

The evolution and political use of élite domestic architecture at Poggio Civitate (Murlo)

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The hill of Poggio Civitate is located immediately adjacent to the small mediaeval town of Murlo, c.25 km south of Siena (fig. 1). Situated at the juncture of Tuscany's mineral-rich *Colline metallifere* and the agricultural abundance of the *Crete senese*, Poggio Civitate's inhabitants drew upon the area's vast resources to emerge as a regional center of power in the 8th through 6th c. B.C.

Excavation in 2015 at the Etruscan site revealed a previously undocumented phase of monumental domestic architecture. The building in question lies immediately west of the Piano del Tesoro plateau, in the modern property zone known as Civitate A. Its architectural form, as well as the materials recovered both upon and beneath its floor, suggest that it dates earlier than the architectural complex known on the adjacent plateau.¹ While excavation and study continue to refine our understanding of both its form and chronology, the current state of evidence permits some observations concerning the manner in which the site's élite employed domestic architecture for socio-political purposes. I will suggest that an increasingly restricted access to élite domestic space reflected the increasingly codified nature of aristocratic identity.

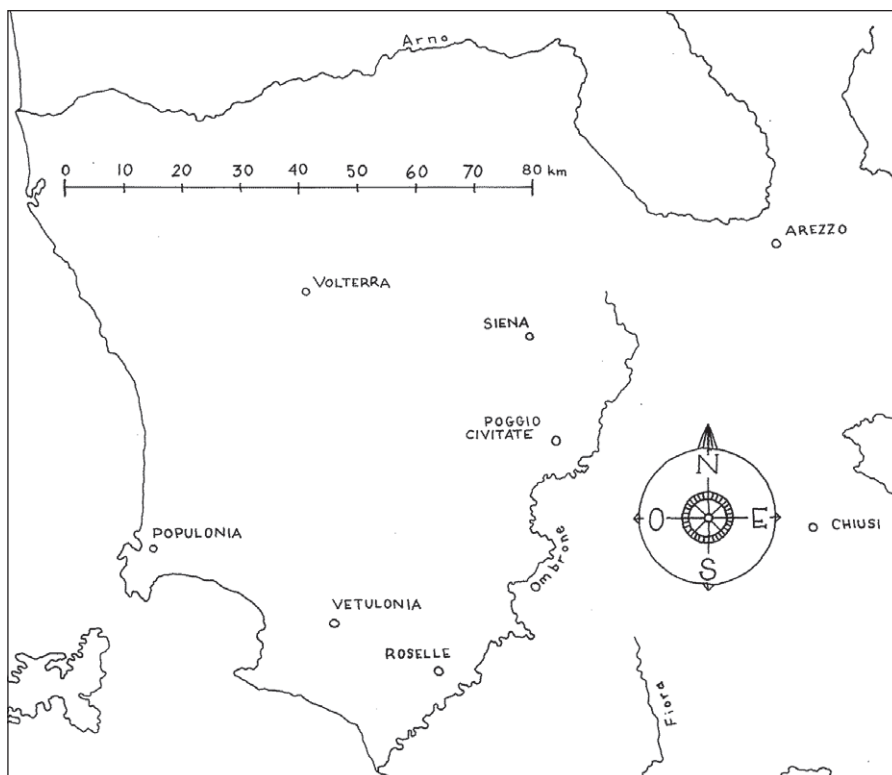


Fig. 1. Regional map (copyright Poggio Civitate Archaeological Project).

1 E. Nielsen and A. Tuck, "An Orientalizing period complex at Poggio Civitate (Murlo): a preliminary view," *Etr. Stud.* 8 (2001) 35-64.