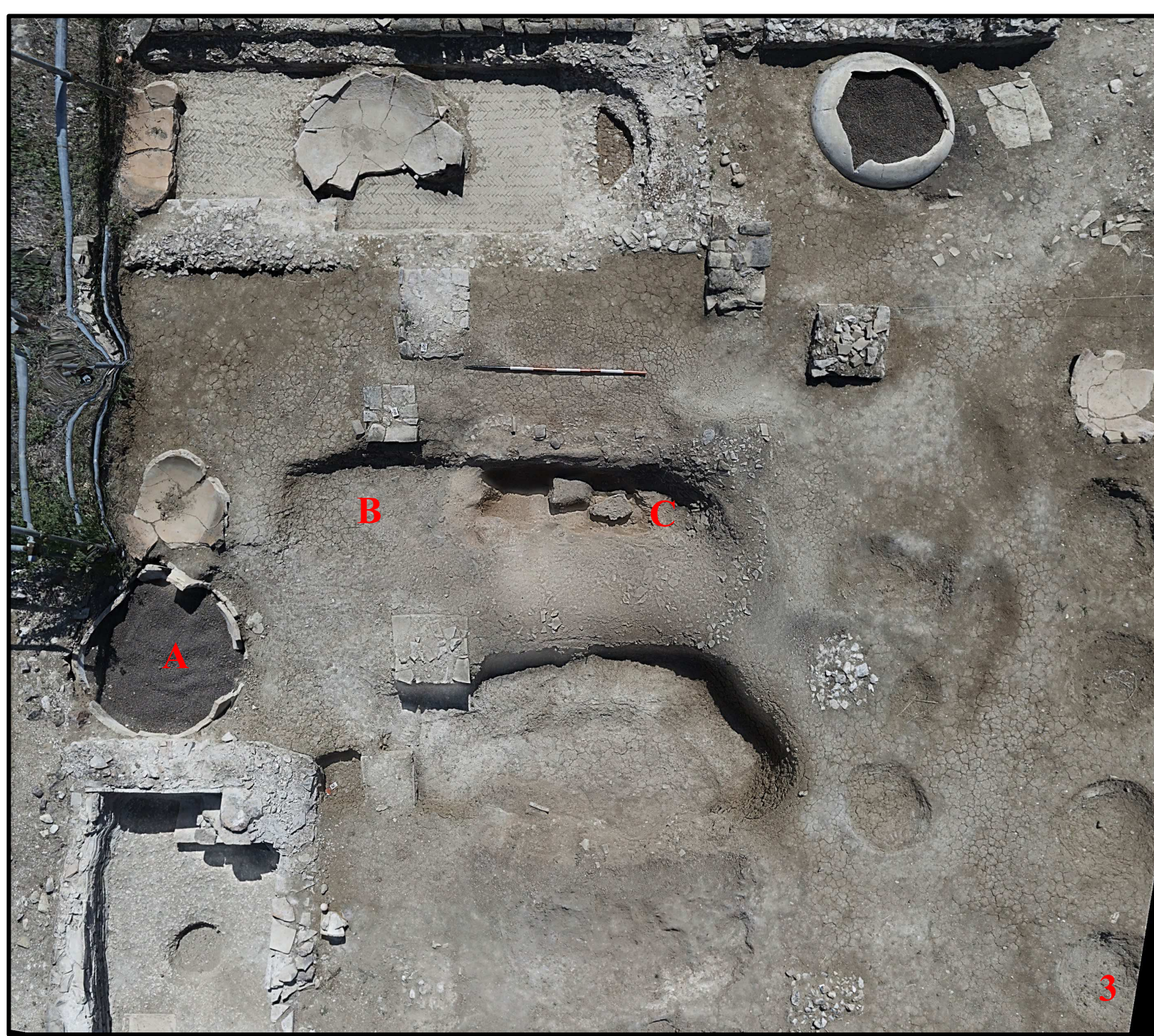
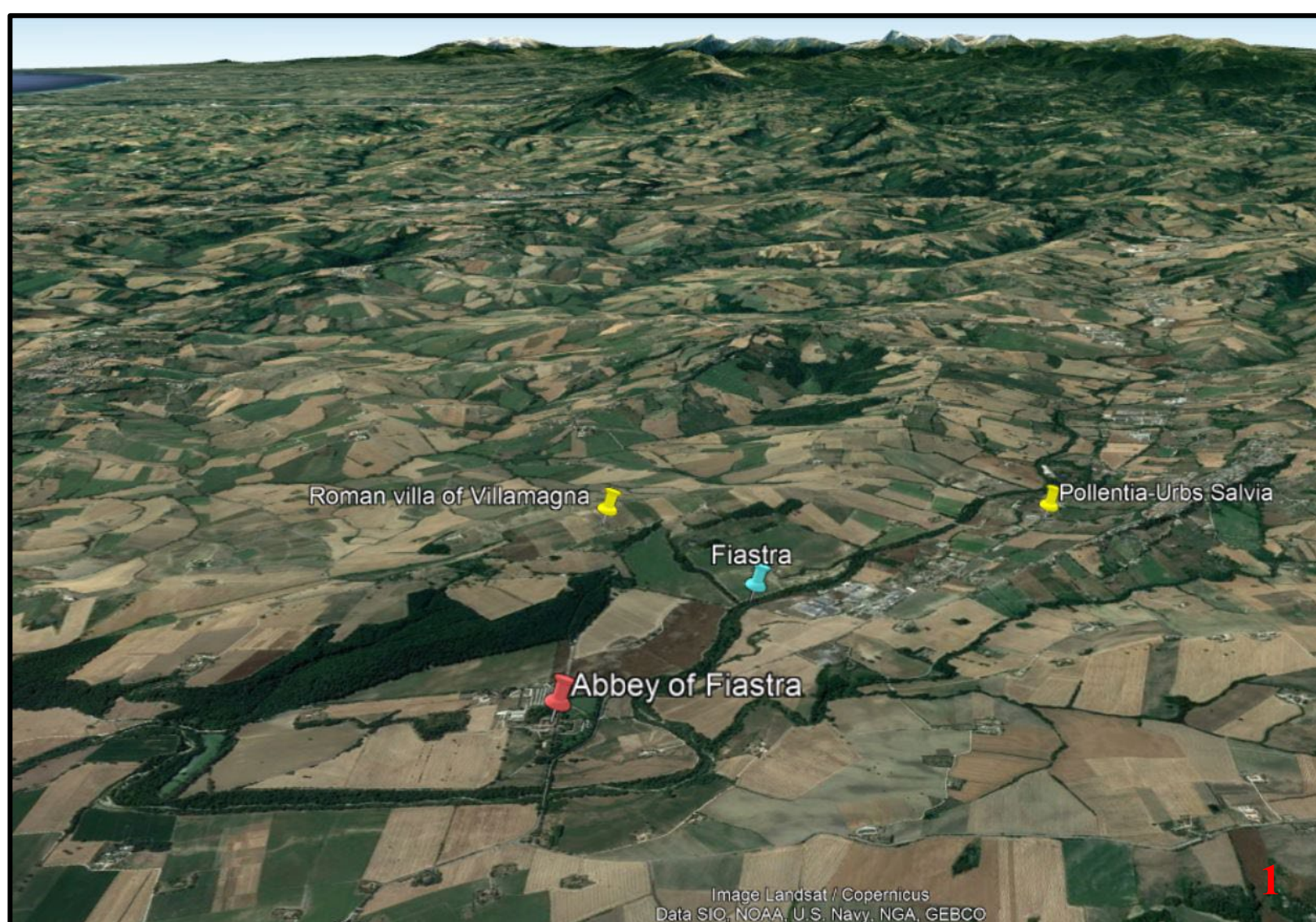


## New Archaeobotanical Data from the Roman Villa of Villamagna (Urbisaglia, Marche Region, Italy)

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### PARS URBANA

Following a destructive event (5<sup>th</sup> century AD), a room of the *pars Urbana* was reused. Some portions of the floor (SU 1031) was sampled (Fig. 4).

The complex composition of the archaeobotanical record highlights the origin of the material from different primary use areas:

- 1) Storage area with prevalence of *Triticum* caryopses and limited number of weeds;
- 2) Production areas connected to the processing of olives, vines (Fig. 7) and other tree fruits.



### INTRODUCTION

In 2018 the University of Macerata and the Laboratory of Archaeobotany and Paleoeecology of the University of Salento, began a project of archaeobotanical analyses of the roman villa of Villamagna in the adriatic part of central Italy (Figs. 1-2) (Carmenati, Perna, Fiorentino 2019).

### THE STUDY AREA

Located in the countryside of Urbisaglia (Marche, Italy), the Villa covers more than 7,000 m<sup>2</sup>. It extends over a large plateau, not far from the cistercian abbey of Chiaravalle di Fiastra.

The complex was inhabited from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC until the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, and then used as a cemetery between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. The hill continued to be populated until the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD (1422) (Paci, Perna 2016; Carmenati, Perna 2021).

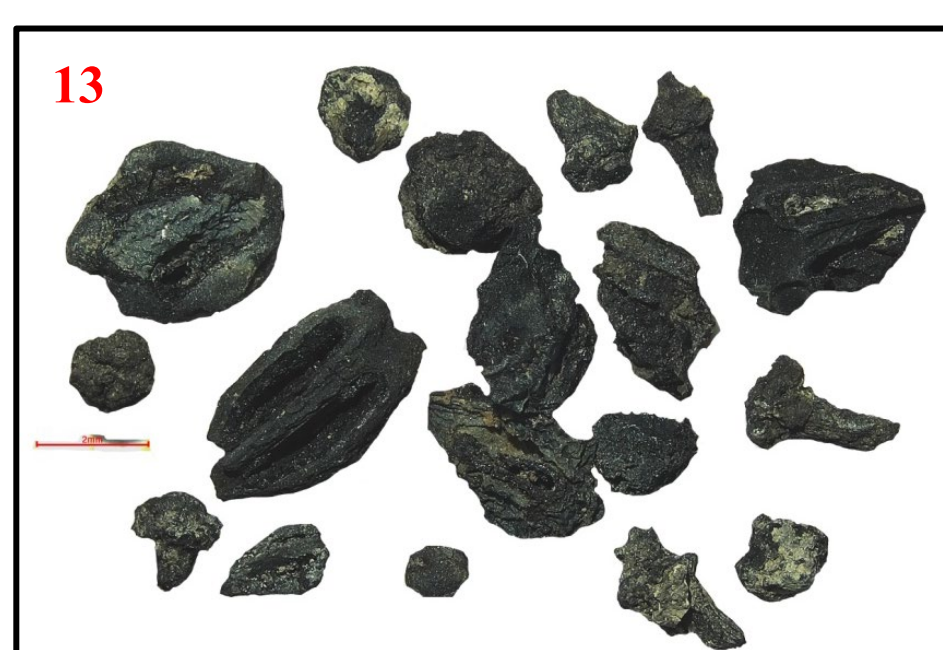
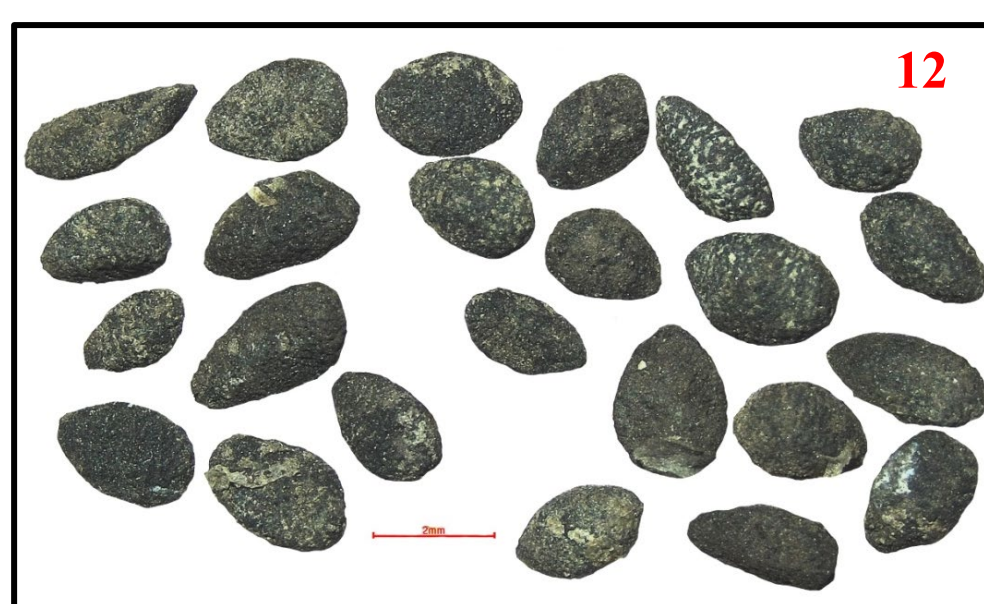
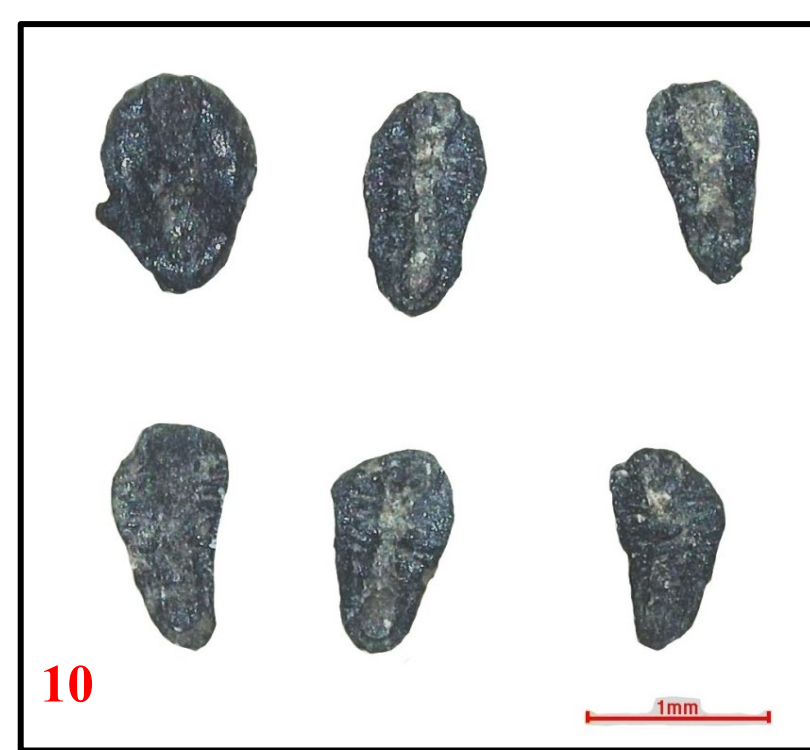
The villa is traditionally divided into *pars Urbana* and *pars Rustica*. The plant macroremains come from different contexts: reused floor areas, *dolium defossum* and a combustion area.

### PARS RUSTICA: THE CONTENT OF THE *DOLIUM DEFOSSUM* AND THE AREA OF THE COMBUSTION STRUCTURE (DRYING KILN?)

At the bottom of a *dolium defossum* (Fig. 3, A), dated to 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century AD, a number of caryopses of *Setaria italica* were found. The detachment of *scutella* from caryopsis (Figs. 9-10), according to our experimentation, highlights the probable effect of a sprouting process (Fig. 8), before the combustion of the plant material.

Near the *dolium defossum* there is a combustion structure, perhaps a drying kiln, which consists of two parts. The filling of the first part (Fig. 3, B) was made up largely of caryopses of *Setaria* sp. (Fig. 5), some of them without *scutella* (Fig. 6). The detached parts of embryos were inside the sediment.

The other side (Fig. 3, C) consists of at least two preparation layers of floors with burned clay. The first layer (SU 4163) consists mainly of grape seeds (*Vitis vinifera* L.) (Fig. 13), olive stones (*Olea europaea* L.) and nutshell fragments (*Juglans regia* L.), associated to seeds of other species: Poaceae, Polygonaceae (Fig. 14), Chenopodiaceae, Rubiaceae (Fig. 11), *Sambucus* sp. (Fig. 12) and Leguminosae. Moreover, an important number of the remains is represented by caryopses of *Panicum miliaceum* (Fig. 16), not attested in the other contexts, associated to *Setaria italica* (Fig. 15) and other very small Paniceae.



### CONCLUSION

The space connecting the *dolium defossum* and the drying kiln represents an area of crop processing for different uses. The Paniceae were the main stored and processed cereals and we hypotize that the germinated caryopses could be linked to the production of beer or other fermented product.

In general, in late antiquity and despite the apparent decay of the monumental complex, the use of a storage and production areas are still attested.



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