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Abstract: Cultural exchange between Etruria and the regions neighboring it to the north finds expression beginning in the Villanovan period in an increasing number of foreign goods in the area north of the Po. In fact the northeastern part of the Po Valley and the adjacent Caput Adriae are comparatively poor in clearly accountable imports from the early phase of these contacts. Various indirect indications, however, suggest the conjecture that this picture is due primarily to the vagaries of preservation. They include the adoption of technological innovations in the north, for instance in wagon-building, as well as the integration of foreign prestige goods, such as the lozenge-shaped belt plaques of the Villanovan culture, into the material culture of the Venetians and their neighbors. The last-named object in particular emphatically clarifies the intensity of the early contacts. Scholarship fully agrees that the belt plaques decorated with waterfowl and sun symbols incorporate entirely specific spiritual and religious content. The acquisition of foreign manners of dress must consequently also have involved an encounter with the ways of thinking of their area of origin. In any case it follows from this that already in the Villanovan period the cross-cultural contacts went far beyond the sporadic exchange of exotic goods to also include communication on the intellectual and social levels.

In the period of the Etruscan "colonization" of the Po Valley, the Veneto and the southeast Alpine region also remain comparatively poor in finds. This holds specifically for imported items of Etruscan metalwork, whose existence, however, must, on the basis of the acceptance of its repertoire of decoration into situla art, be considered certain. A distinct change emerges with the founding of Etruscan settlements (Adria, Mantua, Forcello) in the regions across the Po during the sixth century and the associated intensification of trade, which is reflected *inter alia* in the importation of Greek pottery that now begins. Unlike the bronze vessels, the imported pottery is attested in impressive numbers from the mid sixth century in the Veneto. Both in the formal respect and in reference to the decoration of the vessels, however, it is clear that in no way does this involve the total adoption of Greek and Etruscan ideals as they are manifested in pottery. On the contrary, the selective reception of the Athenian ceramic repertoire in the area north of the Po already makes it clear that the importation of foreign goods was substantially determined by the specific needs and wishes of the recipients. Correspondingly it follows that the imports fulfill a function in the native context that differs considerably from what they had in their places of origin, and this—mutatis mutandis—is also to be assumed for the preceding periods.

Keywords: import, cultural exchange, trade, Venetians, prestige goods

Introduction and problematics

The northern frontier of Etruria, which is generally considered identical with the course of the Po, has long been a permeable space. Already in the Bronze Age, traces of distant cultural contacts have been found that extend beyond the Po Valley into the southern Alpine valleys and regions beyond the mountains. We refer specifically

to the settlement of Frattesina near Fratte Polesine in the Veneto, which excavated materials reveal to have been closely connected with the regions of the Po Valley and central Italy, but which also functioned as an important junction in a network of transregional contacts between the Italian peninsula and the northern Alpine area.1 During the ninth and eighth centuries BCE, on the southern edge of the Po Valley a dynamic branch of the Villanovan culture emerged that was closely tied to the core region of the Villanova culture in central Italy and simultaneously radiated impulses to the north. With the Etruscan expansion into the Po Valley from the first half of the sixth century onwards, cultural exchange with the north took on systematic traits that left their traces specifically in the area of the Golasecca culture in a proper "Etruscanization" of the local elites.

Archaeologically, the contact is represented by a growing number of imports in the area north of the Po. For the most part these are valuable items made of bronze and other costly materials, which—on the basis of their material, their distant origin, or their exotic form and decoration—enjoyed a high reputation and circulated in the context of the exchange of prestige goods between high ranking members of the social elite in both the Mediterranean as well as the non-Mediterranean world. We refer primarily to weapons, bridles, clothing ornaments, and bronze banquet vessels, but pottery and glass vessels, primarily of Greek origin, were also exported beyond the northern borders of Etruria. The same must be assumed for items made of organic materials, which for obvious reasons have left only limited traces. The export of wine must have been foremost. Moreover, other valuable exotica, such as incense —on the evidence of a discovery from Como-Rebbio³— were also traded in the north.⁴

Along with the transfer of goods across the cultural boundaries of Etruria there was also an exchange of ideas, technologies, and social ways of life, which is often evidenced only indirectly in the material culture. We may mention for example the quick spread to the periphery of an aristocratic Etruscan warrior ethos based on military success and economic power, which is reflected in the increasing number of weapons and metal vessels deposited in the tombs of the early Iron Age. Later, in the sixth and fifth centuries, the genesis of new social ways of life can be verified not least by the increasing number of imports, especially of pottery from Athens, which, more strongly than before, was characterized by egalitarian criteria. The Attic pottery,

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¹ Bianchin Citton 1988; Bietti Sestieri 2010, 195-98.

² See for example the amphorae from Forcello: de Marinis 2005 and chapter 78 de Marinis.

³ Mattirele 1932-33.

⁴ On the trade in raw materials, see generally Stöllner 2004.

⁵ Cf. Gleirscher 1993, 71-72; Malnati 2003.

⁶ This conclusion is also suggested by, e.g., the uniform material evidence from Este: Favaretto 1976. Cf. also the Attic pottery from Como: Casini 2007.

which in many places determines the picture of the contacts, follows uniform formal and qualitative standards across a wide area. Exchange with the south in this period appears to have been supported by broader circles, a circumstance that—along with others—may have been jointly responsible for the emergence of the first protourban settlement structures in the southern foothills of the Alps.⁷

1 The first contacts (ca. 800-730 BCE)

With the expansion of the Villanovan culture into the Po Valley, during the ninth century a dynamic process of economic and cultural interaction with the neighboring cultural areas set in. On the one hand, this can be read off the foreign goods in the Bologna tombs, and on the other from finds of the Villanovan culture in the area north of the Po. Already in the latter, though, it is often difficult to distinguish "genuine" imports from Bologna or central Italy from products that were created in local workshops in imitation of foreign models, a circumstance that alters little, however, about the facts of cultural contact per se.

From the very beginning, the attention of the protourban center of Villanovan-period Bologna was directed to the southern Alpine valleys that provided access to the mountains, and to the regions beyond. Interaction with the inhabitants of the southern foothills of the Alps appears often to have taken place at intermediate stations. Specifically, close contacts existed with the great Venetian settlement of Este, which through its location near the Adige River controlled one of the most important trade routes into the Alpine region. In the tombs from this area, several objects have been found that scholars partly classify as "genuine" imports, and partly see as imitations. These include, along with an *antenna* sword of the Fermo type¹⁰ (which has an exact counterpart in the bronze hoard from San Francesco in Bologna¹¹), a lozenge-shaped belt plaque with engraved decoration showing spirals and waterfowl from the rich woman's burial Este, Pelà Tomb 8.¹² It belongs to a type widespread in Etruria, ¹³ of which several examples have also been found in Bologna.¹⁴ The Este belt plaque is probably not an Etruscan "original," though, but a local imitation, as Raffaele de

⁷ Capuis 1993, 160–64; Ruta Serafini 2003; **De** Min et al. 2005; Gambari and Cerri 2011.

⁸ Lecatelli 2003.

⁹ Such as amber; overview: Malnati 2007.

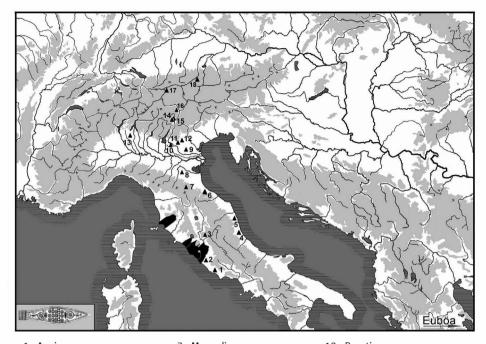
¹⁰ Capuis 1988, 91 fig. 40; 93 no. 176.

¹¹ Merigi Gevi and Vitali 1988, 268 fig.

¹² Capuis 1988, 92f. no. 178 fig. 41; Pirazzini 2011, 584 no. 5.43.

¹³ Maggiani 2009; Nase forthcoming.

¹⁴ Morigi Govi and Vitali 1988, 236f. with figure. Cf. additional finds from the heard from San Francescoin Bologna: Manfroni 2005.



1	Anzio	7	Marradi	13	Prestino
2	Rome	8	Bologna	14	Mechel
3	Poggio Bustone	9	Este	15	Cles
4	"Salino"	10	Oppeano	16	Vadena/Pfatten
5	Fermo	11	Pezze	17	Fliess
6	Verucchio	12	Baldaria	18	Wörgl

Fig. 81.1: Distribution map of the bronze lozenge-shaped belts in Italy, without Tivoli and San Giovanni in Galilea (compiled by A. Naso)

Marinis has recognized.¹⁵ However, the Etruscan provenience of a belt plaque from Pfatten/Vadena in the Adige Valley is undisputed. Further examples ●f the same type, most of which must have been made locally, are known from the necropolis of Baldaria in Cologna Veneta near Este, 16 from Leifers/Laives 17 in the Adige Valley, from Cles¹⁸ and Mechel¹⁹ in the Nons Valley, and from Fliess in the upper Inn Valley²⁰ and

¹⁵ de Marinis 1999b, 610.

¹⁶ de Marinis 1999b, 610; Marzatico and Endrizzi 2009, 48 fig. 12).

¹⁷ Marzatice and Endrizzi 2009, 49 fig. 13.

¹⁸ Marzatic● and Endrizzi 2●●9.

¹⁹ Marzatice and Endrizzi 2009, 50 fig. 16a-b; Zambeni 2011, 584 no. 5.43.

²⁰ Sydow 1995, esp. 9-17; Marzatico and Endrizzi 2009, 50 fig. 17.

Wörgl in the lower.²¹ In their geographic orientation toward the Adige Valley and the neighboring valleys of the northern side of the Alps, the findspots clarify the course and target area of the long-distance contacts of Villanovan-period Bologna and their orientation along a staged traffic network (Fig. 81.1).

Alongside the belt plaques, which are female clothing accessories, the significant role played by high-ranking women in cultural exchange is also expressed in two bronze spindles from Este, which once again find their best parallels in examples from Bologna.²² Being an integral component of female dress, belt plaques take on special significance—they must have most likely "wandered" northward with the wearers.²³ In any case, the finds testify to the penetration of foreign styles of dress into the Venetian and central Alpine cultural sphere during the eighth century.

Similar contacts are manifested in two bronze tripods with curved legs decorated with eyelets from Este and Novo Mesto.²⁴ They have typological counterparts in Bologna²⁵ and Vetulonia, ²⁶ which, as Giovannangelo Camporeale has convincingly set out, was in all likelihood the city where they were produced.²⁷ Two more examples of the same type are known from Verucchio on the Adriatic coast.²⁸ These vessels should probably be recognized as the expression of a direct long-distance contact between the Etruscan center on the Tyrrhenian coast and the native power centers in the southeastern Alpine area, a long-distance contact that also emerges in the distribution of other bronze items. These include horse bits of the Veii type, which once again are attested in Bologna, as well as in the Adige Valley with the find from Pfatten-Stadlhof (Fig. 81.2).²⁹ The latter are probably local imitations, which, however, just like the well-known horse shaped bronze bit from Zurich-Alpenquai and another example from the former *Komitat* of Zolyom north of Budapest, point to the widespread distribution of the early Etruscan harness. To be taken into consideration here is not only the export of the horse's bridle alone, but also of horses as especially prestigious status symbols of Iron Age elites. In Etruria, where the bits are often consigned to the tombs in pairs, horses appear to have served as draft animals pulling chariots and wagons. It must be more than mere coincidence that at the same time in the Alpine area and in the regions beyond, Winkeltüllen (construction elements of

²¹ Zemmer-Plank 1990, 336 figs. 5-7a-b; Marzatico and Endrizzi 2009, 50. This also includes an example imported from upper Italy: Naso 2011, 284 fig. 1; Sölder 2011, 583 no. 5.41.

²² Capuis 1986-87, 93-94 no. 179.

²³ On the role of female dress in early Iron Age Italy: Naso forthcoming.

²⁴ Este, Pelà Tomb 49: Capuis 1988, 94 No. 182 fig. 42; Novo Mesto: Gabrovec 1968; 1992, 212 fig. 7.

²⁵ Bologna, Arsenale Militare Tomb 23: Morigi Govi and Vitali 1988, 254; Camporeale 1969, 39; 1981, 386.

²⁶ Camporeale 1969, 39, pls. 46.3, 47.1.

²⁷ Campereale 1969, 39; 1981, 386, 389-90; 2009, 12-13.

²⁸ Gentili 2003, 165-66 no. 17, pls. 77, 153.

²⁹ von Hase 1992, 247–48, pl. 66; Gleirscher 1993, 72 fig. 4.



Fig. 81.2: Horse-shaped bronze bit from Pfatten/Vadena (photo F. Marzatico)

the wagon) appear in large numbers, which point to the adoption of Etruscan wagon technology.³⁰ Direct evidence of an Etruscan wagon in the Alpine area, however, has not yet emerged.

The appearance of Etruscan-influenced horse and wagon equipment in elite funerary practice on the periphery of the early Etruscan world likewise manifests the adaptation of the native elites to the status- and representation forms of their southern neighbors. In the wider sense this also includes the use of corresponding weapons and armor, of which the spread of the *antenna* swords of the Tarquinia type and its local variants is an example.³¹ In the eastern Po Valley and the Caput Adriae, antenna swords are known from Ponte Nuovo di Gazzo Veronese, Este, Preara, Casier, Bagnar●la, and Tret in the Val di N●n. Alth●ugh again in many cases ●riginals imp●rted from the south cannot be distinguished with certainty from local imitations, the weapon burials and weapon dedications nonetheless reveal the genesis of a warrior ethes that can be compared over a wide culture area.³²

2 The Orientalizing period (ca. 730-580 BCE)

In the Orientalizing period, the export of Mediterranean goods to the north continued. As in the Villanovan period, the number of verifiable imports to the eastern part of the Po Valley and the southeastern Alpine headlands remains comparatively limited.

³⁰ von Hase 1992, 262, pl. 77 figs. 26 A-C; Gleirscher 1993, 73; Egg and Pare 1997, 45-51, esp. 47. 31 von Hase 1992, 240f., pls. 58–59; Gleirscher 1993, 71f.; de Marinis 1999a, 543–48 fig. 19. 32 Cf. also Malnati 2003.



Fig. 81.3: Bronze ribbed bowl from Este (after Sciacca 2005)

Alongside the aforementioned tripods from Este and Novo Mesto a ribbed bronze bowl from Este (Fig. 81.3) must be mentioned³³ which belongs to a type attested in northern Italy by two more examples from the Tomba del Carrettino of Ca' Morta near Como.³⁴ These three bronze vessels are of especial significance, because they belong to a class of object widespread in the north, which with great probability was made in Vetulonia.³⁵ The available chronological information support a dating of the vessels to the end of the eighth and the first half of the seventh centuries. The distribution pattern of the ribbed bowls, whose northernmost findspot is near Frankfurt-Stadtwald (Fig. 83.1),³⁶ suggests that behind their export hides a deliberate strategy of the early Etruscan rulers of Vetulonia. It is a short step to accept that the tripods from Este and Novo Mesto are also to be seen in a similar context, though remarkably, these are not yet attested north of the Alps, while the ribbed dishes are not found in the southeast Alpine region.

Among the most significant traces of Vetulonian bronze exports in the Orientalizing period belongs with great probability the well-known bronze basin from Castelletto Ticino, decorated with a frieze of fabulous animals (Fig. 81.4), whose closest stylistic parallel is the bronze disk decorated with sphinxes and lions from the "Circle of the Sphinxes" from Vetulonia.³⁷ The richly ornamented bronze basin from Castelletto Ticino, which dates to the first half of the seventh century, takes on a special position among the early Etruscan imports in the area north of the Po. The assumption that it was transferred northward in the framework of an individual exchange of prestige goods between rulers of the two sides of the cultural boundary of the Po is tempting and so has long been seen. Camporeale has recently postulated an origin in a Vetulonian workshop for the well-known bronze *pyxis* from Appenwihr (Fig. 83.3).³⁸

³³ The findspot of the bowl is unknown: Frey 1969, 69 fig. 32.1; Sciacca 2005, 88 fig. 116.

³⁴ Sciacca 2005, 87–88, 377–78, Co1−Co2 figs. 114–15.

³⁵ Camporeale 2009; Sciacca 2005.

³⁶ Fischer 1979, 44, 72, pls. 9.2, 20.1, 21.

³⁷ On the basin from Castelletto Ticino: Brown 1960, 23, pl. 11b; Gambari 1988, 82–83 fig. 35. On the location of the workshop in Vetulonia: Schiering 1978; Camporeale 2009, 6–7. Cf. also Berger 1982.

³⁸ Jehl and Bennet 1968; Campereale 2009.

Various indications suggest that after its manufacture, the piece was reworked and altered.³⁹ The ribbed bowl found together with the pyxis was also modified afterward, in this case by the addition of two bronze rings. The two vessels from Appenwihr make it clear that the Mediterranean prestige goods led an independent "life" in the "Barbaricum" and possibly were used within local networks of gift exchange.

The findspot thus need not a priori be identical with the original destination of the vessels. Nevertheless, on the whole there emerges a coherent distribution area of Vetulonian vessel exports, which on the one hand is oriented via the Swiss Alpine passes into the Rhine Valley and on the other via the Veneto into the southeast Alpine region (Fig. 83.2).

Moreover, there appear to have been contacts between the two export axes; thus it is possibly more than a mere coincidence that the two bronze vessels from Appenwihr mentioned above were associated with a bronze sieve that is thought to have been produced in Este or the extended area of the Caput Adriae. 40

It is tempting to assume that the strong engagement of Vetulonia in establishing contact with the north is connected with the city's leading role as center of Etruscan mining efforts in the Colline Metallifere. It is obvious that not only the Greeks and Phoenicians were interested in Etruscan metal and metal technology, but also the neighbors to the north. What moved Vetulonia's rulers to maintain or even to use costly gifts to promote contact with the northern neighbors? What gifts did they receive in return for the ore and the technological know-how that they sent north? Scholarship plausibly argues that it was done with goods that cannot be documented archaeologically, such as perishable items and human resources in the form of slaves and mercenaries. Material transfer from north to south can be grasped more concretely in the example of some selected bronze vessels, among them the Kreuzattaschenkessel, which occasionally reached as far as the core Etruscan area and are probably to be regarded as return gifts in the framework of a reciprocal gift exchange between the elites of the two sides of the Po (Fig. 82.4).41 These vessels, which are distributed north and south of the Alps, are concentrated in two centers near the Caput Adriae, which is probably where they were made—the eastern Veneto on one side and Slovenia and Istria on the other—thus, the same two zones that on the evidence of the aforementioned tripod and ribbed bowls stood at the focus of Etruscan trading interests. Given this background of cultural connections, it cannot be by chance that among the Kreuzbandkessel exported to the south an example has also been found at Vetulonia (Fig. 82.4).42 But what made the rulers at the Caput Adriae attractive trading

³⁹ Rolley 1988, 97f.; von Hase 1992, 257f., pl. 74 figs. 21.1-2, 22; Plouin and Bonnet 1996, 63-64; Chaume 2004, 88, 90 fig. 15.

⁴⁰ Jehl and Bonnet 1957, 25 fig. 9; Egg 1996, 109 fig. 62; Adam 1997, 9. Cf. also Chaume 2004.

⁴¹ Egg 1985, 373-77 with distribution map in fig. 40.

⁴² Campereale 1969, 29, pl. 3.1-3.



Fig. 81.4: Bronze basin from Castelletto Ticino (after Italia omnium terrarum alumna, Milan 1988)

partners for the Etruscans? It seems likely that raw materials played a major role. We may consider metals from the Alpine region, but also amber, which already in the Orientalizing period appears south of the Alps in increasing quantity, including in Vetulonia. All large part of this fossilized material that came from the Baltic region through the eastern Alpine passes to the Caput Adriae and from there was traded either overland or by sea to northern Italy. In the framework of this trans-Adriatic "amber trade" the settlement of Verucchio acquired a leading role, and from there the raw material was taken farther into the central areas of Italy, including Bologna, where amber goods experienced a real boom in the late eighth and the seventh centuries. The appearance of Etruscan tripods of the Vetulonian type in the amber town of Verucchio, discussed above, fits into this background, confirming the model of a trans-European transportation and trade network in the Orientalizing period driven by Etruria, in which Vetulonia played a leading part.

That Etruscan products themselves reached the Baltic and the Atlantic only in exceptional cases does not necessarily contradict the supposition of purposeful trading relations with the distant lands *a priori*. Thus the Celtic potentate of Frankfurt-Stadtwald may well have come into possession of a Vetulonian ribbed bowl, because his sphere of control lay on an important long-distance route that led farther north. He would thus have come to the attention of the Etruscans for the same reason as his peers, who controlled the trade routes across the Alps farther south.

⁴³ Camporeale 2007, 42-45.

⁴⁴ Analyses of the finds from southern Switzerland show that nearly 90 percent of the amber is from the Baltic: Beck and Stout 2000.

⁴⁵ Malnati 2007.

⁴⁶ In this sense it is probably more than pure chance that the tomb lies not far from the Main, which blocks the route to the north.

Distant trans-European relationships of the Early Iron Age find concrete manifestation in a biconical bronze amphora from Gevelinghausen on the lower Rhine, whose best comparisons come from Villanovan-period Veii (Figs. 44.1 and 44.2). 47 Of a somewhat younger date is the cauldron that gave its name to the Hassle type in Sweden. It has good parallels in Caere and Monteleone near Perugia.⁴⁸ While in some cases it must be left open how the imports reached their findspots, they show that the radius of Mediterranean goods—and therefore probably of the people who stood behind the transfer of these goods—reached far beyond the area of the middle Rhine.

Unlike Lombardy and the nearby southern Swiss Alpine valleys, where trans-Alpine communication is manifest in the continuous deposit of finds into the fifth century, the Venetian and southeast Alpine regions are distinguished in the same period by a notable absence of imports. Two basins with embossed rim from Vače and Magdalenska gora, 49 two "Bolognese ribbed cists," the handle of a Schnabelkanne from Este, 50 and the handle attachment of a bronze situla from Padova 51 belong to the scant material evidence of exchange of goods with the south, which incidentally might have taken place not only over land routes, but also by sea.⁵² Various considerations, however, suggest that this picture depends on the archaeological record and therefore does not correspond to ancient reality. Here we must refer first to the retrospective pictorial tradition of situla art that was native to this area, brought to notice by Otto-Hermann Frey. The oldest demonstrable representatives of this style can be dated to the years around 600, including the famous situla from Tomb 73 at Este, Benvenuti.⁵³ Stylistic features in the formulation of the figured friezes and vegetal ornaments, however, point back to the Orientalizing period of the seventh century.⁵⁴

It is natural to suppose that the icongraphic models of sixth and fifth century situla art are to be sought in imports from the Etruscan area which have not been preserved, an assumption that appears to be confirmed not least by the existence of clay imitations of Schnabelkannen in the area, 55 not to mention the well-known belt

⁴⁷ Jockenhövel 1974; Iaia 2005, 163-69.

⁴⁸ von Hase 1992, 243f., 258f.

⁴⁹ Krausse 1996, 269-73.

⁵⁰ Frey 1989, 298, 300 fig. 2.2 (Schnabelkanne). On the ribbed cist: Stjernquist 1967, 58f. nos. 97, 98. On ribbed cists in general: Micozzi 2001a; 2001b; Dehn et al. 2005, 165-78.

⁵¹ Frey 1989, 298, 300 fig. 2.1

⁵² Trans-Adratic contacts must especially be responsible for the conveyance of the two pearl dishes from Vače and Magdalenska gora, which find their closest parallels in central Italy: Krausse 1996, 273. A dish that is not entirely typologically equivalent comes from Nesactium: Krausse 1996, 430 no. 262.

⁵³ Lucke 1962, 62–66 no. 7 fig. 8.17, pls. 23–26, 65.

⁵⁴ Lucke 1962, 56. From the extensive recent literature on situla art we mention only Zaghetto 2002; Zaghette 2006; and Huth 2003.

⁵⁵ Este, Morlungo: Find from a disturbed tomb: Capuis 1993, 204; Tombolani 1988, 148-49 no. 694. •n Schnabelkannen in general: V•rlauf 1995.

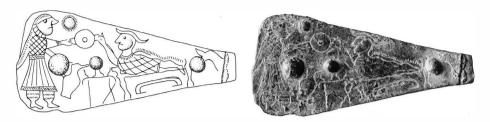


Fig. 81.5: Bronze belt plaque from Este, Carceri (after Frey 1969)

plaque from Este, Carceri (Fig. 81.5), on which a symposium scene according to the Graeco-Etruscan tradition is portrayed, once again making use of a *Schnabelkanne*. 56

Streng influences from Etruria are also manifested in the famous cult wagon from Strettweg, whose rich figural decoration is hardly imaginable without models from the south (Fig. 82.6).⁵⁷ Unlike the bronze vessels with engraved and embossed decoration, which are adapted from Etruscan pottery and metal originals, the statuettes on the wagon from Strettweg stand under the influence of Etruscan figurines. Are we to accept that as well as tableware, sculptural works were exported into the contact zone north of Etruria as well? This question is of special consequence because the figural Etruscan bronzes occur in a different context from the imported vessels. While the latter reveal a connection with the symposium and the banquet, the bronze figurines are mostly connected with cultic requirements, as is very clearly expressed in the wagon from Strettweg. Independent of the question as to whether the wagon was built directly on the model of an Etruscan cult wagon or whether it represents an independent creation that derives only indirectly from southern models, on the whole it follows from it that the native bronzesmiths closely oriented their work to the Etruscan figurative small-sized sculptures.⁵⁸

The two examples demonstrate that the Etruscan export of goods to the northeast must have been considerably more intensive than can yet be recognized from the picture transmitted by the archaeological record.

⁵⁶ Frey 1969, 44, 83–84, 86, 98, 105, pl. 28.15; 67. We may also mention the bronze figurine of a nude worshiper from Padua, who holds a *Schnabelkanne* in the left hand and an *omphalos* dish in the right: Frey 1989, 301–2 fig. 3; Capuis 1993, fig. 57.

⁵⁷ Egg 1996, 14-51.

⁵⁸ Relevant models are works like the warrier figurine from Este, Scolo di Lozzo, that probably came from Etruria, and which in its attenuated, scarcely articulated body closely resembles the figures from Strettweg: Capuis 1988, 91, 93 no. 177; Huth 2003, 239 pl. 87.1.

3 The period of the foundation of Etruscan cities in the Po Valley (sixth-fifth centuries BCE)

With the founding of the Etruscan harbor towns of Adria and Spina in the second and third quarters of the sixth century, trade relations with the north changed.⁵⁹ Besides goods that traveled farther north by land routes across the Apennines, wares increasingly appear that were distributed from the Adriatic coast along the course of the Po and other rivers. To the latter belongs in all probability a large portion of the Greek pottery that appear in increasing numbers from the middle of the sixth century onward in the Veneto and eastern Lombardy. 60 Among the oldest pottery imports, an amphoriskos of the Fikellura style from Forcello that dates to the third quarter of the sixth century deserves to be mentioned. 61 The vessel belongs to a style rarely found in Etruria. All the stronger, therefore, weighs the proof of a second Fikellura amphoriskos in Adria, which underlines the role of the Etruscan harbor town in the development of the interior beyond the Po. 62

At about the same time, in the second half of the sixth century, Attic pottery begins to appear increasingly in settlements in the Veneto, although the paths of origin cannot be determined with certainty. Land transport via Bologna is just as likely as the sea route. More important than the question of provenience is the fact that export from the Etruscan centers was no longer limited to their own goods, but Attic ceramics and products originating outside Etruria were sent north as well. The Etruscans thus functioned in this case as brokers for foreign products.

Athenian vessels thus experienced a double cultural transformation, which is reflected for example in the formal composition of the finds in the indigenous contexts north of the Po. Drinking cups are by far the most common, while mixing and pouring vessels, which in Greece and Etruria are major components of symposium paraphernalia, are only occasionally found.

⁵⁹ According to a recent book by Luisa Bertacchi, Aquileia would also have been an Etruscan foundation (Bertacchi 2009). The thesis is based on a group of fifty-eight Etruscan vessels of unknown provenience that was handed over to the author under dubious circumstances, but since to date no Etruscan pottery from secure contexts is known in Aquileia, an Etruscan origin of the city remains highly doubtful.

⁶⁰ Gamba 1986; Benemi 1988; Benemi 2000; de Marinis 2005; Wiel-Marin 2005; Lenzi 2007-8. Two aryballoi of the late proto-Corinthian and Italo-Corinthian styles from Este precede the phase dealt with here: Este, Rebate, Temb 100: Favarette 1976, 44, pl. 20.1; Lenzi 2007-8, 86, pl. 15a; unprovenienced, Vienna, Naturhistorisches Museum: Frey 1989, 297 n. 35; Woldrich 1978, 39-40, 207. On the two vessels also: Capuis and Chieco Bianchi 1992, 70 fig. 54, 106 n. 66; Bruni 1998, 205 with footnote 15. For Lombardy see chapter 78 de Marinis.

⁶¹ Wiel-Marin 2005, 139f. fig. 63.

⁶² Benemi 1991, pl. 1.1-3.

It is striking that the repertoire of images on the Attic ceramics exported to the north also clearly differs from that on finds from Etruria, and even more strongly from those found in Greece. Mythological and religious themes find virtually no echo on the imported vessels. Instead, what prevails are noncommital "everyday" pictures, scenes from the palaestra, and disconnected Dionysiac themes. Also noteworthy is the preference for vessels without figural decoration. Black-glazed vessels and vessels with purely geometric or floral ornament are found in disproportionate number among the imported pottery from the area north of the Po. As an example we may mention the spread of the favored floral-band cups, which are also well attested in Etruria. But with respect to the northern Italic region, there is a clear discrepancy in distribution. While they are only occasionally found in the area south of the Po, they appear in the regions north of the river in strikingly larger numbers. At least one example has been found in the central Alpine region, in Sanzeno.

The floral-band cups are also found in remarkable numbers in Adria and Forcello. Thus, the distribution of the vessels consequently appears to reflect a specific mechanism of distribution and reception, which was decisively controlled by the Etruscan centers in Adria and Forcello and tailored to the needs of the local customers.

4 Conclusions

Cultural exchange between the Etruscans and their neighbors to the north found expression from Villanovan times onward in an increasing number of imports. Of course precisely the northeastern part of the Po Valley and the adjacent Caput Adriae are comparatively poor in clearly accountable foreign finds, which is likely due primarily to accidents of preservation. Across the entire time span dealt with here, from the eighth to the fifth century, a widespread reception of the Etruscan stock of forms and the imagery preserved on them can be observed in the material legacy of the native cultures of the Veneto and the eastern Alpine area. Prerequisites for that are intensive personal contacts between the various interest groups taking part in the exchange, which must also have been accompanied by the adoption of intellectual ideas and social practices from the south. Despite this close interaction with the Etruscan world, the cultural appearance of the Venetians and their northern and northeastern neighbors is distinguished overall by a noteworthy independence, which is expressed not least in their free and independent dealings with imported goods.

⁶³ Pierre 1984, 143-52; Iacebazzi 2004, 215-17.

⁶⁴ Cavada 1990, 26f., 34f. figs. 2-3.

⁶⁵ Only a few representative examples need be mentioned: Bonomi 1991, pl. 37.3–5; Wiel-Marin 2005, 248f.

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