

New Evidence for the Late Roman Connectivity at the Site of San Vincenzo (Stromboli, Italy)

During the most recent excavations at San Vincenzo, new data has been collected to analyze the Late Roman economic connections of Stromboli with the wider Mediterranean Sea. While there were hints of a Late Roman Necropolis found, briefly mentioned in some old reports from the early 20th century, there is very little evidence beyond those reports and no comprehensive study on this period on Stromboli (De Fiore 1916, Libertini 1921, Zagami 1950). Previous work has been focused on the Bronze Age settlement and its connections with the Aeolian Islands, the coast of Italy, and the Aegean world. This paper seeks to analyze, for the first time, the new data uncovered during these excavations and explore it in context with the surrounding archipelago and Mediterranean area, during the Late Roman period.

The island of Stromboli itself is a stratovolcano, with regular volcanic activity. The volcanic environment has left the island devoid of water, yet despite this, there has been human contact since the Neolithic Period and the first settlement was in the Bronze Age, likely due to its position in the Southern Tyrrhenian Sea, just north of the Straits of Messina. The islands in general thrived during the Bronze Age and Greek periods, which have been the focus of past archaeological works on the Aeolian Islands. Archaeological evidence, however, points to continued utilization of Stromboli and the other islands during the Roman and Late Roman periods, yet no comprehensive study has been undertaken.

The only written works regarding Roman or Late Roman contact with Stromboli were a drawing from J. Houel in the 18th century and a few lines in some volumes mentioned above, summed up in single-season campaign report from the first excavation of the Bronze Age settlement at San Vincenzo in the 1980s by Madaleine Cavalier. After Cavalier's season, the site

lay unexcavated, until the current archaeological team took up the excavation of the Bronze Age settlement in 2009. During the 2013-2015 seasons, the excavations uncovered three tombs with different tomb typologies containing five bodies. The ceramics found among the graves, while limited, include vessels from Africa, the eastern Mediterranean, and Southern France. The range of vessels provides proof for the interconnectivity of Stromboli with the rest of the Mediterranean during the Late Roman period. Thus, I propose to analyze the data found at Stromboli, with comparable evidence from Africa, Calabria, and Ostia.

Bibliography

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