of Italy is not easy to evaluate, but at last the problem is beginning to receive the attention it deserves.

Montescaglioso is a town of unusual beauty, not only because of its position (which is stupendous—high on a steep hill overlooking the Bradano River and all the surrounding countryside), but also for the architecture of its historic center.

The town has existed continuously from the seventh century B.C. The early period is represented in this exhibit by the contents of a tomb of about 700 B.C. Like most of the antiquities found there, it was recovered in a “salvage” excavation under the present day streets. The group of grave



fig. 9—Hellenistic tomb group from Montescaglioso. Dated to the last half of the fourth century B.C. (On loan from the National Museum at Matera.)

offerings contained a handsome geometric krater with a meander design on the shoulder and a stylized tent design on the body. This is a product of the indigenous Iron Age tradition (found also in the early settlement at Incoronata.) Several of the other vases in this group imitate such forms. The skyphos is based on a Corinthian sub-geometric type. The oinochoe is an imitation of Rhodian or Corinthian work. There are two thymiateria, or incense burners. The bronze fibula is worthy of note.

In contrast, a tomb of the fourth century B.C. from Montescaglioso contains vases decorated in the red-figure technique of Greek convention, or simply glazed black. They belong to an artistic *koiné* or commonality, which was found all over the southern half of the peninsula in early Hellenistic times, except in the most backward centers. Among the vases is a large krater with a Dionysiac scene—a youthful male and running female. A plate with a woman's head is more original, less Hellenic in character. The tomb contained an apparatus, for kottabos, a drinking game at Greek and Etruscan banquets, and its presence here indicates that, not only the products of the refined Greeks, but also some of their social conventions were assimilated by the natives. The sadly fragmentary metal belt, on the other hand, is normally found only in the tombs of indigenous warriors.

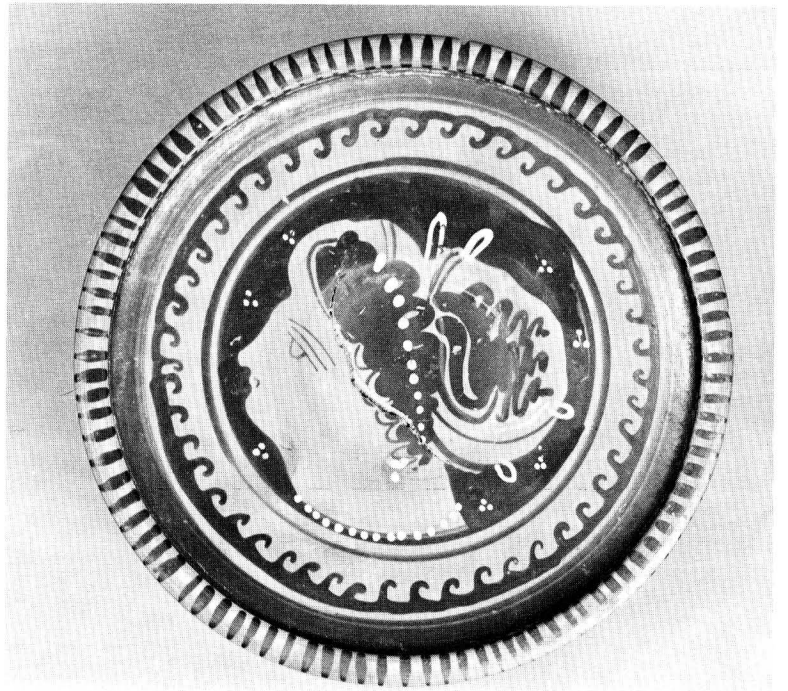


fig. 10—A plate from the group in fig. 9. It measures 16.2 cm in diameter.





*fig. 11—Aerial view of the University of Texas Excavation at Pizzica (1975), focusing on the area of the factory and kilns. (Photo courtesy of the Superintendency and Aldo La Capra.)*







fig. 14—Excavation of the Roman tile and pottery kilns at Pizzica, 1st century B.C. (1976).

## V. *The Territory, Rural Industry*

The site at Pizzica, where the University has been excavating continuously since 1974, was not, like so many, discovered from the air, but from the ground. Work had begun, on the experimental farm of the Development Agency (Ente Sviluppo) of Bari, to convert into a peach orchard the low-lying hill overlooking the Basento on its south bank. The bulldozer turned up a number of ancient rooftiles, fragments of pottery, and the work was stopped. With the kind cooperation of the Agency, the excavation began in June of 1974. The hilltop produced an enormous quantity of rooftiles and eventually, after three years of patient work, a nearly complete ancient tile factory.

It is rare to find two kilns as well preserved as those at Pizzica, but to have found both the building where the product was prepared for the kiln and stored and the actual clay deposit employed is truly exceptional. This picture of a complete rural industry is filled out with the fine reconstructions of the kiln and factory building by architect Bruno Perini. It has been possible to include in this exhibition some of the finished products of the kilns. These include a variety of types of rooftiles. Large mortars, amphorae, and terracotta loomweights, found in abundance on the site, point to the diversification of this ceramic industry. The magnificent series of loomweights is of particular interest. It is concrete evidence of another major industry in the territory, weaving, which otherwise has left few traces. The wool and dyes of Greek southern Italy were world renowned.

The discovery of large quantities of slag, and of fragments of a terracotta bellows, suggests that ironworking was carried out at Pizzica. The kilns themselves may have been employed in processing the ore.

Who ran the factory? And what market did it serve? The apparent lack of living quarters suggests that the workers either lived elsewhere or were slaves given only the most primitive shelter. A market for the rooftiles as for the loomweights would have been found in the surrounding countryside. Tiles were not export items. The difficulty of transporting them argued for putting the place of production as close as possible to the market. In Roman times the center of economic activity had shifted out of the city into the agri-business and sheep-ranching operations of great properties in the territory.

At Bernalda, the home of many of the excavation team, kilns differing from that at Pizzica in only the smaller details were in operation until just twenty years ago. Now synthetic roofing materials are economically more practical, if considerably less beautiful, than the terracotta.

Ironically, the invasion of the pastoral tranquility of the Metapontine countryside by Roman industry may one day be repeated on a much vaster scale, by the virtual obliteration, in its turn, of the Roman industry. At such time one area of the western world which has maintained its agricultural traditions and way of life for something like five thousand years will be altered irreparably.

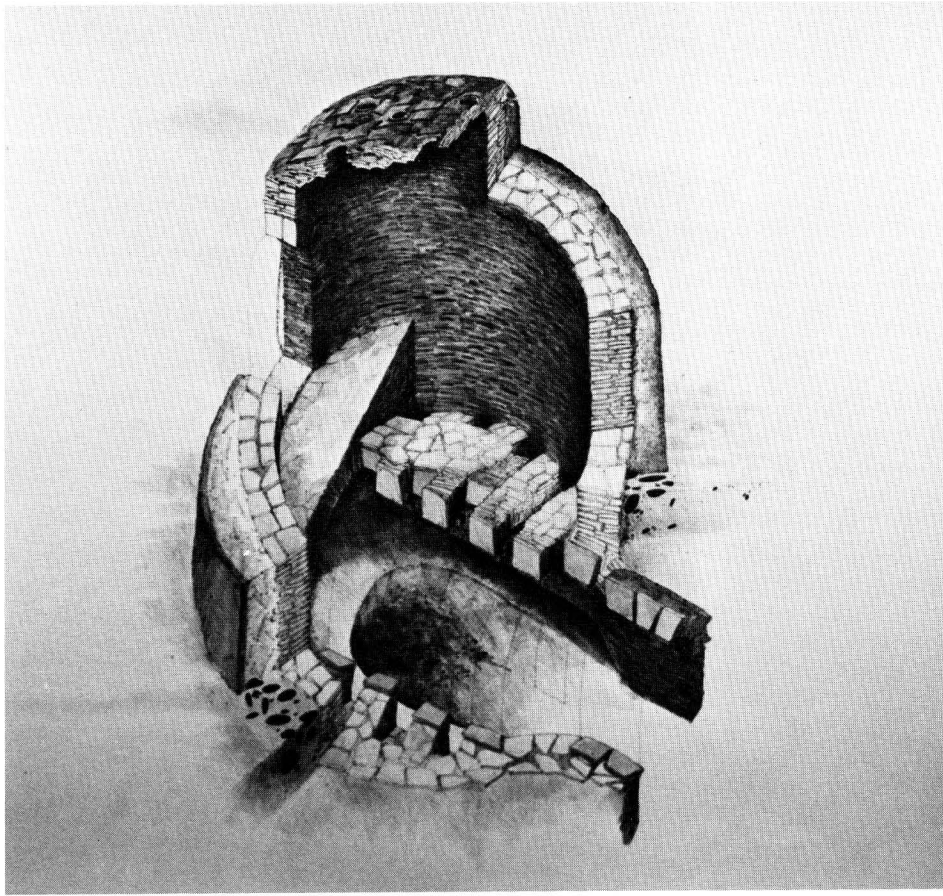


fig. 15—Architect's reconstruction of the larger kiln, showing the combustion chamber and fire hole (*prae-furnium*) below, perforated floor, and upper chamber for the product being fired.

## V. The Territory—Continuity

The historical and archaeological record of Metaponto from the fourth century A.D. until modern times is almost non-existent. We know generally that the territory was abandoned, that the population which survived the collapse of the Roman empire and the barbarian invasions withdrew into the interior. Towns like Montescaglioso continued to exist, if not to flourish. There was the constant threat of fresh invasion, by the Saracens or by pirates.

The situation did not begin to improve until the 11th century A.D. At that point, the territory showed again some signs of life. Medieval pottery has been discovered at Santa Maria d'Anglona above Herakleia, on the hill of Policoro, and at other points on the Metapontine plain. At Pizzica in 1974 the first substantial deposit of Byzantine pottery in the immediate territory was uncovered. It consisted of an amphora with graffito inscription recording undoubtedly the name of its owner Stephanos, Chartalareos or Stephan, the clerk; a fine pilgrim's flask (a Near Eastern form not commonly encountered in Italy); and a jug with red painted decoration similar to examples from Santa Maria d'Anglona. A coin of Michael IV (1038-1041 A.D.) gives us one secure date for this very limited contact between the agrarian world of Metaponto and Byzantium, through the Basilian monks. Contacts elsewhere in Southern Italy and Sicily were more productive.

The great estates, *masserie*, are reminders of a more recent agrarian past. They contain, besides the dwelling of the landholder, habitations for the peasants, workshops, store-

rooms and a chapel. Some, like the one known as Torre di Mare a short walk from the ancient city of Metaponto, are heavily fortified. Torre di Mare goes back perhaps as far as the ninth century A.D.

Beginning in the 1940's a series of public works, for drainage and irrigation, has made the territory of Metaponto not only habitable, but also agriculturally extremely productive. Again ironically, the deep-plowing techniques introduced in the agrarian reform of 1956 have all but erased, in many areas, the remains of the classical past.



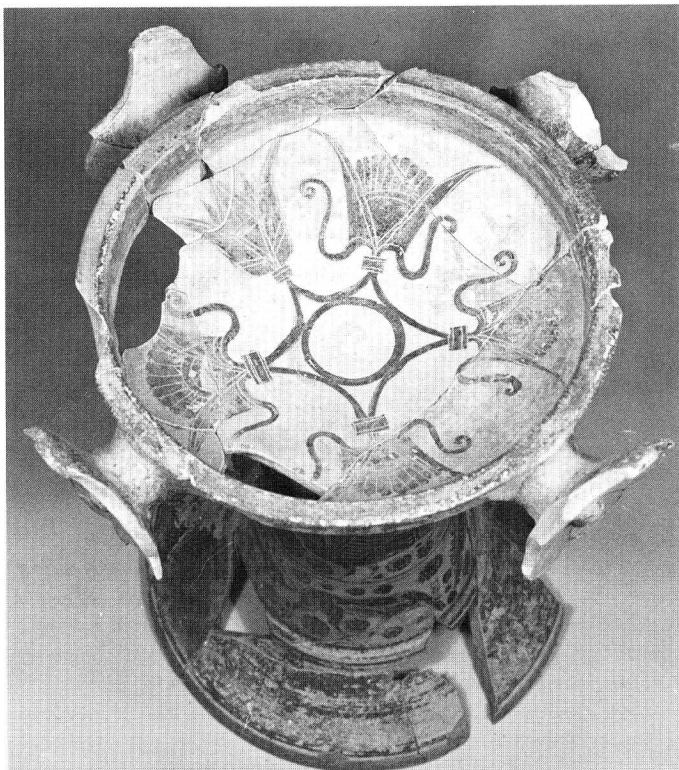


fig. 16—Three votive statuettes from the Sanctuary to Artemis and Zeus at San Biagio. (On loan from the National Antiquarium, Metaponto.)



fig. 17—Thymiaterion flanked by two lekythoi from San Biagio. The Thymiaterion is 28.3 cm high. (On loan from the National Antiquarium of Metaponto.)

fig. 18—Detail of the Thymiaterion (fig. 17) with alternating pattern of palmettes and lotuses.



## VI. Rural Sanctuaries

This area of the exhibition is well stocked with works of art of the first quality. The worshippers at the rural shrine of Zeus and Artemis at S. Biagio were hardly less demonstrably grateful to their benefactors than the urban worshippers at the Temple of Apollo. Among the gifts they brought were gold jewelry, coins, and bronze mirrors with handles in the form of shepherds. There is also a series of native statuettes of startling beauty and great originality, which begins with a Daedalic figurine of the late seventh century B.C. and includes striking, elongated female figures (the so-called "block" style), one of which has a distinctly oriental appearance. The figure of Artemis holding a sea animal and wearing a high polos headdress, with the disk symbols of the sun and moon attached to her chiton, is charming, but must seem very strange to one acquainted only with "mainstream" Greek art, that is with the art of the cities and major sanctuaries. Late in the series is the hellenistic group of the lady and the satyr. Dionysiac characters among the votive figurines of hellenistic date, or even earlier, are not uncommon. Other ceramic offerings included the magnificent early sixth-century B.C. thymiaterion (or incense burner) decorated around the base in a local version of the Corinthian animal style. An exquisite pattern of lotuses fills the interior of the bowl; molded rosettes sprout from the rim. The exuberance of the animal and vegetable decorative devices finds parallels in Minoan or Mexican folk art, but few in the art of the mother country in the archaic period.





*fig. 19*—Terracotta revetment of the early sixth century B.C. sanctuary at San Biagio. In low relief is a scene of warrior and chariot, drawn by winged horses and driven by a servant. It is 20.7 cm high. (On loan from the National Antiquarium at Metaponto.)



*fig. 20*—Terracotta revetment from the fifth century B.C. sanctuary at San Biagio. Height: 21.9 cm. (On loan from the National Antiquarium at Metaponto.)



*fig. 21*—Lion's head water spout from San Biagio, fifth century B.C. It is 18 cm high. (On loan from the National Antiquarium, Metaponto.)



*fig. 22*—Terracotta antefix, from San Biagio, with the head of a nymph. Fourth century B.C. (On loan, National Antiquarium at Metaponto.)



fig. 23—Installation of “well point” pumping system for the excavation of the sanctuary at Pizzica. Directing the work is Giuseppe Di Taranto (white cap). June 29, 1977.



fig. 24—The “well point” in operation, July 1977, at Pizzica.

The architectural decoration of the cult place must also have been impressive, to judge by the elements which have survived. We are fortunate to have here examples from the two principal periods of the sanctuary. From the early sixth century B.C. is the terracotta revetment representing in low relief a chariot drawn by a winged horse (its stylistic antecedents are perhaps to be sought in the Greek islands of the Aegean) and the palmette antefix (the decorative ending of a cover tile of the roof of the building). Brilliantly polychrome architectural elements further attest the importance of the cult in the fifth century B.C. The sima (the crowning element of the decoration of the cornice) with its raised pattern of alternating palmettes and lotuses would have been interrupted at intervals by expressive lions' heads, like that displayed here. The cornice was completed below with a revetment employing the meander.

The site of the sanctuary of San Biagio, eight kilometers as the crow flies from the city walls, is nothing out of the ordinary as landscape. It occupies a hollow in a slope which faces down the valley of the Basento (from which it is divided by a low hill) toward the sea. The outstanding feature is the all-weather spring. An impressive structure of local “pudding” stone around the spring at its mouth leaves no doubt that the spring played a central role in a cult.

For some time after its discovery by the Superintendency in the mid-1960's, this opulent cult-building around a spring was considered novel, even unique for Metaponto, and for Magna Graecia, but the results of the University's 1977 excavation season at Pizzica have proven beyond a doubt that this is not the case. Three successive cult structures around a spring, ranging in date from the early 6th century B.C. to the late fourth century, were uncovered, first to the south and partially under the farmhouse described above.

fig. 25—A complete votive figurine and cups found sitting on the edge of the stone ringed pool—probably the earliest sanctuary at Pizzica. They date to the first half of the sixth century B.C. The statuette measures 9.7 cm high.







fig. 26—View across the top of the retaining wall and collecting basin of the fourth century B.C. sanctuary, Pizzica.

The drama which culminated with this discovery began in 1974 with the chance discovery of a votive statuette, and observation by our foreman Giuseppe Di Taranto of archaic Greek pottery fragments projecting from the bank of a modern irrigation canal. In 1975 a structure of 6th century date (with later building superimposed) was located under four feet of tough, grey clay; in 1976 it was partially excavated. At the level of the stone pavement of about 500 B.C., ground water made further excavation nearly impossible. The evidence of earlier periods was lost in the mud. This was the final challenge and it was met, thanks to Professor Adamesteanu and the Superintendent of Calabria, Professor Foti, and the indefatigable Di Taranto with a magnificent device known as the “well-point.” This device had been employed successfully at Metaponto and Sybaris, and it worked at Pizzica to dry out an area the size of a football field, to a depth of twenty feet. Excavation could and did proceed, revealing the various phases of the sanctuary.

The fourth century B.C. structure, with its monumental retaining wall of “pudding” stone, stepped approach, and vast stone-paved collecting basin for the spring water (approximately 12 meters square), is larger and differs considerably in form from the structure by the spring at San Biagio. The structure is documented by photographs and with a plan. From the excavation came a number of votive figures (many in fragmentary condition), including the Pan on the cover of this guide, and the red-figured lekythos representing a seated woman and a hermaphrodite.

The late 6th century sanctuary was the most elaborate, architecturally. Its stone pavement was meticulously cleared by graduate student Jack Englert, to reveal a small collecting basin, fed by a channel and inserted within the vast pavement of fieldstones and flanked, on two sides at least, by sizeable rooms aligned along a central east-west axis. The basin is set off from the rest of the structure by a pavement which surrounds it. Further excavation is required for the building to be described completely.



fig. 27—Red-figured votive lekythos from the sanctuary of the fourth century B.C. at Pizzica. Represented on it were a seated woman and standing hermaphrodite (not pictured). A fragment of coarse ware vessel with the torch of Persephone is the only clue to the identity of the divinity worshipped here. The lekythos is 16.1 cm high.



fig. 28—Excavation of the sanctuary at Incoronata, June and July, 1977.



fig. 29—Fragment of a votive figurine from Incoronata. Height: 11.5 cm.

The primitive sanctuary of the early sixth century seems to have been merely a shallow pool surrounded by stone into which were placed the miniature votive dishes and the very early sixth century B.C. female half-figure, displayed here.

When the “well point” was removed at the end of the excavation season—it had worked twenty-four hours a day for a month, and the excavators only slightly less—the spring reasserted itself, but not as it had been for the past several years, a muddy diffused tide, but rather as concentrated and clear, and located directly above the sanctuary of the fourth century B.C.

With the superposition and juxtaposition of structures of different dates, the extensive damage to the area caused by flooding over millenia, the mud and the water, this must rank as one of the most difficult excavations ever undertaken. Its hard-won results, and the light they shed on the worship of the rural population should be all the more valued.

1977 was the year of the rural sanctuaries. A second was discovered at Incoronata by the University excavation team. Before this year it had been thought that Incoronata, after the destruction of the trading settlement there about 650 B.C., had ceased to be important. Some few scattered roof tiles had been noticed, and had been assumed to belong to a small farmhouse. Graduate students, Susan Andrews and Thomas Hale identified and very carefully excavated a miniature sanctuary to a divinity identical in form to the mistress of S. Biagio. The unique terracotta antefix (which is transitional between the palmette and Gorgon head types), the painted revetments of the cornice, and the votive statuettes and vases, many of which are seen here, are all that remained of the wooden building of the first half of the sixth century B.C. One of the terracotta heads is certainly a masterpiece of South Italian coroplastic art.

fig. 30—Fragmentary antefix from the sanctuary at Incoronata. Height: 12.5 cm.







fig. 31—Tomb group from Pizzica D'Onofrio. Fourth century B.C. (On loan from the National Antiquarium of Metaponto.)

## VII. *Burial in the Territory*

Ancient cemeteries have proved to be a rich, almost inexhaustible source of ancient works of art, many of which are found intact and are highly photogenic. The pity is that their excavation has been only too often unrecorded or clandestine. The abundant ceramic material from such sites can tell us something of the development of Greek art, but little about the occupant of the tomb. The scientific excavation of a tomb or cemetery on the other hand can provide valuable insights into social and economic history, as well as works of art.

All the material in this last section of the exhibit is from tombs in the territory of Metaponto, from the University's area of investigation. The tombs belonged to persons of the rural population, in some cases and to city dwellers in others, since, with only a few exceptions, the inhabitants of Greek *poleis* buried their dead in cities of the dead (*necropoleis*) outside the city walls.

The urban burial is represented by a tomb from a vast necropolis of the fourth century B.C., in an area now known as Pizzica d'Onofrio, not far from the University's excavation at Pizzica. The tomb was excavated in 1973 by the Superintendency. The very numerous vases include three globular bottles (two bombylioi and a lekythos) decorated with delicate scenes in the red-figured style typical of Southern Italy, and especially Apulia, in the fourth century B.C. (In this period Metaponto was very strongly influenced culturally by powerful Taranto to the north.) They are appropriate to a lady's boudoir. As the mirror, the fine gold filigree earrings, and bronze and gold pins indicate, the lady buried here was well-off.

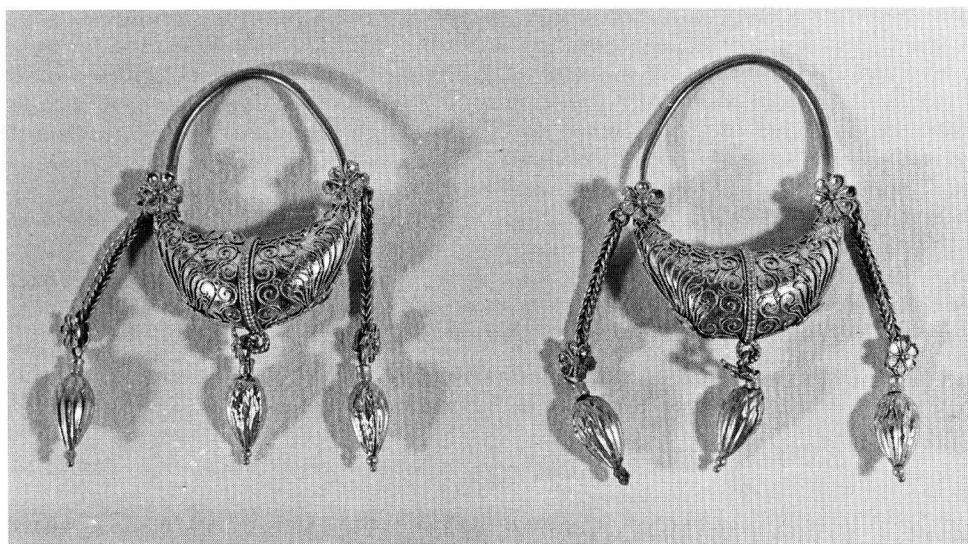


fig. 31a—Gold filigree earrings from the tomb in fig. 31.



fig. 32—The grave offerings from the tomb of a youthful athletic victor. The excavation of the rural necropolis at Saldone, June 1976. Hydria by the Pisticci Painter, owl cups, two strigils, nail. The hydria is 31 cm high.

No such wealth is to be found in the small rural necropolis at Saldone. In 1976 at the urgent request of the Superintendent, the University began an excavation, later finished by the Superintendency, of a series of tombs on a hillside about five kilometers inland from the ancient city, along the valley of the Bradano River. The field in which the tombs were located was in the process of being levelled by an enormous bulldozer. Speed was of the essence. Sixteen tombs were uncovered in a little over a week, and another twelve, several weeks later. The burials clustered in three nuclei, which appear to be family plots and undoubtedly belonged to several ancient farmhouses, previously noted, in the area. They are very simple cists (holes in the ground), covered with slabs of stone in the case of adults or a single large roof tile in the case of children. (In the southern nucleus, which can be dated to about 450-430 B.C., the children's graves outnumber the adults'.) The grave goods are, for the most part, very modest black glazed vessels. There are a number of bronze strigils, used by athletes for cleaning after a workout. This says something about the farm family's dedication to the Metapontine national pastime. Touchingly, the strigils are often found together with miniature vases in infant burials.

One of the burials at Saldone, however, stands out from all the rest by virtue of three fine painted vases—a hydria, representing "Zeus and the nymph Aigina," the work of the Pisticci painter and a masterpiece of colonial art; and two owl cups. This is very likely the tomb of a victorious boy athlete. With him also went his two fine strigils.

Not all the tombs of country dwellers deep in the territory of Metaponto were equally modest. The athlete who was buried in the monumental stone tomb near the sanctuary of San Biagio was, economically and socially, among the elite. His burial crown, which was meticulously restored and drawn by Annaluce Marino of the Superintendency, is a fantastic combination of gilded bronze ivy leaves, berries, grape clusters and grasshoppers in gilded plaster. Despite its very delicate condition which prevented it from traveling (it is represented by a color slide), it must rank among the masterpieces of the ancient jeweler's art.

The treasures of the great tombs of the urban necropolis at Crucinia may have rivaled those of the athlete at San Biagio, but they have long since disappeared. We can, however, admire their impressive architecture in the fine reconstructions which close this exhibition.

The following have given generously of their time and talents during the 1977 excavation season and for the exhibit:

Prof. Dinu Adamesteanu, Superintendent of Antiquities for Basilicata, Potenza, Italy  
Mrs. Leoda Anderson, Administrative Assistant, Austin  
Miss Susan Andrews, Graduate Student, University of Texas, Austin  
Signor Pippo Basile, Photographer, Potenza, Italy  
Dott. Sandro Bini, Rome, Italy  
Miss Robin Bonner, Artist, Corpus Christi  
Signor Aldo La Capra, Aerial Photographer, Potenza  
Signor Bruno Chiartano, Metaponto  
Prof. Marian Davis, University Art Museum, Austin  
Dott. Salvatore Dedono, Ente Sviluppo, Bari  
Prof. Ingrid Edlund, University of Georgia  
Mrs. Cynthia Eisman, Graduate Student, University of Pennsylvania  
Mr. Jack Englert, Graduate Student, University of Texas at Austin  
Mr. Keith Ferris, Museum Staff, Austin  
Prof. Ruth Gais, Syracuse University  
Signor Alfredo Gallitelli, Specialized Worker, Bernalda, Italy  
Prof. G. K. Galinsky, University of Texas at Austin  
Prof. Donald Goodall, University Art Museum, Austin  
Signorina Rosanna Grieco, Restorer, Crispiano, Italy  
Mr. Michael Guarino, Student and Draftsman, University of Texas at Austin  
Mr. Thomas Hale, Texas Archaeological Survey  
Mrs. Virginia Hale, Graduate Student, University of Texas at Austin  
Ms. Margaret Harmon, Photographer, Austin  
Prof. Don Herron, University of Texas at Austin  
Signor Antonio Indice, Taranto, Italy  
Mr. Ricky Kopff, Museum Staff, Austin  
Dottorressa Elena Lattanzi, Museo Nazionale, Matera, Italy  
Annaluce Marino, Draftsman, Metaponto  
Miss Vera Massaro, University of Texas at Austin  
Mrs. Hope McBride, London  
Miss Kathleen Monahan, Austin  
Mrs. Linda Nance, Graduate Student, University of Texas at Austin  
Prof. James Neely, University of Texas at Austin  
Dott. Bruno Perini, Architect, Rome, Italy  
Mr. Tom Puryear, Museum Staff, Austin  
Signorina Francesca Quarato, Restorer, Metaponto  
Signor Leonardo Pacciani, Specialized Worker, Bernalda, Italy  
Miss Margaret Rochelle, Photographer, Austin  
Soprintendenza alle Antichità della Calabria  
Signor Giuseppe Di Taranto, Specialized Worker and Foreman, Montescaglioso, Italy  
Signor Leonardo Torraco, Farm Manager, Pizzica (Metaponto)  
Signora Rosetta Torraco, Pot Washer, Pizzica (Metaponto)  
Mrs. Nita Wagenfuehr, Museum Staff, Austin

*Back cover:*

An incuse silver stater of Metaponto, bearing the symbol of the city and territory, the ear of wheat.  
Minted in the early fifth century B.C. Museo Nazionale, Matera.



