

SEPINO

THE ARCHEOLOGICAL AREA OF ALTILIA

4



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
DEL MOLISE





- 24) Lato SE del foro: 1°
- 25) Lato SE del foro: 2°
- 26) Lato SE del foro: fontana
- 27) Arco di *Lucius Neratius Priscus*
- 28) Casa dell'Impluvio sannitico
- 29) Edifici industriali lungo il decumano
- 30) Edifici lungo il decumano (scavi 1977)
- 31) Porta Benevento
- 32) Monumento funerario di *Caius Ennius Marsus*
- 33) Porta Terrevecchia
- 34) Complesso presso porta Terravecchia
- 35) Complesso presso porta Benevento
- 36) Complesso presso porta Tammaro
- 37) Complesso campus, piscina, *porticus*
- 38) Necropoli romana e insediamento medioevale

- LEGENDA
- 1) Le mura
 - 2) Porta Tammaro
 - 3) Il cardo
 - 4) Il teatro
 - 5) Monumento funerario
 - 6) Porta Bovianum
 - 7) Le terme del decumano
 - 8) Il decumano
 - 9) Edifici lungo il decumano
 - 10) Basamenti di fontane
 - 11) Edificio di culto
 - 12) Il macellum
 - 13) La basilica
 - 14) Il tribunal
 - 15) L'aula absidata
 - 16) Il lacus presso la basilica
 - 17) La piazza
 - 18) Lato NO del foro: prima aula
 - 19) Lato NO del foro: seconda aula
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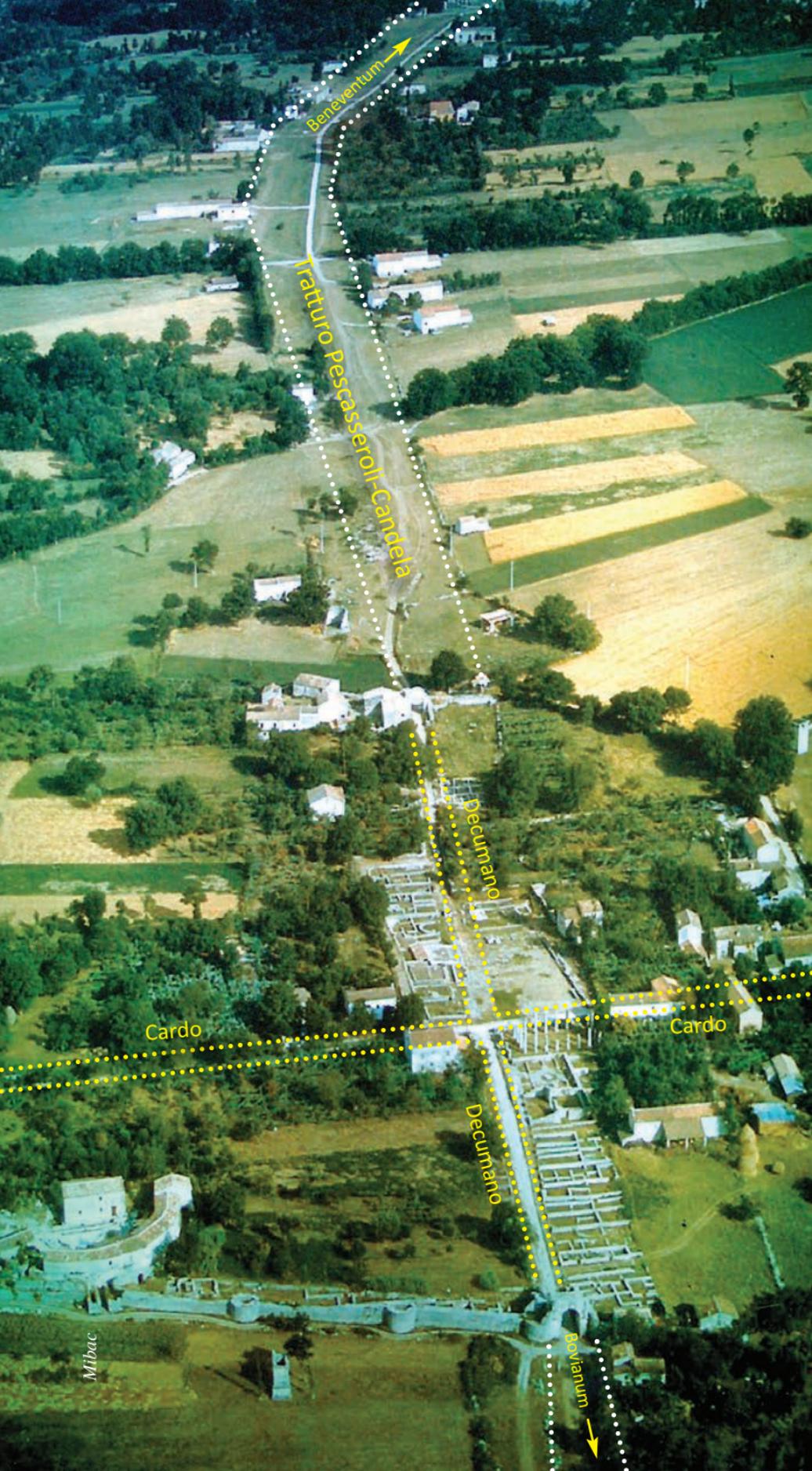
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SEPINO

The Archaeological site of Altilia



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
DEL MOLISE



Beneventum

Tratturo pescasseroli-Candela

Decumano

Cardo

Cardo

Decumano

Mibac

Bovianum

SAEPINUM: THE CITY ON THE TRATTURO

The origins

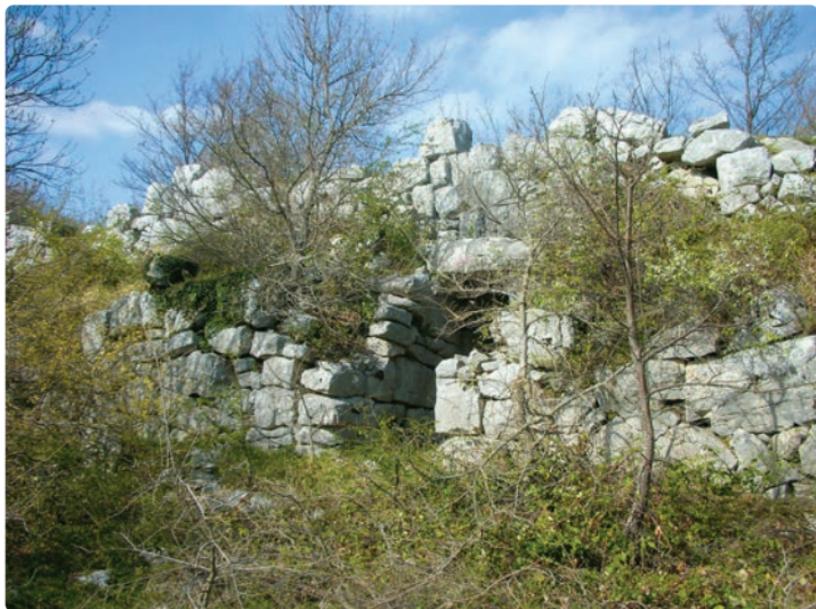
An old shepherd told a traveler curious in antiquity, in the mountains of Abruzzo, that far away, to the south, there was Lautilia, a dead city, built by ancient knights whom later abandoned in order to liberate the Holy Sepulcher in the Holy Land.

This ancient legend, reported by Adriano La Regina, refers to the mythical city of Saepinum, which in the Middle Ages went by Altilia, for centuries it has been covered by the ground cultivated by the inhabitants of the place. Periodically it is crossed by millions of herds that transit the path that goes from Pescasseroli, in Abruzzo, to Candela in the Foggia region. Upon this long ancient artery arose the ancient city of Saepinum, which, before becoming Roman, was Samnite.

On the side: The Altilia site; in evidence, the Tratturo Pescasseroli-Candela and its interaction with the Decumanus inside the city of Saepinum. Below: Postierla del Matese in the walls of the Terravecchia settlement.

Terravecchia

The Samnites therefore founded the ancient settlement of *Saepinum*, probably around the 4th-5th century BC, placing it in a happy geographical position, at the intersection of two directions: one from the Tratturo, the other from Terravecchia. This latter place was in fact a fortification set back on the slopes of the Matese at about 950 m. of height that the Samnites built to better control the territory. This settlement is still recognizable in its defensive structure thanks to the persistence of megalithic walls about a kilometer and a half long and interspersed with three access doors. The first, called *Postierla del Matese*, which led to the mountain; the second, called the *Acropolis*, which led to *Bovianum Undecumanorum*; and the third, that opened the passage to the site of *Saepio* and for this reason was called Tratturo. This artery, in its final stretch, is identified with the *cardo maximus* (the primary north-south road that was the usual main street) of the future Roman city of *Saepinum*.



Saepinum Roman town hall

The toponym *Saepinum* can be traced back to the Latin *saepio* = enclosure and probably indicates a place intended as a shelter for flocks, port or market hub. At the end of the 2nd century BC, *Saepinum* already has its urban layout, private constructions made by highly qualified personnel with *cocciopesto* (building material used in ancient Rome made of tiles broken up into very small pieces, mixed with mortar, and then beaten down with a rammer) floors and mosaic tiles and *impluvium* (both in stone and in terracotta). During the third Samnite war the Roman consul *C. Papirius Cursor* occupied the city, laying the foundations for the future Roman domination which, after the social wars of the 1st century BC, led Rome to administer and organize this part of the Sannio. The establishment of the Septon *municipium* (town hall) will favor the urbanization process with the construction of important buildings, both public and private, while in the Augustan period it will reach its maximum splendor with the construction between the 2nd and 4th AD of the fortified walls, as well as the raising of mighty towers and the construction of the four access doors, occupying a quadrangular area of 1250 meters in perimeter.

The Middle Ages and the birth of Altilia

Damaged by the earthquake of 346 AD, the city became poor and was reduced even further after the fall of the Roman Empire (476 AD). Around 667 it came back to life with the Lombards. The changed political conditions and the position on the plains, difficult to defend, exposed it to continuous looting and decreed its definitive abandonment. The population moved to the nearby hill, where the Castellum Saepini rose. However, part of the population separated and returned to the old Samnite fortified center of Terravecchia (*Saipins*) or *Castrum Vetus*. In the period from the 9th to the 15th century there were therefore two different settlements (the current Sepino and Castelvecchio), but after alternating transitions and following the earthquake of 1456, the inhabitants of Castelvecchio merged into the Castle of Sepino, which at that time knew a remarkable flowering thanks to the activity of Bishop *Antonius Attilius*. From the mid-11th century, Sepino belonged to the Norman county of Bo-

Below: Location of Terravecchia, Saepinum and current Sepino sites (Google Earth). On the side, above: Vintage print of the medieval Sepino and, below, of the modern one.





iano, as Baronia of the cadet branch of the de Molisio family. It was a bishop's diocese until 1456 and even later (XVIII century). At the end of the XVI century, the Barony of Sepino, among the ten major centers of Molise and with a territory that included San Giuliano, Sassinoro and Cercepicola, passed from the Capua-Altavilla family to the Carafa family. The earthquake of 1805 caused enormous damage to the en-

tire urban structure and later the castle to collapse. Starting from the XVIII century, the archeology area was systematically repopulated and thanks to the use of the abundant archaeological material, the construction of the village of Altilia was undertaken. The houses scattered on the site, as well as those present on the summa cavea of the theater, are the architectural results that reach up to our days.



ITINERARY IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA

Getting to Altilia is not difficult. In fact, the site is located close to the important S.S. 87 which connects Campobasso to Benevento. After passing Vinchiatiuro, for those coming from the north, to the right, just before the junction for Sepino, you enter the parking lot of the archaeological site. We are in fact near the Tammaro portal, that can be seen in the distance.

Tammaro Portal

There are four access gates to the city and they were placed to oppose the main routes. Restored, they take their name respectively from the places where the routes came from. Tammaro portal takes the name of the river that flows down to the valley, it is on the mountain-river path (the *cardo*) that at the other end goes to join Terravecchia portal. Compressed between two stone dwellings, it has lost much of its monumentality, even if the arched structure is supported by important



pillars of square design. Very little remains of the towers that originally stood on the door. There are inserts of walls in *opus reticulatum* (form of brickwork used in ancient Roman architecture, it consists of diamond-shaped bricks made of volcanic ash), as well as a fragment of an inscription is visible, while on the right side there is a phallic symbol carved in relief, which was placed to ward off dangers and negative influences coming from people, animals or things that crossed the city gate.

On this page, top: Framed epigraph reused to the side of Tammaro portal. Below: Tammaro portal seen from the inside. On the side: Panoramic view of the Theater; on the summa cavea, the dwellings built in the 700s.



Theater

Located between the Tamarro and Boiano Portals, the only things that remain are the *ima cavea* and the *media cavea* (*cavea* are the seating sections of Roman theatres and amphitheatres traditionally organised in three horizontal sections, corresponding to the social class of the spectators), the *orchestra*, the front block of the *proscenium* and the layout scene on which a rural building was built in the eighteenth century. The two *tetrapiles*, four-door monumental entrances, two facing the outside of the structure, two instead serve internal functions (*orchestra* and covered posterior ambulatory and external exit) are also preserved. On the *summa cavea* some rustic farmhouses have sprung up which, in hemicycle (semicircular, or horseshoe-shaped, debating chamber) and in the emerging volumes renew the shapes of the Roman structure and its functions outside. Behind the walls, the theater has an opening that allows access to

the structure directly from the countryside. The eighteenth-century colonial houses (fortunately surviving an initial idea of demolition) are the last of the stratifications operated over time on the Samnite site. With the start of the cultivation of vast territories and the decay of pastoralism and traffic in the late imperial age, the city began to be partly abandoned with the consequent downsizing of the inhabited nucleus.

The Tetrapiles

At the opposite ends of the hemicycle *cavea*, there are two massive stone *tetrapiles*, each made up of four quadrangular pillars, with superimposed molded cornices and very robust round arches; they carried out a structural function of support to the masonry and connected with the scenic building. Moreover, the right *tetrapile* (the left was already closed in ancient times) served, as it is today, from the main entrance to the theater, linking, in a





transversal sense through the *parodos* (side entrance to the theater), the orchestra and the *soul* and *medium cavea*, while in longitudinal, through the external semi-annular corridor, the *summa cavea*.

The scenic building

PIt has a rectangular plan that is defined, thanks to a rear body (*frontescaena*), which folds at right angles towards the short sides to contain the actual hull, in other words the stage. On the frontescale there are three doors, two of which are perfectly visible on the rural construction that surmounts the scene: these,

respectively called *Porta ospitalis right*, *Porta regia* and *Porta ospitalis left*, constituted as the entrances used by the actors for stage access. Furthermore, the grooves on which the wooden beams were placed to support the axes of the stage are still evident, just as some pivoting holes have been found inside the museum building, probably relating to the existence of a mobile scenario used for the theatrical set design. In the

On this page, above: The Tetrapile consists of four quadrangular pillars with superimposed molded cornices and very strong round arches. Below: The theater and, in the center, the scenic building.



front part, the stage has an elevation (*proscenio*) decorated with niches that alternate between semicircular and rectangular way

The *Postierla* of the Theater

Just behind the *cavea*, there is a slit in the wall, protected by two asymmetrical rectangular foreparts in respect to the shape of the curtain wall. This opening (the only one in addition to the four main doors), originally closed by a wooden portal and now called "Postierla del Teatro" was built after the city's first wall system in order to serve as an emergency exit making it easier for the extramural population to empty the stands. As regards the financing of the theatrical building, as reported by a stone tablet, it is due to a local magistrate, certain *Pomponius Saturninus*. It is possible to assume that the capacity of the theater reached approximately 3,000 people.



II MausoleoThe Mausoleum of *Publius Numisius Ligus*

Located outside the Bojano portal, on the right, about 70 meters from the tratturo, it was built entirely in local white limestone and was almost completely rebuilt, using the original materials, with the exception of some additions. It is a monument of the so-called "ad ara" type (altar like), whose origins are to be found in the Asian Hellenistic world, but which became widespread throughout the Roman world between the end of the Republican period and the beginning of the Imperial age. Usually the monuments of this type have various decorations (Doric friezes, lictor beams), while that of Saepinum is of great simplicity.



On this page, to the side: *La Postierla del Teatro* which made the evacuation of the extramural population easier. Above: *The Mausoleum of Publius Numisius Ligus*.

The Walls

The walls, in an almost reticulated work, has a development of 1270 m and encloses an area of about 12 hectares with a quadrangular plan. Along its perimeter four, monumental doors open. The construction of the wall circuit was requested by the same Augusto who gave the task to the two adopted sons Tiberius (future emperor) and Drusus to realize it, according to the inscription, positioned on the attic of the four access gates to the city, which dates its construction between 2 BC and the 4 d.C. Along the walls, there is a series of circular towers, about 100 feet apart (30.135 m).

On this page, below: The highest tower in the circuit of the walls and, next to it, the opus reticulatum of the city walls. On the side: The monumental Boiano portal.

Boiano Portal

Carried out according to the honorary arch scheme, through a precise iconography, the portal has the dual function of protecting the inhabitants of the city and allowing the performance of duties. For these reasons, in addition to symbolic images of chained slaves and divinities placed as a warning to the ill-intentioned and aimed at averting bad luck, it bears inscriptions bearing administrative provisions and an apparatus designed to support and survey the traffic.

Of all the Sepino gates, the one in Boiano is the best preserved. It is still set between two sturdy towers and presents many of the original elements, including the sculpted figures of two barbarians and an imperial inscription from the time of Marcus Aurelius, which established precise provisions on the protection of sheep. On the keystone of the portal is the sculptural image of the head of Hercules.





TI CLAVDIVS SEPTIMVS SEVERVS PIVS OPTIMO PRINCIPI
NERO CLAVDIVS SEPTIMVS SEVERVS PIVS OPTIMO PRINCIPI
AVGVSTVS PORTAE TRAIANAE AEDIFICATAE



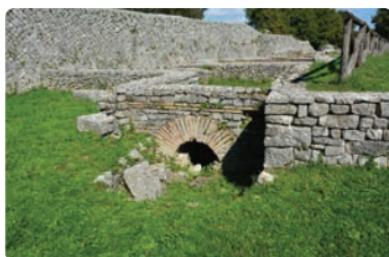


The *Rescritto* of the imperial era

A very important document from the time of Marcus Aurelius (168 AD) which provides interesting information on the economic situation of this period, the famous imperial rescript regards the transit of flocks, engraved on the right shoulder, outside the Boiano portal (CIL IX 2438). It reports a controversy that arose between the authorities of Saepinum and Bovianum and the tenants of the imperial herds, who complained of abuse and livestock subtractions. The interest of those responsible (*liberti a rationibus*: freed from the service) involved the direct intervention of the praetorian prefects, the second authorities only to the emperor, who resolved with a heavy warning against the magistrates of the two cities. The document is important because it testifies to the interference of the central power in facts that were worthy of the jurisdiction of the praetorian prefects, but above all because it informs us of a situation now almost monopolized by large amounts of livestock by the Fiscus (the private funds of the emperor) a fact that finds a parallel in the establishment of the large estate.

The *Termae* – Thermal Baths

Sepino could count on three thermal complexes, among which the one located near the city walls near the Boiano portal, brought to light for its greater extension. In fact, it presents all the characteristic elements of the baths with the canonical succession of baths at different temperatures; the heating system raised on pillars (*suspensurae*: hangings), ducts (*tubules*) applied to the walls for the passage and circulation of hot air and a series of other rooms of various destinations.



On this page, from top to bottom: Thermal complex near Boiano portal. On the side: Inscription, barbarian prisoners, keystone with the face of Hercules and the Rescript of the imperial era on Boiano portal.





Along the *Decumanus*

Going from the Boiano portal to the forum, on both sides are the remains of houses partially brought to light; this section of the *decumanus* (an east-west-oriented road) also contains the signs of a *portico* (roof structure over a walkway, supported by columns or enclosed by walls). On the right side you can find, in sequence; a building preceded by a *pronaos* (space in front of the cell/temple room preceded by columns) with brick pillars, probably

intended for worship and preceded by two small taverns; a *macellum*, the market for the sale of goods, located behind the basilica with access to the *decumanus*. The *macellum* layout is trapezoidal; a short corridor, between two shops opening onto the street, leads into a central area with a hexagonal design, paved with large pieces of limestone irregularly cut. In the center, there is a millstone that acts as a tub, placed in a hexagonal basin. On the side of the Basilica, located on the *cardo*, there is a long-watering place, while on the side of the hole opposite it are the remains of a covered fountain

On this page, above: The neighborhood of private homes near the Decumanus. Below: Aerial view of the Macellum area. On the side: View of the Decumano with the original Roman paving.

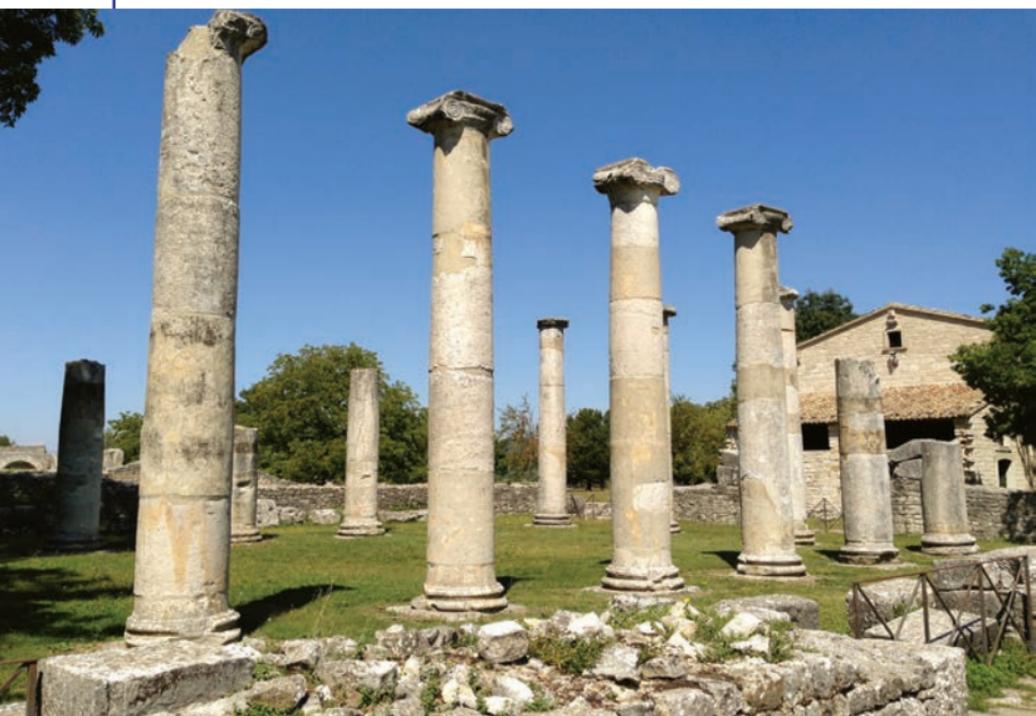


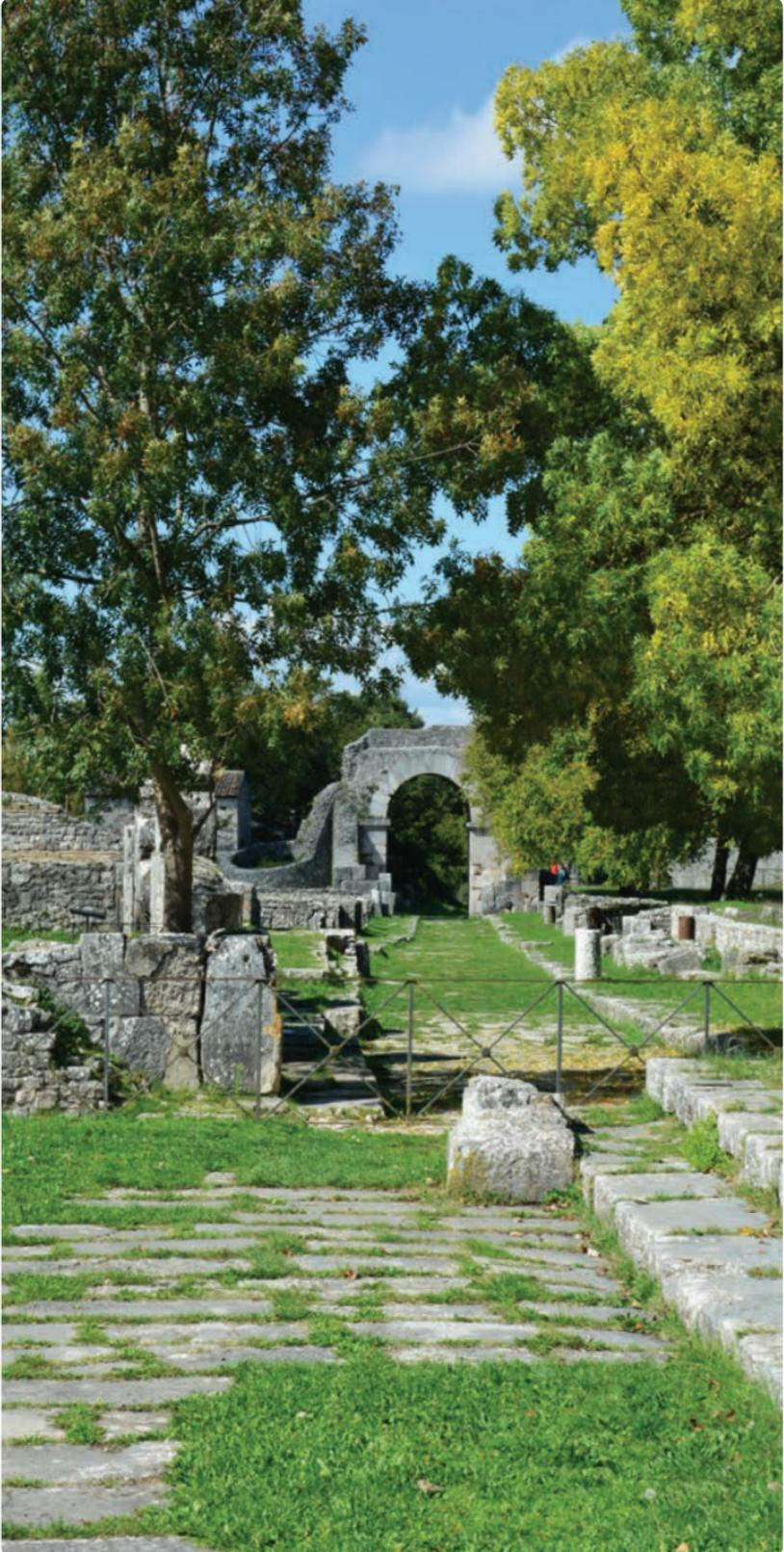
The Basilica

It is the element that characterizes and qualifies as a forensic area. Multi-purpose in functions, ranging from judicial to commercial (for large financial transactions and the signing of contracts), it was an important socializing spot, frequented by both, those out for a stroll and those out on business. Its connection with the square is obvious and natural: in addition to logistical reasons, the need to have covered space near the square dictated it. The Basilica sepinate is in fact located at the junction of the *cardo* and *decumanus*, in an eminent position, closing the north-western side of the forum. It has a rectangular layout of 31.60 x 20.40 m, divided internally by a peristyle (continuous porch formed by a row of columns surrounding the perimeter of building or a courtyard) of twenty columns with smooth stem, four on the short sides, eight on the long sides, surmounted by Ionic capitals.



Top: The hexagonal-shaped macellum; in the center, the stone of the mill; in the background, the Basilica. Below: The columns of the Basilica with Ionic capitals. On the side: View of the Decumanus; in the background, Boiano portal.



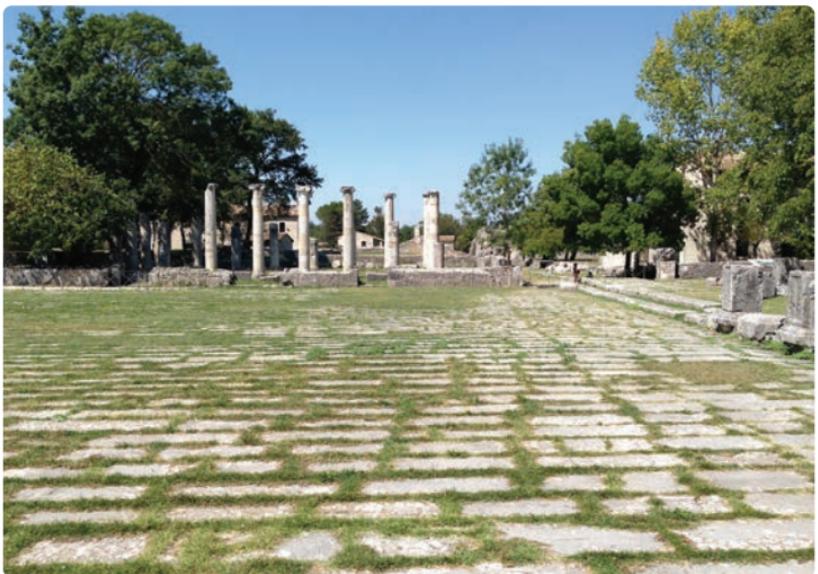


The Forum

At the junction of the *cardo* with the *decumanus*, the forum opens with a space initially intended for exchanges and markets and later becomes a political and administrative center. On the square, paved with limestone slabs, public buildings can be found. Recent excavations have brought to light the entrance of an imposing building with a front of over twenty meters, raised above the square due to the presence of a stairway access. Along its axis there was an honorary arch commemorating the illustrious fellow citizen Nerazio Prisco, who had been fortunate in the imperial chancellery at the time of Trajan (98-117 AD), evidenced by the inscription that was probably to be placed on the attic of the arch. The Forum is the space that symbolically recalls the ancient "market" destination of the Samnite site. This space in the Roman age progressively evolves in the roles up to the political-administrative functions delegated to it by Rome. It is possible that the officialization of this last function is due to "modernization" (perhaps coinciding



with the establishment of the *municipium*) of the space with the paving and a perimeter canalization for the collection of rainwater and with the raising of monuments to Augustus and Nero, as can be deduced from some stone fragments found on the spot.





Nerazio Prisco

Born in 50 AD, in *Saepinum* he quickly accomplished the *cursus honorum* (running for office), also distinguishing himself as a valiant general. In 97 he was sent by the emperor Nerva as governor in Pannonia. With the Dacian war, the Romans had come into possession of important gold mines and the emperor sent an inspector, a man who had already distinguished himself in Rome for morality, fidelity and honesty. The choice fell precisely on Nerazio, because he had already been treasurer of the State. Traiano called upon him to be part of the *consilium principis* (high council) and became his intimate adviser. Lucius Neratius was also a famous jurist and last headmaster of the Proculian School (roman jurisprudence). In 112, while accompanying Traiano in an expedition against the Parthians, he was indicated as his successor to the throne, but the sudden death of the emperor in Cilicia prevented Nerazio from ascending the throne of Rome. In fact, Plotina, Traiano's wife, declared that her husband's intention was to appoint P. Elio Adriano as his successor. He died in Rome in the time of Emperor Hadrian.

The other buildings along the *decumanus*

Continuing towards the Benevento portal, on the left side of the forum rest the buildings destined for public use. In sequence: a comitium (a room intended for popular assemblies during the periods of election of public officials), preceded by a system of pillars, the remains of a pro-naos; the curia (structure delegated to the meetings of the body of the decurions- Roman cavalry officer- among which the magistrates were elected). A classroom for the imperial cult (identified emperors and some members of their families with the divinely sanctioned authority), elevated above the hole by a podium and anticipated by a wide staircase. A temple; the thermal baths of the forum (or of Silvano); the house of the impluvium, which takes its name from a Samnite *impluvium* in terracotta (end of the 7th century BC) discovered under the Roman one during some surveys in 1955. The house with a water mill; a house with a tavern and an internal area with

On the side, above: Inscription that reminds the magistrates who took care of the flooring. Below: The paved area of the Forum. Above: Reconstruction of the Honorary Arch of Nerazio Prisco.



open "tanks", the characteristic of which has generated two controversial interpretations; one tends to identify a mill in the building, the other a textile structure, perhaps a tannery.

The Griffin Fountain

The *Fontana del Grifo* rises along the north-eastern side of the decumanus, about ten meters from the forum square, on the border between the

public and private areas, between the spa building and an adjacent *domus* (house occupied by the upper classes and some wealthy freedmen). During the restoration work carried out in 1973, the missing parts of the monument were supplemented with new elements in limestone from a nearby quarry in Guardialfiera in order to deliberately highlight the added parts and make them distinguishable from the original ones. The



fountain is named for the decoration on the façade, depicting the relief image of a griffin facing left, standing on its front legs and crouching on its back legs with its wings folded backwards. The eagle-like head has a large hooked beak, oblique eye and the straight and protruding ears, a thick mane that drapes on the back. The figure, seen at an angle, is carved in relief with a perspective setting. Between the chest and the front legs is the hole for the water pipe.

Benevento Portal

The Benevento portal, currently preceded by a farmhouse and used as an Antiquarium, is defined between two

towers, such as Porta Bovianum, with the arch key that presents a sculptural image of a helmet dedicated to Mars. On the outside, a number of sculptural fragments testify the existence of an original sculpture representing barbarian prisoners. In one of the two towers is the aqueduct cistern, whose rare characteristics determine a different construction system in rows of blocks placed horizontally, possibly to ensure greater resistance.

On the previous page: Front of public buildings facing the Forum; The wheel of the Crate of the mill and the Samnite impluvium. Above: The Fontana del Grifo and, below, Benevento portal seen from outside the walls.

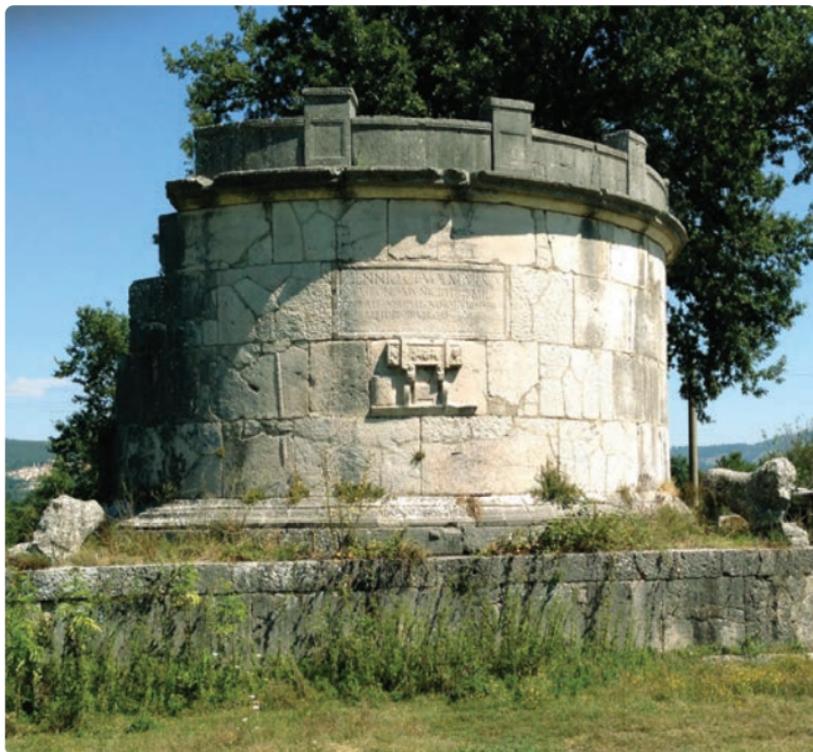


The Mausoleum of Caius Ennius Marsus

Located along the tratturo, about 75 meters from Benevento portal, outside the city walls, is the Mausoleum. Rebuilt and raised in the 40s using the original parts and integrating when necessary, with restoration parts suitably highlighted. It is a burial mound monument of Etruscan origin, composed of a cylindrical drum placed on a square base of m. 10.12 on the side and high m. 1.80 approximately, consisting of overlapping stone blocks. Inside the basement, there is the foundation structure of the sepulchral cell in an octagonal layout. The drum, tall m. 3.30, has a diameter of m. 8.40 and is bounded at the base and at the top by molded cornices. It consists of four overlapping rows of slightly curved stone blocks (82 cm high), ending at the top with a battlement, consisting of an alternation of lower blocks (62 cm high) and rectangular

stones (90 cm high). Four stone lions were placed at the corners of the base with their heads turned to the side in the act of crushing the head of a warrior with a helmet. Only two sculptures have survived, although very damaged; a third is kept in the Museum at the theater. A certain homogeneity of style and execution was noted between the lions and sculptures of the Saepinum portal which can be explained by the fact that they are probably creations of the same urban mastery of artists. In the front of the Mausoleum, inside a frame, is the epitaph that recalls the owner of the tomb, a citizen of equestrian rank, and recalls its brilliant military and civil career sustained in the city administration.

Below: The Mausoleum of Caius Ennius Marsus. On the side, above: Terravecchia portal and, below, a view of the rooms inside the Museum.





Terravecchia Portal

So named because it goes to join the mule track that leads to the ancient site of Terravecchia where very little remains of the original structure. Of the east tower there are no visible traces, while only a small piece is preserved of the opposite one as well as any reference to the access ramps to the towers and the patrol path that have disappeared.

The museum

The Museum of the city and territory of Sepino is set up inside rural buildings of the '700, implanted in the structures of the Roman theater, of which they take up the curved shape. Preserved inside the houses are the characteristic elements of the daily life of the inhabitants of that

period, such as the sink, the fireplace, the oven and the niches carved in the walls used in ancient times as storage rooms. The peculiarity of the Museum consists in collecting artifacts found directly within the archaeological area or from the surrounding area. The material ranges from the prehistoric age to the Middle Ages. Preserved in the first sector, the Paleolithic stone instruments found in throughout the Valley of the middle course of the Tammaro, from San Giuliano del Sannio and Cercemaggiore to the Sepino mountain and to the northern border of Santa Croce del Sannio. The halls that follow refer to aspects of Roman life: the symposium, the pastimes and craft activities, the funeral rites.



SEPINO AND SAN PIETRO A CANTONI

Enclosed within a mighty circle of walls along which tall cylindrical towers are distributed, the historic center of Sepino is a small jewel of medieval architecture in which sober and elegant Renaissance buildings such as the Attilio palace, built by an ecclesiastic of Sepino after his appointment as bishop of Termoli. A must is a visit to the parish church in the name of Santa Cristina, in which the relics of the Saint are kept. The interior has late Baroque characters. The Chapel of the Relics and the Treasury deserve special attention: the first, preserves several reliquaries and a wax mask of San Carlo Borromeo; the second, already restored in 1610 by Prince Francesco Carafa, presents in polychrome marble, the silver bust of Santa Cristina from the 17th century on the altar. On the walls, the seventeenth-century bronze busts of six other saints. Other interesting artistic attractions are the monumental Fontana del Mascherone, placed at the entrance of the village; the church of Santa Maria Assunta (XIV century); the church of the Purgatory (XVIII century); the Convento SS. Trinity, not far from the town, built in the 16th century and renovated several times and now used as a venue for conferences and celebration of Provincial Chapters and spiritual exercises. Another religious building is the "Conventino" of Santa Maria degli Angeli, built as a small Porziuncola (small church) in 1871 and now reduced to ruins. However, the Monastery that holds the greatest importance for the history of Sepino is that of Santa Croce, built in the mid-12th century on the Sepino Mountain as the private foundation of the counts of Molise. Even though every visible vestige is missing today, its centu-

ries-old history emerges in numerous archives. The Italic Sanctuary of San Pietro a Cantoni is located at 655 meters above sea level, halfway between the fortified site of Terravecchia and Altilia. A strategic position, of balance, between a point of defense and one for production and sales. The excavation, which began in 1991, has taken on a considerable extension. The temple is probably considered the most important Sanctuary of the Sannio Pentro, inferior in size only to that of Pietrabbondante. Built in a nodal point of transit, it was not only a center of worship but also a meeting and exchange point. Many flocked to the sacred area, which offered shelter for the many pilgrims. The ancient Sanctuary was constituted by a temple of which one can admire the monumental podium that reached a considerable height.



Above: Panoramic view of Sepino; in the center, the bell tower with a drum dome, rebuilt in 1846, of the parish church of Santa Cristina.

INFO AND USEFUL NUMBERS

Archaeological site of Altilia

SS. 87 Campobasso-Benevento

Opening hours:

Freely accessible area

Polo museale del Molise

Salita San Bartolomeo, 10

86100 Campobasso

+39 0874 43131

pm-mol@beniculturali.it

mbac-pm-mol@mailcert.beniculturali.it

Museum of the city and the territory

Provincial road, 82

86017 Sepino

Summer opening hours:

Tuesday-Sunday 9.30am-6.30pm;

Winter opening hours:

Tuesday-Sunday 8.00-17.00;

www.musei.molise.beniculturali.it

pm-mol@beniculturali.it

Tel: +39 0874 790207 Closing: Monday

Full price: € 3.00 - Reduced: € 2.00

Comune di Sepino

Piazza Prisco Nerazio, 40

86017 Sepino (CB)

Tel. 0874 790132

Fax 0874 790502

www.comune.sepino.cb.it

info@comune.sepino.cb.it

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- 2 MAB Unesco reserve "Alto Molise"
- 3 The Swabian Castle and the old village of Termoli
- 4 The archaeological Area of Altilia/Sepino
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- 6 Agnone, the museum and the Pontifical Foundry of Marinelli Bells
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