

# ***PREHISTORY AND PROTOHISTORY IN ETRURIA***

**15TH CONFERENCE – 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Centro Studi  
di Preistoria  
e Archeologia,  
Milano**

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## ***Hypogea*** ***Life, Death, cults in the underground worlds*** ***Research and excavations***

Hypogeism is one the most exciting and intensely studied topics in pre- and protohistory. Large caves, underground tombs characterised by complex architecture and rupestrian settlements have always led archaeologists to research the meaning and the use of these underground worlds, often visited for the simple need of protection, to find a shelter from the, sometimes hostile, external world.

However, archaeological finds clarified that a caves is a space in itself, placed between the realms of the living and the dead, a passage zone, a door on another world inhabited by deities, benevolent or not, who it would have been necessary to engage with yet during earthly life.

Life in the Afterworld, judging from grave goods, would have not been conceived as much different from that one led by the dead in this world. Certainly, each community would have had its own particular vision of the underworld's architecture, its laws and what would have used to happen in it. A more or less reassuring mental vision would have been constructed.

Tombs are the dwelling of the dead, who are living in the Otherworld; but it seems that this house, and all the goods contained in it, although occupying a specific space in this world, somehow was transferred in the Otherworld where the dead could keep on using it and live their life.

Rupestrian settlements are mostly dated to the Medieval era, but Sorgenti della Nova dates back to the Late Bronze Age and, certainly, others will be recognised elsewhere.

Studying the architecture of these settlements, the rock-cut structures and their relative possible functions (temple, dwelling, storage, etc.) is necessary to understand the reason which lead to their construction, as opposed to those wattle and daub huts and service facilities often built in direct relation with them, within the same site.

This conference aims to investigate every aspect of hypogeism, structural and functional characteristics and, as much as possible, the possible reasons which led some members of ancient communities to choose or build underground spaces.

The final goal is to present an organic study of this phenomenon in all its aspects, which allows to better understand the meaning of single contexts and place them in a general framework.

For this reason, each case study presented will need to show the relative finds, but also frame the hypogeal structure within the general typology suggested here:

- *natural* (caves, sinkholes, rock shelters, tunnels, etc.), with a brief morphologic description (modified zones, one or more spaces, what spaces were in use, presence of water, etc.);
- *artificial-funerary* (oven tomb, chamber tomb, with multiple rooms, with or without a top mound) with a description of their architecture;
- *artificial-residential* (service features, rupestrian dwellings, worship areas, underground temples) with a description of their architecture;

Special attention will be paid to the function of these structures, which in certain instances might be multiple (in case of caves: temporary or permanent dwelling, sanctuary, burial site; in case of tombs: burials, sanctuaries, ceremonial sites, cenotaphs).

As always, the subject regards Etruria, but for necessary comparisons, papers related to other areas of Europe and the Mediterranean will also be accepted. In a few cases, strictly related to Etruria, it will be possible to analyse elements from a more recent age, in particular related to archaic or orientalising period, as a result of the phenomena hereby examined.

The *second section* will host presentations related to pre- and protohistoric studies and findings in Etruria in recent years, with a preference for updates on topics already presented in previous conferences. This section will exclusively hold *posters*, but the publication on the Conference Proceedings will receive the same space as presentation papers.

In the *poster section* there will be space for those that present a monographic subject. Posters will be put *online*, on Centro Studi's webpage and will be downloadable to ease their diffusion and discussion. Please send your poster to Dr. Christian Metta and Matteo Aspesi to his email: [metta.christian@gmail.com](mailto:metta.christian@gmail.com) [maspesi@gmail.com](mailto:maspesi@gmail.com), please also use this email to ask further information. To have the posters online it is imperative that you send your poster by **July 31**.

The conference will take place in Valentano (VT) (September 11), Manciano (GR) (September 12) and Saturnia (GR) (September 13).

The fee is € 40 per person for each conference speaker and academic attendees, and € 20 for students and independent researchers, payable to the Secretariat on the day of the Conference.

The fee will include meals offered by the hosting municipalities, *prétirage* and a discount on all the Conference Proceedings and publications by Centro Studi di Preistoria e Archeologia.

When presenting the paper, the first three authors of a paper must pay the fee regardless of whether they attended the conference or not.

Whoever is interested in participating to the conference should send their registration form to [metta.christian@gmail.com](mailto:metta.christian@gmail.com), [veronica.gallo90@gmail.com](mailto:veronica.gallo90@gmail.com) and [nuccianegroni@gmail.com](mailto:nuccianegroni@gmail.com) by **April 30, 2020**.

Please attach an abstract between 1000 and 2000 characters long to your registration form. **Acceptation will be make known by May 15, 2020.**

All who will register will receive the second communication and a detailed program of the conference.

Nuccia Negroni Catacchio