

PREHISTORY AND PROTOHISTORY IN ETRURIA

16TH CONFERENCE – 9th-10th-11th September 2022

Archaeology of fire ***Life, Death, Cults: a constant presence*** ***Research and excavations***

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

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Monographic theme

The presence of fire and its importance in everyday life, in funerary rituals and in religious ideology have been the subject of many studies and much research; however, the related activities, beliefs and myths are not observable anymore and have to be reconstructed interpreting material remains survived until now; the process is very complex and not without risks because many of this archaeological sources got to us modified and their informative capability has been sensibly reduced; moreover we lost the interpretative codes and to understand antiquity modern interpretative categories are utilised, which are often inappropriate and misleading.

Is it possible to distinguish a domestic hearth from a ritual fire, material residue of an action involving animal sacrifice to worship a deity? Or from the remains of a communal banquet in honour of the dead or the ancestors? In every case it will be possible to find charcoal, ash, animal bones and charred seeds. A few tools are available for a correct interpretation such as: more recent comparanda, including religious activities and ceremonies described by written sources; ethnoarchaeology, through the observation of contexts that produce material remains similar to those ones in study; experimental archaeology. However, the most accurate analysis is that one of the archaeological context and its comparanda. The probabilities of a more accurate interpretation increase with the number of contexts studied and, therefore, available for comparison.

This conference aims to analyse different types of fire features, the typology of materials found in the same context, the type of contexts and their comparanda, to create an ample collection of case studies. The aim of this exercise is to foster the design of hypotheses based on the largest possible number of secure data.

For this reason, every case study presented shall describe the finds, including them in a general reference category based on the type of context, and finally, when necessary to formulate interpretative hypotheses, recourse can be made to later literary tradition, ethnoarchaeology and experimental archaeology.

During the Conference the following themes will be considered:

- *Topic 1 – Fire in household setting:* hearths, ovens, accidental fires;
- *Topic 2 – Fire in ritual context:* hearths, layers altered by fire, evidence of ritual burning on artefacts and/or ecofacts;
- *Topic 3 – Fire in funerary context:* ustrina, cremation rites, rituals involving the use of soils containing cremated human remains;
- *Topic 4 – Fire in workshop setting:* ovens, kilns, production techniques.

When submitting your paper, please, specify for which of the above four topics you wish to be considered.

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Research and excavations

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.

The poster section will be dedicated to both themes. 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 Dr. Matteo Aspesi to his email: metta.christian@gmail.com 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 the **31st of July**.

The conference will take place in Valentano (VT) and Saturnia (GR) – 9, 10, 11th September.

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, *prétirage* and a discount on all the Conference Proceedings and publications by Centro Studi di Preistoria e Archeologia.

When presenting the paper, the first two 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, veronica.gallo90@gmail.com and nuccianegroni@gmail.com by the **30th of April 2022**.

Please attach an abstract between 1000 and 2000 characters long to your registration form. **Acceptance will be made known by 15th May, 2022.**

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

Nuccia Negroni Catacchio