

Institut für Archäologien Fachbereich: Ur- und Frühgeschichte sowie Mittelalter- und Neuzeitarchäologie
& Cluster **“Politische Ästhetik: Theorie & Methode”** der Plattform “Politik – Religion – Kunst”
& **Italienzentrum** der Universität Innsbruck

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Thirty Years of Medieval Archaeology in Italy: Status Quaestionis

Post-classical excavations led over more than 30 years in Italy have proved interesting aspects about landscape changes between Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages. The Roman Empire's collapse engendered during fourth and sixth century A.D. the end of the villas' system both in suburban areas and in rural spaces: it had to concern with social shifts and with economic ones.

The Gothic war certainly had accelerated that kind of slow but continuous process in the first half of sixth century: the Byzantine effort to keep together the whole ancient Roman Empire was not a homogeneous success in the different part of it. For Italian peninsula, Byzantium drove out the Goth power, but in the end it opened the way to Lombard migration (end of sixth century) along the country. The end of the Roman system was the cause of the birth of new rural settlements, built on hilltops which often became the embryo of medieval castles during X-XI centuries.

Post-classical archaeology in urban areas has demonstrated the Late Antique profiles of the cities, which are completely different from the Roman ones during the first imperial age: urban centers in Late Antiquity were now characterized by defensive walls, built during the fourth-fifth century, and by the development of 'Christian space', which concerns building of structured areas depending on the diffusion of Christian religion.

Nicola Busino is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy at the Second University of Naples since 2008. His research fields are focused on landscape and settlements between Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. He's been working on Ariano Irpino's castle (Avellino, Campania) and on Late antique cemeteries and settlements in Northern Campania. He's preparing the edition of brief archaeological excavations (2011) carried out in Saint Peter's church in Caserta. He also works on material culture (ceramics, glasses, metals) between Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

Ort: Geiwi Turm, Innrain 52, SR 50113

Zeit: **Dienstag, 13. März 2012, 18.00-19.30**