

Institution: University of Cambridge		
Unit of Assessment: 29 Classics		
Title of case study: Past forward – Archaeological research as a driver of local growth		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: since July 2010		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit: since September 2014		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Alessandro Launaro (PI)	Senior Lecturer in Classics (Classical Art & Archaeology)	since October 2009
Prof Martin Millett (Col)	Laurence Professor of Classical Archaeology	since October 2001
Period when the claimed impact occurred: since September 2014		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>This project has hugely increased and profoundly transformed our knowledge of the Roman town of <i>Interamna Lirenas</i> (Pignataro Interamna, Central Italy). Close collaboration with the Italian Archaeological Service and the local Municipality resulted in considerable resources being committed to preserving and promoting the archaeological heritage. The effective public communication strategy (involving Open Days, collaborations with local schools, popular articles in local and national periodicals) greatly enhanced the level of engagement among the local population with their Roman heritage, turning archaeology into a focus of civic pride and an effective vehicle for the cultural and economic growth of this community.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Since so many Italian towns have been continuously occupied since Roman times, and so display their Roman heritage in buildings and the town plan to this day, there is a tendency to think that anywhere where this is not the case was backward or marginal in Roman times. The Roman town of Interamna Lirenas is a good case in point. Today the site is a series of arable fields, featuring very few, barely recognizable, traces of still-buried structures. The main evidence for past occupation is provided by the spread of archaeological materials (mostly tile fragments and potsherds) brought to the surface by ploughing. Its long-established interpretation could not be more coherent: founded as a colony in 312 BCE, Interamna Lirenas soon exhausted its strategic role as military bridgehead; unable to develop its civic dimension further by taking advantage of the opportunities presented by a growing empire, by the end of the 1st c. BCE it had already turned into a secondary centre, destined to a long decline until its definitive abandonment in the 6th c. CE.</p> <p>Since 2010 the site and its surrounding landscape have been the object of archaeological fieldwork directed by Alessandro Launaro (PostDoc 2009–13; Lecturer 2013–18; Senior Lecturer, 2018-) and Martin Millett (Laurence Professor of Classical Archaeology 2001–), in partnership with the Italian Archaeological Service and the Municipality of Pignataro Interamna, with the technical collaboration of the British School at Rome (S. Hay 2010–13) and Ghent University (L. Verdonck, F. Vermeulen 2015–17) [R1]. This integrated research project involved:</p>		
<p>a) magnetometry (2010–12) and ground-penetrating radar survey (2013–17) over the entire urban area of Interamna (24 ha), producing a highly detailed image of the still-buried remains of a dense settlement, featuring a complex plan with a surprisingly monumental appearance [R6].</p>		

- b) intensive field survey (2010–14) across the surrounding countryside (covering 400 ha in total), uncovering extensive evidence for a dense rural occupation lasting until the 3rd c. CE at least [R3].
- c) complete excavation of a hitherto unknown theatre (2013-19) [R3], which – combined with new epigraphic discoveries, including an inscribed sundial [R5] – pointed to Interamna's level of cultural and political integration with the wider Roman world;
- d) timely analysis of all categories of finds (2010–) showing that, although receiving few overseas imports, Interamna was an important node of a lively regional trade network (evidenced by the spread of local/regional commonware pottery) [R2–4].

As a result, we have transformed the understanding of the nature and place of this Roman town and its territory: rather than being in decline, both urban and rural occupation can now be shown to have peaked between the 1st c. BCE and the early 3rd c. CE. Furthermore, these findings allow a significant re-evaluation of the transformations of Roman Italy more generally. Long-distance market integration proves to be only one possible benchmark for the economic performance of communities in the Roman period. Prosperity was in fact most dependent upon local networks which both preceded and (often) survived Rome's empire; long-distance market integration depended upon these networks.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- [R1] Bellini, G.R., Launaro, A., and Millett, M. (2014). Roman colonial landscapes: *Interamna Lirenas* and its territory through Antiquity. In J. Pelgrom and T. Stek (eds.), *Roman Republican Colonisation: New Perspectives from Archaeology and Ancient History*. Rome. 255–275.
- [R2] Bellini, G.R., Launaro, A., Leone, N., Millett, M. and Trigona, S.L. (2014). Ceramiche comuni da Interamna Lirenas e dal suo territorio. Primi risultati dello studio crono-tipologico (campagne 2010–11). In E. Cirelli, F. Diosono and H. Patterson (eds.), *Le forme della crisi. Produzioni ceramiche e commerci nell'Italia centrale tra Romani e Longobardi*. Bologna. 581–592.
- [R3] Launaro, A. (2019) Interamna Lirenas – a history of 'success'? Long-term trajectories across town and countryside (4th c. BC to 5th c. AD). In A.U. De Giorgi and R.T Scott (eds.), *Cosa and the Colonial Landscape of Republican Italy (Third and Second Century BC)*. Ann Arbor: 119–38.
- [R4] Launaro, A. and N. Leone (2018) A view from the margin? Roman commonwares and patterns of distribution and consumption at Interamna Lirenas (Lazio). In *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 31: 323–338.
- [R5] Launaro, A. and Patterson, J.R. (2020). New epigraphic evidence from the Roman town of Interamna Lirenas, Central Italy. In *Epigraphica* 82: 213–241.
- [R6] Millett, M., Verdonck, L., Leone, N., Launaro, A. (2019) *Beneath the Surface of Roman Republican Cities* (data set archived at the Archaeology Data Service: <https://doi.org/10.5284/1052663>) [Accessed: 21 June 2019].

[R3, R4, R5, R6] were all peer reviewed. [R1 and R2] were published in collected volumes drawing on the authors' archaeological research. These items therefore meet the minimum 2* requirement.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

This project has made the people of Pignataro Interamna, Central Italy (2,499 inhabitants) newly conscious of their archaeological heritage: until recently indifferent to (or even

unaware of) it, they now consider themselves both its custodians and primary beneficiaries [E1–3].

Preservation and promotion of the archaeological heritage

In light of the results of the geophysical prospection, the Municipality purchased 2.2 ha of land (EUR 61,264) to create an archaeological park [E1–2] – fenced, prominently signed, and patrolled by *Carabinieri* [E3]. The discovery and study of the theatre, with its sophisticated architecture and likely association with the family of emperor Galba (revealed by an excavated inscription), boosted local/regional interest. The Municipality thus commissioned a restoration of the building (to make it accessible and usable for spectacles and local events) [E4], submitting on their initiative and as a direct result of this research a substantial funding application (EUR 299,500) to the Regione Lazio [E5].

Building on this changed attitude, the Municipality also restored a small Roman bridge (2013) and created a standing exhibition in the Town Hall displaying archaeological finds that local enthusiasts had collected and which, on this occasion, were returned (2016). The 2018 Memorandum of Understanding [E6] recognized that *“the Municipality, as a result of this radical re-assessment of the extent of the still-buried archaeological remains at Interamna Lirenas and across its territory, has further intensified its proactive commitment to develop and promote its archaeological heritage”*.

A resurgence of civic pride

The discovery of an inscribed sundial (2017, with media coverage across the globe, including *The Times*, *Indian Express*, *Repubblica*, *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, *Haaretz* [E7]) naming a hitherto unknown plebeian tribune hailing from Interamna, captured local imagination as a focus of civic pride. So too did the study of a little known 19th-century document recording an inscription confirming that Julius Caesar had been a political *patronus* of this town in 46 BCE. By public demand, the sundial is now proudly exhibited in the Town Hall, with a panel explaining its functioning and historical significance for Interamna Lirenas – and Pignataro Interamna.

This research profoundly changed local perceptions: residents now realize that their archaeological heritage can be showcased to raise the community’s regional profile and attract internal and external stakeholders to Pignataro Interamna. A questionnaire [E8] distributed at a meeting of 60 people (= 2.5% of the entire population) (December 2019: 14 teachers, 5 highly-qualified professionals, 7 office workers, 7 workers, 2 clerks, 10 local business owners, 14 retired and 1 unemployed), revealed 26 (43%) to have first learned about the Roman heritage of Pignataro Interamna since the start of our project in 2010 (including 50% of the teachers!). The questions *“How interesting are the things you have learned about Interamna Lirenas?”* and *“How much has archaeological research contributed to increase your sense of civic pride?”* received average scores of 6.8/7 and 6.9/7 respectively. Comments indicated that the research had led to a renewed *“sense of belonging to the community of Pignataro”*, *“produced a stimulus to support and contribute to the growth of our community”*, as well as fostering a strong desire for further archaeological work and increased local involvement in protecting and promoting the site. One teacher further noted that: *“[as a result of this research] I have revised my teaching of history by privileging local history.”* [E8]

A vehicle for cultural and economic growth

Our annual Open Days (since 2017) attracted local residents of all ages (bringing in more than a hundred people in a two-hour period); specific events were arranged for local school students (since 2013) and US tourists from the nearby NATO base in Gaeta (in 2018 and 2019 – in collaboration with a cultural association from Latina and a gourmet restaurant in Pignataro) [E1]. Street festivals organized by the Municipality celebrated our archaeological

discoveries in 2018 and 2019, bringing in large numbers of visitors and boosting profits of local restaurants/pubs. Substantial educational initiatives aimed at enabling schoolchildren “to recognize the profound link between past, present and future”, teaching them “how the decisions taken in the present will shape their future” [E9] and involving them in the classification of archaeological finds from the excavation [E10] were scheduled to take place in Spring 2020 (postponed due to Covid-19).

Notably, in 2019, the local pharmacy (*Farmacia Falovo*) and central bar in town (*Bar Il Cigno*) changed their names to *Farmacia Interamna* and *Bar La Meridiana* respectively [E1] (the *meridiana* – the sundial – features prominently on their sign and its 2-metre wide image – derived from the high-resolution 3D model which we made freely available online – decorates the main lobby).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[E1] Letter from the Mayor of Pignataro Interamna

[E2] Letter from the Officer of the Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le Province di Frosinone, Latina e Rieti

[E3] Letter from the Commander of the *Carabinieri* Station of San Giorgio a Liri Station

[E4] *Progetto di Miglioramento e Adeguamento dei Livelli e delle Condizioni di Fruibilità e Accessibilità dei Luoghi della Cultura: “Teatro Interamna Lirenas”* (Giacomo Bianchi & Partners Architects, Cassino)

[E5] Funding application submitted by the Municipality of Pignataro Interamna to the Regione Lazio for the *Miglioramento e Adeguamento dei Livelli e delle Condizioni di Fruibilità e Accessibilità dei Luoghi della Cultura: “Teatro Interamna Lirenas”*

[E6] *Memorandum of Understanding to share and pursue the Interamna Lirenas Project within the archaeological district of Interamna Lirenas (Pignataro Interamna, FR) aimed at improving knowledge, protection, development and promotion of the archaeological heritage*, between the Italian Ministry for Cultural Activities and Heritage, and Tourism, The Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge, and the Municipality of Pignataro Interamna (December 2018)

[E7] Discovery of the inscribed sundial (media coverage)

[E8] Completed questionnaires (60) distributed at the end of a public meeting with the population of Pignataro Interamna (21 December 2020)

[E9] *Progetto “Alla Scoperta di Interamna Lirenas: la Città Sepolta”* (Istituto Comprensivo di S. Giorgio a Liri)

[E10] *Convenzione di Tirocinio di Formazione e di Orientamento Progetto Scuola Lavoro* (Liceo Scientifico G. Pellecchia, Cassino)