

DENIS SAMI

A PASSAGE OF TROOPS? LATE ROMAN SMALL FINDS FROM *AD NOVAS*-CESENATICO (NORTH-EAST ITALY)

INTRODUCTION

What constitutes Roman military equipment and who used it? For specialists in Roman military material culture these are central and much debated questions¹. Simplistically it may be argued that objects used by the army represent military equipment, but given the social complexity of the Roman army how do we distinguish between artefacts used by soldiers and civilians²? Furthermore, material culture can intrinsically assume multiple and different functions as well as meanings. For example, a spear-head may have been used in battle by a *velites*, as well as in hunting by a non-combatant person; similarly, a *gladius* may have been used in battle but could have also been used for personal defence by a civilian. Consequently, the object per se carries a potential ambiguous identity that can be difficult to pin down. But when we add to the single object the context where it was used and lost and the reason for its entry into the archaeological record, we can nonetheless narrow down our speculation and define more precisely its identity.

Below is discussed a representative sample of small copper-alloy, iron and glass finds collected from the site of Cà Bufalini in Cesenatico during the excavations undertaken by the university of Leicester between 2008-14, all of which are generally identified in current literature as “military equipment” (fig. 1). The assemblage was collected in part through metal-detector surveys and in part from stratigraphical excavation in contexts closely related to the

presence of a road and the buildings alongside. The artefacts are discussed in consideration of the context of their discovery and the potential reason for their loss, giving added value to their archaeological and object status.

The way these artefacts entered the archaeological record is in fact of central importance to understanding their use and their social, as well as symbolic meaning. It is clear that some Roman military equipment was deliberately deposited in votive contexts and less frequently in burials, but what can we learn from the artefacts that were simply lost during their use? If we want to untangle the complex social lives of military objects, their use and role in the performance of certain identities and their final deposition, it is necessary to first understand the wider spatial, temporal and historical contexts within which these occurred. Although limited, the case study of *Ad Novas* provides a snap-shot into these processes as the site was an interregional crossroad, pivotal to the movement of people on the Adriatic starboard and in the eastern Po Valley, as well as a focus for the local economy.

THE SITE

The *Tabula Peutingeriana* indicates that the Roman settlement of *Ad Novas* lay immediately north of the Rubicon river and along an interregional road flanking the Adriatic littoral and connecting the cities of Rimini to Ravenna (fig. 2). Although we lack textual

¹ ALLASON-JONES 1999.

² ALLISON 2013. JAMES 2004.

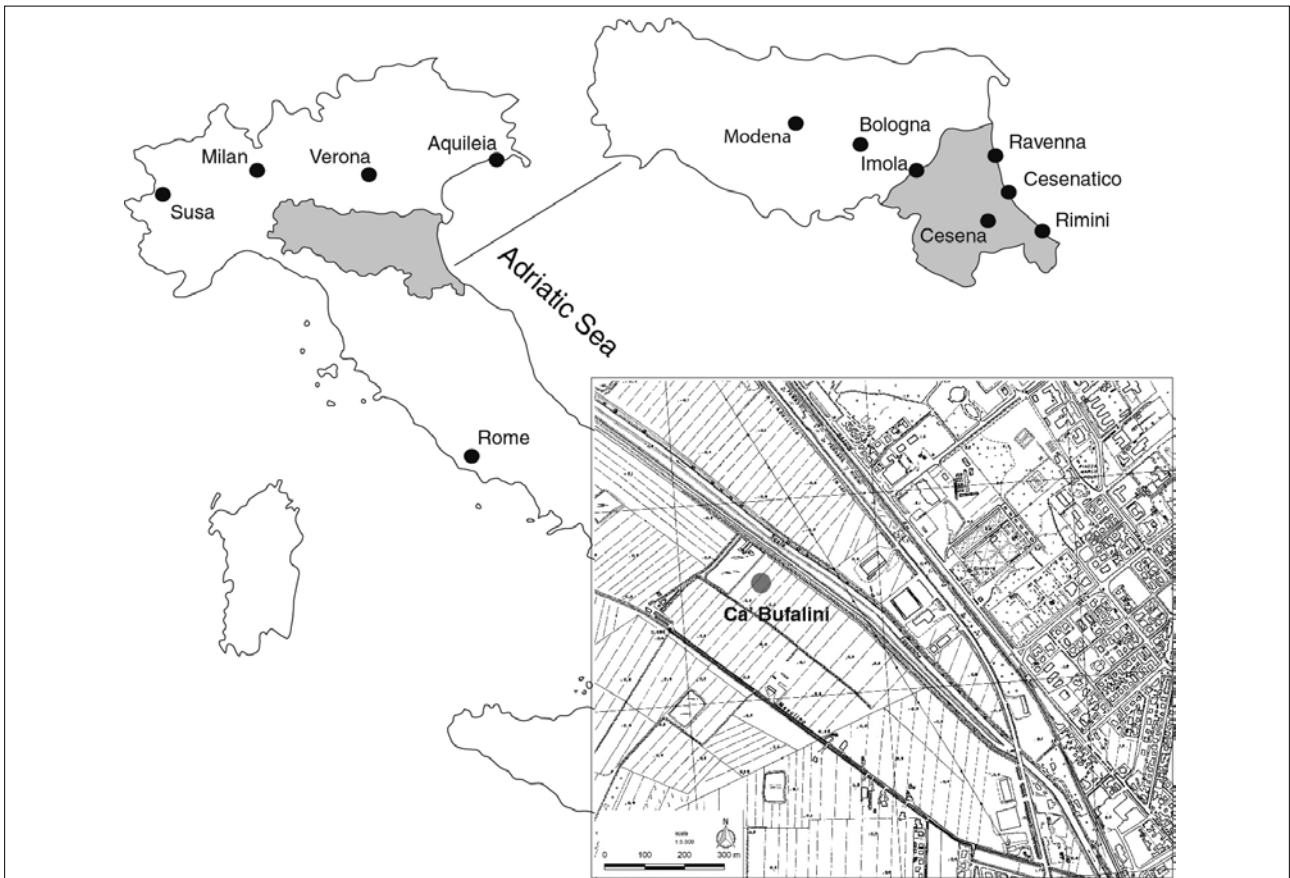


Fig. 1. The North Adriatic Region showing the location of *Ad Novas-Cesenatico* and the site of Cà Bufalini.

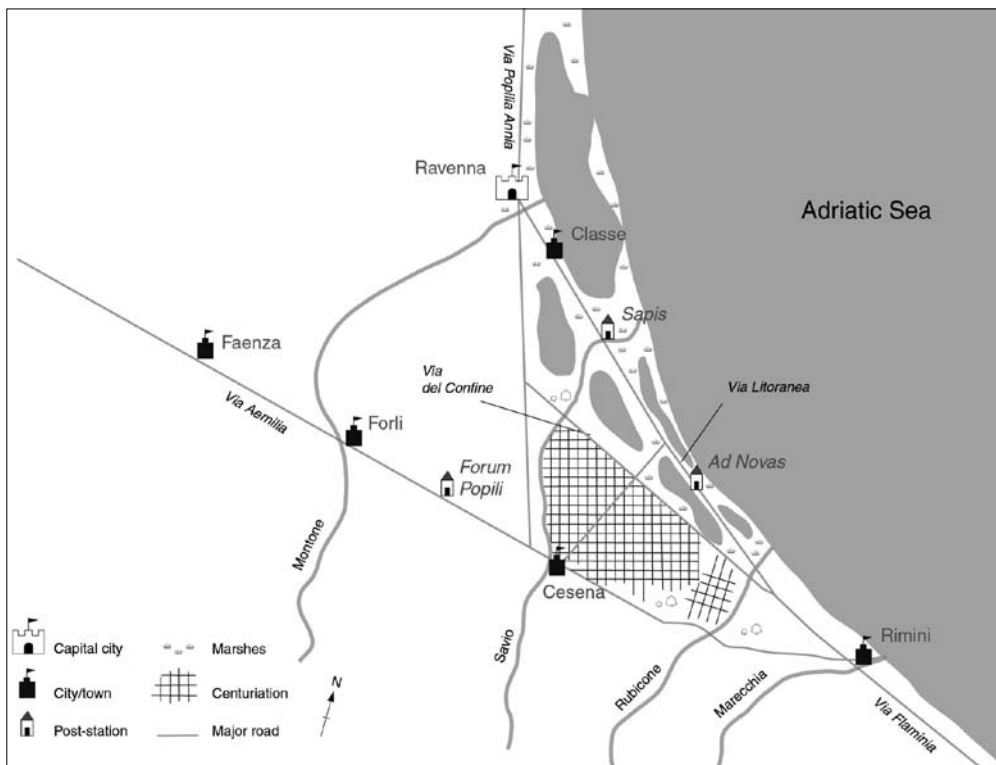


Fig. 2. *Ad Novas-Cesenatico*, the Roman road system of coastal Romagna.

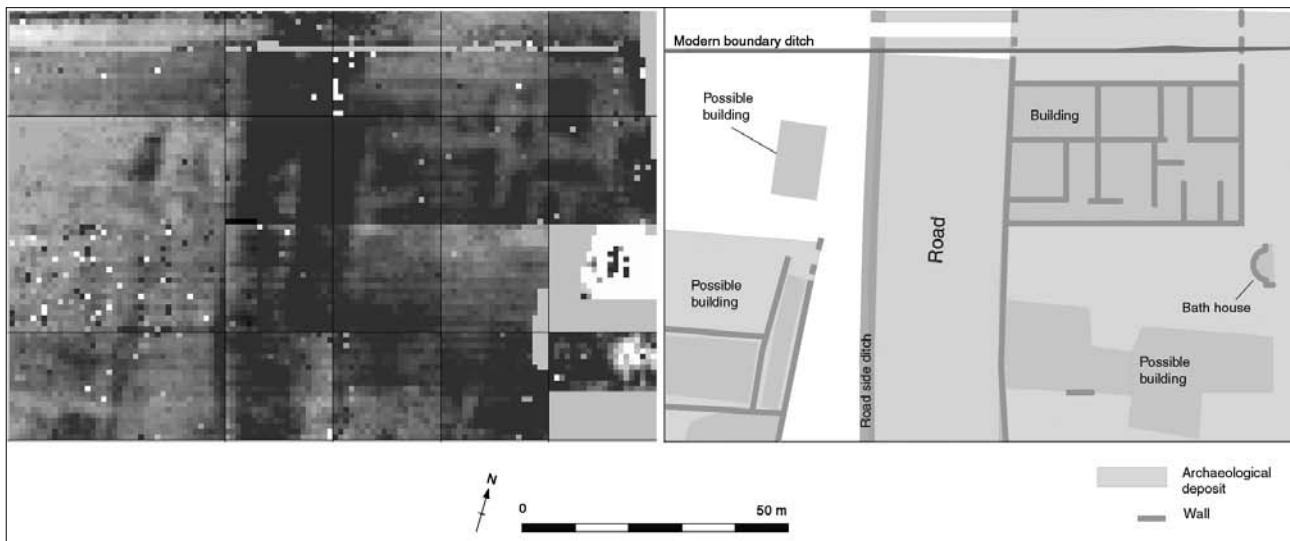


Fig. 3. Cesenatico, Cà Bufalini, left, the results of the geophysical survey. Right, interpretation plan of the settlement.

information from the Roman period, the same map seems to suggest that *Ad Novas* was a *mansio/statio* serving the *cursus publicus*. The centre must have had a certain symbolic and strategic importance since in 568-69 bishop Petrus was met here by the citizens of Classe on his way back to Ravenna. We also know that later, during the revolt of George – son of John, the secretary to the Byzantine Exarch who was deported and executed by Emperor Justinian II – in 719, the citizens of the nearby centre of Cervia were ordered to patrol the area of *Ad Novas* to prevent any potential landing of Imperial troops. The ninth century *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae ravennatis* also informs us that in 814 the settlement was described as a *civitas dirupta* – an abandoned town³. With only limited information, archaeologists have sought to identify the precise location of *Ad Novas* and the road of the *cursus publicus*. Although it had been largely accepted that the Roman settlement of *Ad Novas* lies in the area of modern Cesenatico and the road was linked to the modern Via del Confine, their positions remained uncertain until our recent excavation campaigns⁴.

The investigations at Cà Bufalini documented a large and articulated roadside settlement dating from the early first century AD to the late sixth century and comprising a substantial paved road, a circa 40 x 50 m large rectangular building with courtyard, a small thermal bath and a possible dock on the bank of the

nearby Fossatone canal⁵ (fig. 3). Further remains of buildings, possibly part of the residential area, were documented in 2014, making the settlement larger than previously thought.

The coast of Cesenatico is today a fairly dry and flat cultivated plateau ending in a sandy shore, but until the eighteenth century this landscape was dominated by standing water characterised by reed beds and difficult to access unless moving along the roads built on top of sand dunes. This environment, as we identify, most likely played a central part in the formation of the assemblage here investigated.

The north/west-south/east oriented road was a particular focus in our excavations. This was a major construction of a considerable width of circa 9 m, and was built on top of a dune levelled with clay and gravel in the highest position of the site. Its surface was paved with a thick layer of cobbles corresponding to the *cursus publicus* construction technique. A large ditch flanked the road on the west side helping the *via* to remain dry, while on the east side the walls of the buildings demarcated the eastern limit of the road-space. Thanks to its position, size and quality building technique this road should be identified as the *Via Popilia-Annia* of imperial time, the road connecting Rimini to Ravenna and Aquileia as depicted by the *Tabula Peutingeriana* and described by the early medieval *Liber pontificalis*⁶.

³ AGN. *Lib Pont. Rav.*, c. 93. See also the translation by C. NAUERH, *De Sancto Petro Seniori*: XXVIII, 93, 10-13.

⁴ FARFANETI 2000. GIORGETTI 1982.

⁵ SAMI, CHRISTIE forthcoming.

⁶ SAMI, CHRISTIE forthcoming. The location of the *via Popilia* as been the centre of a long debate. Today it is widely accepted the road changed its original position through the centuries, see GIORGETTI 1982.

Interregional *viae* were also known as *viae militares* because they were often built by the army and used predominantly, although not exclusively so, for the rapid movement of troops, dispatch of messages, animals and supplies⁷. From the time of Septimius Severus and later with the organisation of the *comitatenses* (movable troops) by Constantine the *mansiones* and *stationes* of the *cursus publicus* became focal points in the supply of the army implying a rising militarisation of these centres⁸. The use of the *cursus publicus* was strictly regulated by law to the extent that the eighth volume of the *Codex Theodosianus* is largely dedicated to the administration of the network of land communications and under Emperors Valens (364-78) and Valentinian (364-75) only the Emperor could have released the *diplomata* necessary to access the *cursus*⁹. This attention by the Roman authorities implied especially in the late Western Empire a high militarisation of *mansiones/stationes* and of the road space¹⁰.

Roads were regularly patrolled by *stationarii* and *beneficiarii*, military officials appointed to the security of the road system that together with the periodical movement of army couriers and troops with their trains of wagons and supplies also contributed to the sense of a militarised environment¹¹.

It is this movement of military personnel that may have contributed to a notable element of the small finds collected at Cà Bufalini. In particular, discussion will focus firstly on the theoretical approach to such artefacts, seeking to define their context of use and identity. Were these objects only the prerogative of military personnel or could they also be representative of civilians? Boundaries between military and civil use are, as we shall see, often complex and blurred in the Late Roman period.

Furthermore, attempts will be made to use the textual sources to suggest a possible provenance for these artefacts, as well as draw comparisons with other archaeological contexts and similar finds.

MILITARY EQUIPMENT?

Belt and harnesses fittings, fasteners, weapons, as well as glass and amber beads, generally interpreted as part of, or associated with the Roman military equipment appear among the most common small finds collected at Cà Bufalini¹². These groups of artefacts, despite their association with the Roman army display multifunctional or cross-identity characteristics that can also offer evidence of non-combat activity on site¹³. Dome-headed and flat-disc fasteners (fig. 4, 1-8) are a good example of such multifunctional and versatile equipment that cannot be exclusively and precisely assigned to horse harness or allocated to combat dress¹⁴.

The different ranges in size and thickness of these artefacts highlight their versatility. Dimensions can differ considerably spanning 14 mm width of fig. 4, 1, to 7 mm of fig. 4, 1. 5. Some fasteners are decorated revealing an aesthetic element to whatever they were attached to (fig. 4, 5-7). These objects became common from the third-century and their primary use was to bond together leather belts or straps¹⁵. Considering a maximum leather thickness of 4/5 mm, belt fastener fig. 4, 3-6 may have linked together two straps, while fig. 4, 1-2 most likely joined together three or four belts. Despite their frequency along the *limes*, these fasteners are completely absent in the first to fourth century AD necropolis of Lugone in Salò (Brescia), which appears to have some important military connotations¹⁶. They are absent from the small find assemblages from Ravenna and Classe where, given the presence of the navy fleet and military personnel, we may expect perhaps higher concentrations¹⁷. Single dome-headed fasteners have been documented at sites all around Italy, but high presence of such artefacts remains so far unknown¹⁸. The fact that these objects do not occur in the well excavated the late sixth century Byzantine *castrum* of Sant'Antonino di Perti in Liguria might suggest that their production ended sometime between the fifth and the sixth century¹⁹.

⁷ TILBURG 2007, pp. 63-64. CORSI 2000, pp. 13 and bibliography in note 49 p. 18.

⁸ CORSI 2000, p. 7.

⁹ CORSI 2000, p. 8 (see also chapter 3 source 130).

¹⁰ See ŠAŠEL 1977.

¹¹ FUHRMANN 2012, pp. 197-98. TILBURG 2007, pp. 66-68. PETRACCIA 2001. Militarised space: TILBURG 2007. CORSI 2000, p. 8.

¹² ALLASON-JONES 1999.

¹³ ALLISON 2013, p. 3.

¹⁴ ALLASON-JONES 1985.

¹⁵ BISHOP, COULSTON 2006, pp. 182-83.

¹⁶ REDŽIĆ *et alii* 2014; REDŽIĆ 2013, pp. 98; FISCHER 1988.

¹⁷ The excavation at Classe focused on the commercial area and the Basilica severiana where the presence of military personnel may have been limited (Elena Baldi personal communication).

¹⁸ In Emilia-Romagna dome-headed fasteners have been documented in Mirandola near Modena (CORTI 2012, fig. 1.5) and Borello near Cesena (MARALDI 2014, fig. 4.2-3), but it is possible that lack of published exemplars prevent a full understanding of the distribution of such objects.

¹⁹ MANNONI, MURIALDO 2001.

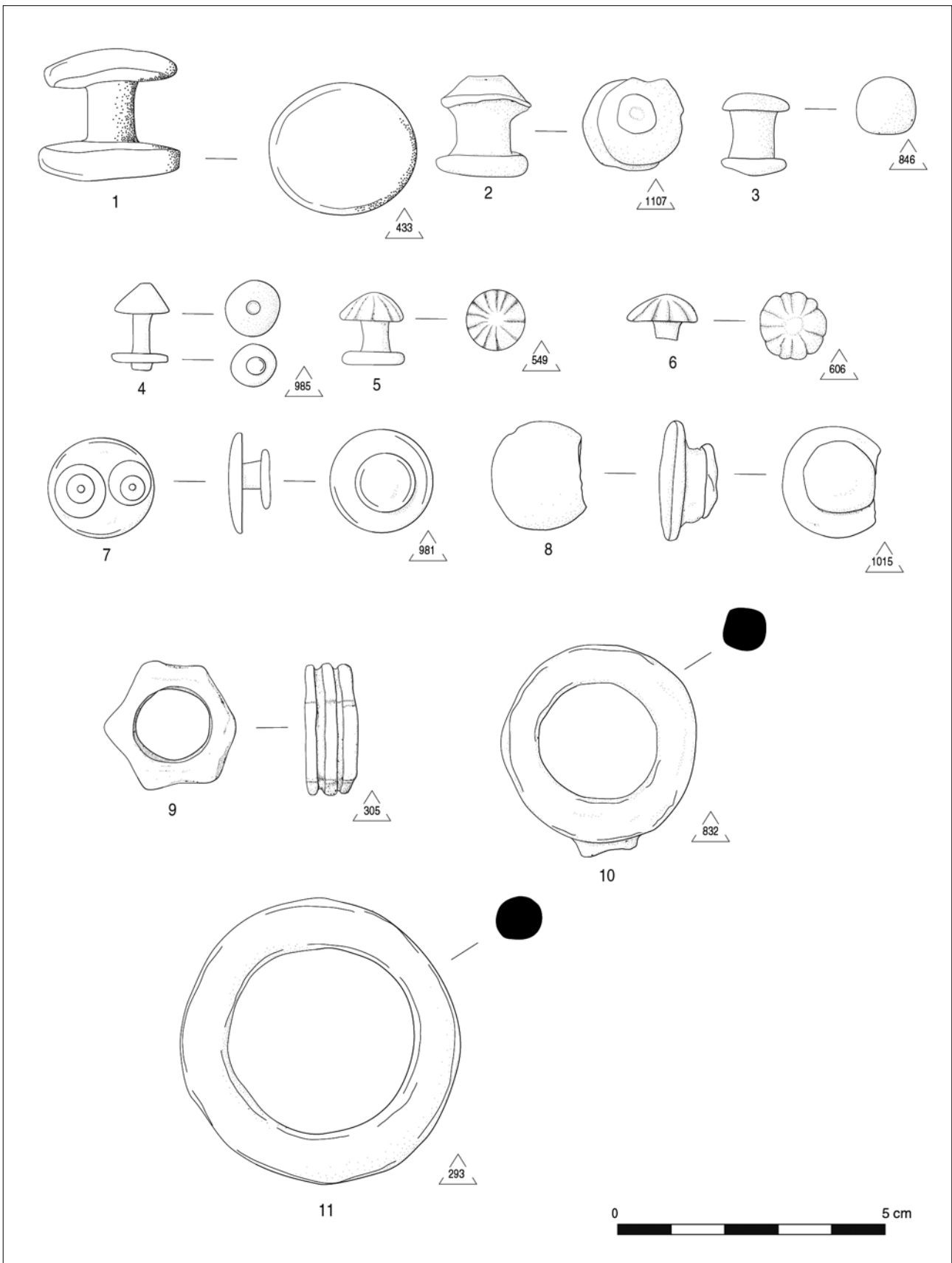


Fig. 4. Cesenatico, Cà Bufalini, Copper-alloy fasteners (1-8) and ring junctions (9-11).

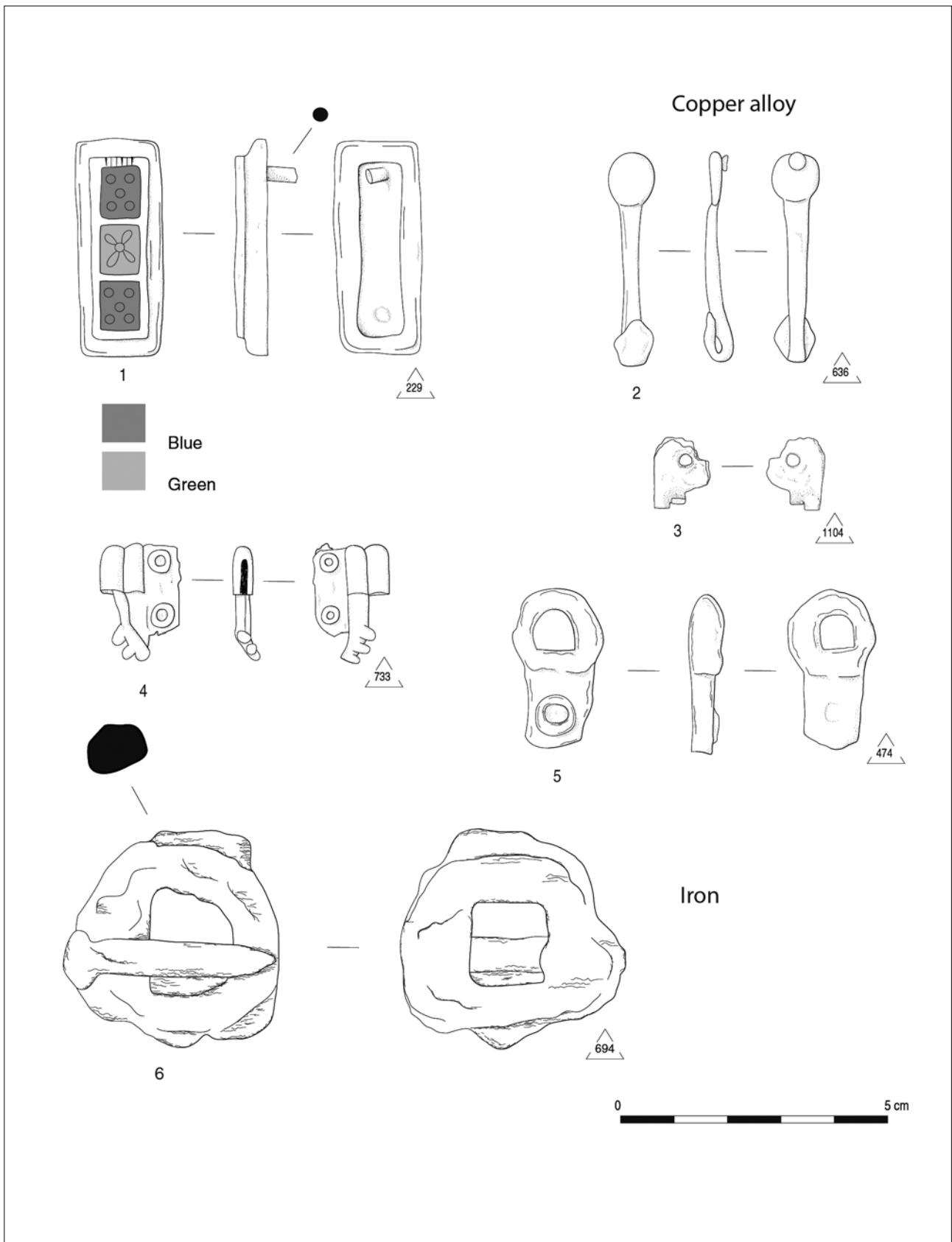


Fig. 5. Cesenatico, Cà Bufalini, Copper-alloy mount (1), scabbard slide (2), *lorica squamata* scale (3), *lorica segmentata* hinge (4) and buckle (5). Iron buckle (6).

One mount, fig. 5, 1 was most likely a belt or harness decoration as its two pins are too narrow to function as a fastener. It is decorated in blue and green glass, a production technique paralleled in Roman Britain and on the Danubian *limes* where brooches and mounts have enamelled embellishment, notably such mounts are unknown at, for example, the third century military assemblage of *Dura Europos* in Syria or that of Tamusida in Morocco²⁰. The mount, fig. 5, 2 is more likely to belong to a scabbard slide. The upper end is disc-shaped with an integral rivet to the reverse for attachment, while the lower section is long and narrow, culminating in a small hook²¹.

Although such simple items may have had multiple functions, the iron D-shaped buckle, fig. 5, 6 and plain copper alloy rings, fig. 4, 10-11 are perhaps horse harness fittings and were used to secure saddles. The two rings present signs of heavy wear on one side suggesting they were subject to intense mechanical stress²².

Weaponry is probably the most functional category of objects with the strongest military connotations. The iron spearhead, fig. 6, 1 is a simple sub-pyramidal point possibly from a catapult or *arciballista*, but a second head spearhead, fig. 6, 2 is the terminal part of a *pilum*, a pyramidal-head javelin unlikely to have been used outside a military context²³.

Although other functions and interpretations cannot be excluded – for example, a fitting from a casket or small item of furniture – our hinge fragment, fig. 5, 4 seems in fact most likely to be part of a *lorica segmentata*. Very similar parallels are documented at the *castrum* of *Colchester* in England²⁴. To my knowledge, the only elements belonging to a *lorica segmentata* in north Italy comes from the necropolis of Lugone where a well preserved hinge was recovered from a burial²⁵. A small copper alloy buckle, fig. 5, 5 may also have been part of *lorica segmentata*, although, again, its simple form means that other equine-related and domestic functions cannot be ruled out. The fragment of a copper alloy armour scale documents the use of *lorica squamata* on site. This armour was often employed in the protection of horses and may connect with the other horse related objects documented on site.

As seen, the group of objects investigated here, despite their potential military connection could also

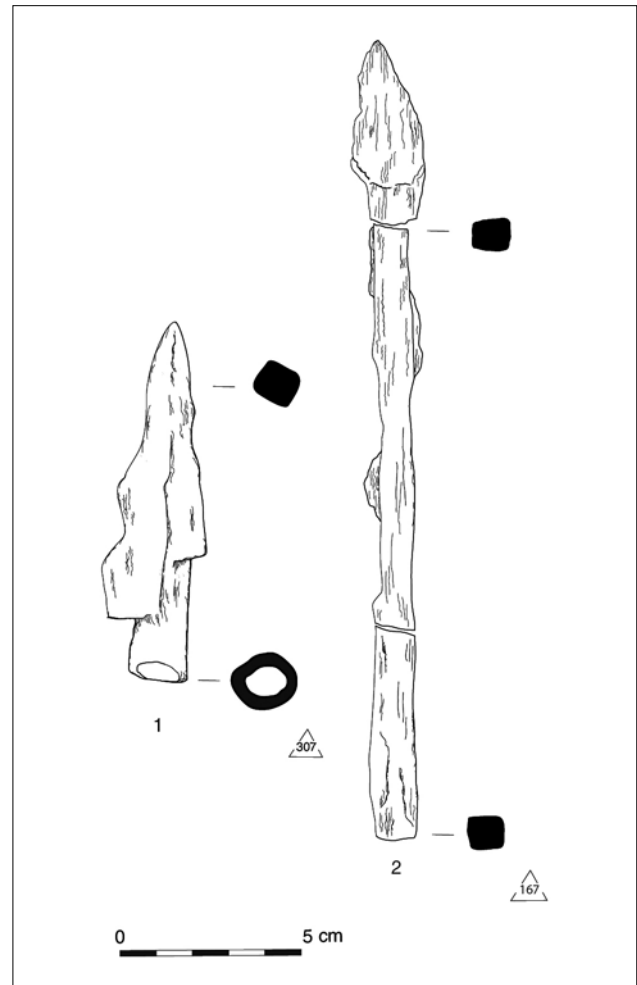


Fig. 6. Cesenatico, Cà Bufalini Iron subpyramidal bolt (1), *pilum* (2).

be assigned to different users and so, automatically assuming a military connection can lead to the obvious risk of an overrepresentation of the presence and role of army personnel in passing through *Ad Novas*. Lindsay Allason-Jones, in analysing the ambiguity of the small finds from turrets on the Hadrian's Wall showed the importance of the contexts in which finds are recovered to assign them a function²⁶. To the

²⁰ Similar mount has been documented in Lincolnshire (Portable Antiquities Scheme: LIN-B798F1) and North Yorkshire (PAS: NCL-309B11). JAMES 2004. MUGNAI *et alii* 2013.

²¹ A slightly similar scabbard slide is documented in Darlington (PAS: BM-7CC415).

²² BISHOP 1988, p. 106. JAMES 2004, pp. 60-62.

²³ This sub-pyramidal point has similarity with artillery bolt-heads in BISHOP, COULSTON 2006, p. 169, n 2-7. About the *pilum* see D'AMATO, SUMNER 2009, pp. 6-7. BISHOP, COULSTON 2006, pp. 73-76, 130, 151. CONNOLLY 2001.

²⁴ CRUMMY 1992, p. 189, n 161, 234, n. 362-64. COULSTON 1990.

²⁵ MASSA 1997; APPELS, LAYCOCK 2007, pp. 62-3.

²⁶ ALLASON-JONES 1988.

importance of the context and the concentration of these finds, we should add the reasons for why these artefacts entered the archaeological record. Was their disposal accidental for example being broken, replaced during repair or discharged through age? Or, perhaps was their removal or loss intentional?

DEPOSITION

Among the many reasons for the disposal or loss or burial of military equipment was deliberate deposition²⁷. Military equipment – and in particular weaponry – has in fact been documented extensively within ritual contexts, suggesting that it held an important symbolic meaning for military communities²⁸. Unintentional loss was also a major cause of disposal in particular for smaller sized, everyday artefacts. The objects from Cà Bufalini, as we have seen, are functional, rather cheap, ordinary items, intensively used and exposed to heavy wear and rupture, causing different degree of damage. Losing a small mount may in fact have been unnoticed to the owner, causing only minor inconvenience. But the loss of a dome-headed fastener securing a waist belt, a horse harness or a scabbard slide may have caused functional faults that could hardly have been unnoticed. The loss of a horse harness ring junction or that of a waist buckle, similarly most certainly caused major problems that needed fast repairs.

Beyond the potential damage cause by modern ploughing, if we look at the assemblage it appears that the most common reason for loss or disposal is heavy wear due to mechanical stress. For example, rings fig. 4, 11-12, despite concretions, clearly presents indications of intense use on one side. The mount decorated with inlay fig. 5, 1, features broken rivets. Leather belts and straps no doubt frequently broke; this may explain why almost all the dome-headed and the flat-circular fasteners, as well as junction rings and buckles were found complete. However, considering the high quantity of such at *Ad Novas* does this make a place of heavy traffic and potential stress and rupture of securing and fastening artefacts?

Although the road crossing the site was of considerable width this was still a narrow space which hundreds, if not thousands of cavalymen, soldiers and wagons loaded with supplies had to transit. Even if the movement of the Roman army was extremely well planned and strictly regulated by law to ensure

fast movement of soldiers and supplies to minimise the trains and to reduce multi-user conflict²⁹. Nonetheless, jam, delays, jostling must have been common place in the Empire.

According to modern statistics a horse averages 210.31 cm in height, and 237.74 cm in length and when a rider sits in the saddle the widest point is 121 cm³⁰. Roman horses were of smaller size, closer to the size of a modern pony, spanning between 111.76 cm and 121.92 cm of the Exmoor pony to the 160.02 cm of the Friesian horse³¹.

In determining the space occupied by a cavalryman we need to consider that he had to travel at an acceptable speed, but he also had to move fast, changing direction or setting a formation in moments of necessity. It is reasonable therefore to think that enough space was left between horses – a minimum of 1 m on each side and 2 m from the front and rear horse would have been enough.

A *schola* of the late fourth century consisted of circa 500 cavalrymen, which, considering the above measurements, implied a marching column divided in two rows circa 750 m long. To this we have to add wagons or other horses packed with supplies and possibly non-combative personnel. Accordingly to these measurements the road at Cà Bufalini was large enough to accommodate two Cavalrymen comfortably (fig. 7).

On the related ground, the *mansio/statio* of *Ad Novas* may have represented a critical point in the movement of an army required to transit in formation through a restricted area delimited by buildings and ditches. The restriction caused by the landscape possibly intensified form of mechanical stress to the equipment – particularly to horse harness – that was at the origin for the high concentration of these artefacts in the archaeological records of the site.

PROVENANCE AND CHRONOLOGY

The distributions of such finds within forts and fortifications or from scattered funerary contexts has mostly been understood only within the regions of the *limes*³². As a consequence, these artefacts are not very well known outside the ‘militarised’ regions of the Empire.

The standardisation of the Roman military equipment means that the provenance of these finds is generally difficult to establish. The dome-headed fasteners, ring junctions and D-shaped buckles col-

²⁷ BISHOP, COULSTON 2006.

²⁸ BISHOP, COULSTON 2006, p. 116.

²⁹ CTh VII 4, 22 (May 396); ROTH 1999; TILBURG 2007, p. 127. For the movement of the Army at the time of Emperor Justinian see COSENTINO 2011.

³⁰ HOPPER 2007, p. 165.

³¹ SPEIDEL 1994, p. 108, JOHNSTONE 2004.

³² SWIFT 2000.

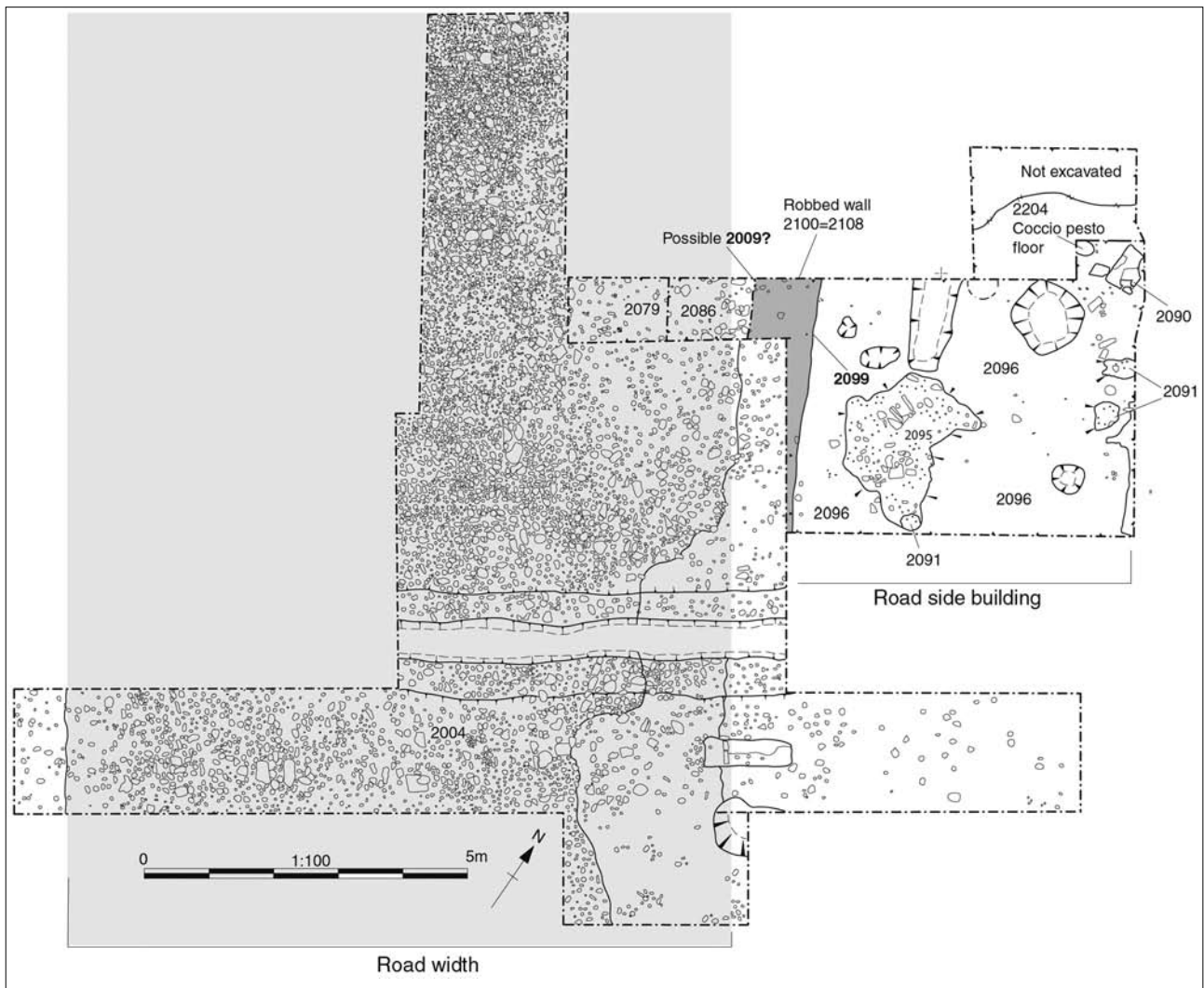


Fig. 7. Cesenatico, Cà Bufalini, plan of trench 10 showing part of the north/east-south/west road and the flanking structure.

lected in *Ad Novas* are, for example, identical to the equipment documented at *Dura-Europos* in Syria, as well as in Colchester in England. If the object *per se* cannot help in defining its origin, other finds associated with them, combined with more careful consideration of the local and regional historical context may help to shed light on the potential provenance of the assemblage.

Glass beads of cubic, cylindrical, globular and hexagonal faceted forms dating from the second to the fifth century – with increasing concentrations from the fourth century – are recurrent finds along

the north and the east *limes*³³. The dark blue hexagonal faceted bead from Cà Bufalini, fig. 8, 3 is one of the most emblematic Late Roman personal decorations documented in the Danube region and are generally associated with the presence of the army³⁴. Turquoise melon beads made of glass or more frequently of faience (fig. 8, 2) are also distinctive and widely – although not exclusively – occur within military contexts. Probably manufactured in the Danube area they are known from the first to the fifth century AD and a connection with military horse decoration has been suggested³⁵. In addition,

³³ SWIFT 2000.

³⁴ SWIFT 2000, pp. 57-58.

³⁵ Penelope Allison categorise melon beads as potential part of dress or horse equipment as well as possible female and child decoration. ALLISON 2003, pp. 83-85.

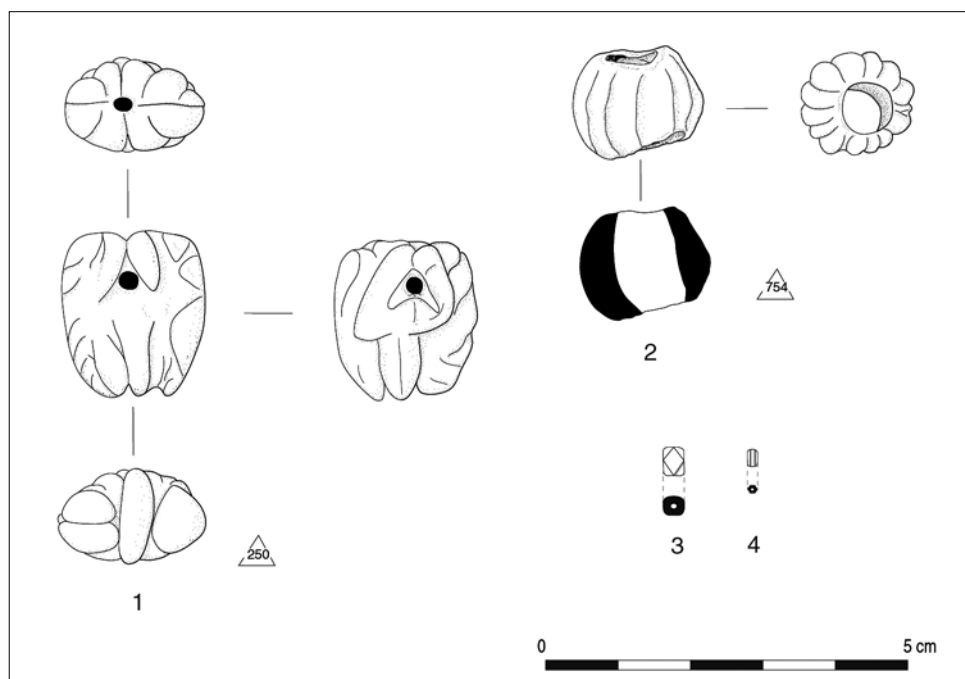


Fig. 8. Cesenatico, Cà Bufalini, beads: amber (1), faience (2), glass (3-4).

amber beads (fig. 8, 1) occur widely in Roman funerary contexts and with a particularly high incidence in burials of the Danube region ³⁶.

As small portable objects, glass and amber beads may have travelled extensively through the Empire in different modes: traded as necklaces or bracelets, as well as passed from one person to another as gifts. A comprehensive study and distribution maps of blue hexagonal beads and melon beads may change our view of the production, use and distribution of these artefacts, currently; however, they are associated with the presence of the army and the north-east *limes*.

Textual sources indicate an intensive presence of the Army particularly in the fourth century. The network of land communications of the Po valley was essential in the movement of troops from the key province of Gaul to Illiricum at the time of Constantine ³⁷. As consequence, most likely a season of renovation and investment in the system of roads and *mansiones/stationes* occurred ³⁸. In 312, preparing for war, Massentius concentrated his army in the north east of Italy, between Verona and Aquileia. Constantine moving from Treviri and taking Massentius by sur-

prise, defeated Massentius's army at Susa, occupied Verona and in the late summer he besieged Aquileia. The fall of Verona and Aquileia opened Constantine the way to the Po Valley finally completed with the fell of Modena and Rimini. At this point Constantine had secured his access to the via Flaminia and reached Rome ³⁹. From Rome, in the early months of 313, he moved to Milan and then Gaul. Further presence of Constantine and his army in north East Italy is documented in 315 and 316 when he prepared for the battle against Licinus. Finally, in 318 Constantine resided between Aquileia and Milan and moved at the end of the year to Sirmium in Pannonia ⁴⁰.

Further consistent movement of troops are documented in 361, when emperor Julian besieged Costantius II in Aquileia ⁴¹. In addition, the battle of the river Frigidus fought between Theodosius and Eugenius in 394 – possibly around Vipava (Slovenia) not far from Aquileia – may have meant a regular flow of Pannonian troops along the Via Popilia-Annia both before and after of the battle ⁴². In the early fifth century, Stilico and Alaric transited with their army through the Po valley possibly passing through *Ad Novas* and the garrison of the near fifth

³⁶ SWIFT 2003.

³⁷ PORENA 2013, p. 338.

³⁸ Troops from southern Pannonia for example were deployed in other contexts and have a high degree of mobility. RADMAN-LIVAJA 2012.

³⁹ ROBERTO 2014.

⁴⁰ PORENA 2013, pp. 335-36.

⁴¹ ROBERTO 2014, p. 137.

⁴² ŠTEKAR 2013.

century capital Ravenna may have frequently moved along the via Popilia-Annia too. Germanic mercenary troops led by general Aetius were defeated by *magister militum* Boniface in the battle of Rimini in 432 and both the armies must have passed through *Ad Novas*⁴³. Given the relative proximity of the Pannonian *limes* and the frequent and massive transit of troops along the *cursus publicus* of the Po Valley, it is not surprising that the objects here discussed had a north-eastern provenance.

Taking into consideration the historical background, a chronology spanning from the third to the fourth/fifth century is most likely. The high concentration of fourth to fifth century coins, ceramics and glass also support a Late Roman date for the assemblage here investigated⁴⁴.

CONCLUSIONS

When investigating every day and multi-functional objects we need to be cautious in drawing links with specific identities. However, supported by the textual evidence, a military origin for many of the finds from *Ad Novas* remains plausible, whilst simultaneously bearing in mind their ambiguous nature. As we have seen, the militarisation of the road-space and the administration of the *mansio/statio* in which

army personnel were widely and directly employed contributed to generate a militarised environment. The proximity of important political centres such as Rimini, Ravenna and Aquileia, as well as the battles fought between the late third and fifth century in the north Adriatic region may have further strengthened such atmosphere through the regular movement of army personnel in the eastern Po Valley⁴⁵. Its location along an important interregional road and next to a waterway, made the *mansio/statio* of *Ad Novas* a strategic point in the support and possibly the supply network for moving troops. The discovery of a consistent military equipment assemblage in such a context is therefore not surprising.

The small finds from *Ad Novas* represent a unique corpus of information that offers scope to understand more about the people who frequented the settlement and travelled along the road. At the same time, they shed light on the transient presence of the army in a region far from the *limes*. These finds open new theoretical insight into the possible social and emotional impact of militarisation, moving from the materiality of finds to a more intangible understanding of the site. Did militarisation bring a sense of security or insecurity? Did the transit of troops cause material and economic damage or represent a point of structural development and a new market? The questions remain, but are important to raise and introduce more.

ABSTRACT

Keywords: This paper describes a collection of small finds generally identify as part of the Roman military equipment collected during the excavation organised by the University of Leicester at Cà Bufalini in the north-east Italian town of Ad Novas-Cesenatico. Archaeological investigations carried out from 2006 to 2014 documented a first to sixth centuries AD road settlement organised alongside a large glareata road most likely to be identified with the Via Popilia-Annia of imperial time. The military origin of the artefacts here discussed is defined not only by their functional aspect, but also by the context of provenience and disposal.

Keywords: Cesenatico; Militaria; Late Antiquity; Popilia; Adriatic.

RIASSUNTO

UN PASSAGGIO DI TRUPPE? *MILITARIA* TARDO ROMANA DA *AD NOVAS*-CESENATICO (ITALIA NORD-ORIENTALE)

Questa ricerca analizza un gruppo di reperti - genericamente identificati come *militaria* - raccolti durante la campagna di scavo organizzata dall'università di Leicester a Cà Bufalini di Cesenatico tra il 2008 e il 2014. Lo scavo ha portato alla luce i resti della *mansio/statio* di *Ad Novas* costruita lungo una via glareata identificabile come la via Popilia-Annia di epoca imperiale. Il rapporto tra lo spazio della strada, il passaggio di truppe e la perdita di *militaria* vengono utilizzati per definire l'uso militare degli oggetti presentati.

Parole chiave: Cesenatico; *militaria*; Tardaantichità; Popilia; Alto Adriatico.

⁴³ GWATKIN, WHITNEY 1911, pp. 410-11.

⁴⁴ The ceramic, coins and glass assemblages are currently under study. For a preliminary idea of the material evidence from Cà Bufalini see SAMI *et alii* 2014, SAMI, CHRISTIE forthcoming.

⁴⁵ CHRISITE 2007. BUORA 2002.

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Denis Sami

Oxford Archaeology East.
15 Trafalgar Way, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB23 8SQ, United Kingdom
denis.sami@oxfordarch.co.uk