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Foreword

This volume is a collection of contributions dedicated to Lucia Vagnetti, a scholar whose innovative research work has significantly enhanced our knowledge of Mediterranean protohistory over the last decades.

These contributions are offered to her as an homage from scholars who she encountered since the initial stages of her career. With many of them she gave birth to important collaborations and built long-lasting friendships.

The choice for authors and research topics — which has been our responsibility as editors of this volume — has necessarily caused a selection of contributions based on Lucia's scientific interests as well as on the people who in various ways have shared her scientific path. Our intention with this choice was to represent the different subjects and the specific geographical areas of the Mediterranean protohistory in which Lucia concentrated her research work.

Even if Lucia Vagnetti is a renowned scholar for her studies on the Aegean world, it must be recalled that she moved her first steps as an Etruscologist. In fact, she took her degree in Archaeology with M. Pallottino with a thesis on the materials from the votive deposit of Campetti at Veio, which was then quickly published (Vagnetti 1971).

After this initial phase of scholarly formation, Lucia specialised at the Italian Archaeological School in Athens, directed at the time by D. Levi. During her stay in Athens, Levi entrusted her with the study of the Neolithic levels of the site of Phaistos, a scientific endeavour which put her for the first time in direct contact with the prehistory and the protohistory of the Aegean. Lucia completed that job so admirably that its publication continues to represent a reference point for all the specialists in the field (Vagnetti 1972-73).

In the same years she was involved in Rome in the activities of the Centre of Mycenaean and Aegean-Anatolian Studies directed by G. Pugliese Carratelli. This Centre, which soon became an Institute of the Italian National Research Council, was created in the 1960's on the wave of the recent discoveries in the field of the Mycenaean philology and archaeology. The aim of the Centre was to combine those pioneering studies with other more consolidated fields in the study of the Antiquity, so as to fill the large gaps still existing in the history of the pre-classic stages of the Mediterranean civilisations (*Trentennale*).

One of the first initiatives carried out by Lucia during this period was the organisation with S. Tinè of the first exhibition of the Mycenaean archaeological findings in the Central Mediterranean (Tinè, Vagnetti 1967). Her involvement in this initiative gave a new imprint to her scientific interests, since from here originated one of the most prolific branches of her research work: that about the Bronze Age relationships between the Aegean World and the ancient communities of the Central Mediterranean (Vagnetti 1968a, 1970).

Meanwhile, the Institute for the Mycenaean and Aegean-Anatolian studies, directed by C. Gallavotti, had started numerous field activities in Crete, Cyprus and Anatolia. Lucia took part in some of them, developing a keen interest for many aspects of Cretan and Cypriot archaeology (Vagnetti 1974a, 1975, 1980, 1984a, 1984b, 1989, 1991; Vagnetti, Belli 1978; Vagnetti et al. 1989). Over the years, the ancient history and archaeology of Crete in particular was to capture her attention, as is shown e.g. by the fact that, until a mature phase of her career, Lucia, together with her husband Paolo Belli, continued to devote a large part of her scientific work to specific aspects of the Late Minoan funerary rituals, thanks also to the collaboration with M. Tsipopoulou (Tsipopoulou, Vagnetti 1995, Tsipopoulou, Vagnetti 1997; Tsipopoulou et al. 2003; Tsipopoulou, Vagnetti 2006).

In Italy, between the 1970's and early 1980's, many discoveries made through the numerous field activities in the various regions of the peninsula as well as in the islands, revealed an important Mycenaean presence in the West. In particular, the discoveries at Vivara, Broglio di Trebisacce, Termito and Coppa Nevigata in southern Italy, and Antigori in Sardinia contributed to expand our knowledge in this field. The experience gained by Lucia in the study of the Aegean world as well as her deep knowledge of the relationships between that area and the Central Mediterranean in the second millennium B.C. made her the scholar of reference for a field which was at the time nearly unexplored (Vagnetti 1979; Lo Schiavo, Vagnetti 1980). She was

thus involved in the preparation of both the conference and the exhibition “Magna Grecia e mondo miceneo” (Vagnetti 1982a), where the participants tried to make an initial assessment of the recent discoveries. Some years later, then, she promoted and organised an important conference in Palermo, where the forms of the Mycenaean trade with the Central and Eastern Mediterranean were analysed (Marazzi et al. 1986).

These two relevant scientific initiatives shed light on the new findings and paved the way to new methodological and interpretative perspectives. In particular, during the study of the Mycenaean-like pottery from Broglio di Trebisacce, which was entrusted to her by R. Peroni, Lucia realised that part of that ceramic production, due to some of its characteristics, was likely not imported from the Aegean (Vagnetti 1982b, 1982c, 1984c, 1984d). Following this idea, she promoted not only an archaeological study of the sherds, but also a campaign of chemical analysis of the clays. This endeavour was accomplished in an international collaboration with R. Jones, who, besides being an expert in this kind of investigations and having a large database of clay samples from the Aegean and Cyprus, was at the time the Director of the Fitch Laboratory of the British School at Athens (Vagnetti, Jones 1988, Jones, Vagnetti 1991, Vagnetti, Panichelli 1994, Vagnetti 2001a). This long-lasting campaign has included materials from a multitude of sites in the Central Mediterranean.

The results, which were immediately encouraging and were quickly published in a wide range of Italian and international journals and conference proceedings, confirmed Lucia’s brilliant ideas about the local manufacture of Mycenaean-type pottery in Italy and changed forever the way we look at the relationships between the Aegean world and the communities of the Central Mediterranean.

Subsequently, the project promoted by Lucia and Richard constantly developed through the expansion of the geographical variety of findings (up to the Po valley), their chronology and the constant refinement of both the analytical techniques and the statistical elaboration of the data. The results of the more than thirty-year-long development of the different sampling and analysis campaigns have been recently found their place in the volume *Italo-Mycenaean Pottery* (Jones et al. 2014), which represents the tangible result of Lucia’s commitment to this line of research.

With the same tenacity and curiosity she also studied other aspects in this field, bringing to light the existence of specific relationships between Italy, Crete and Cyprus. In particular, she identified and commented from a historical perspective specific categories of objects, ceramic classes and pottery styles from sites of the Central Mediterranean that can be traced back to the two islands (Vagnetti 1968b, Vagnetti 1974b, Vagnetti 1985a, Vagnetti 1985b, Lo Schiavo et al. 1985, Vagnetti 1986, Ferrarese Ceruti et al. 1987, Vagnetti, Lo Schiavo 1989, Vagnetti 2001b, Vagnetti 2001c, Vagnetti 2003).

The different sections of this volume (Italy, Italy and the Aegean World, Aegean and Cyprus) reflect Lucia’s scientific path, a Mediterranean itinerary through fields of History and Archaeology which were nearly unexplored at the beginning of her career. If today our knowledge about the history of Italy and the Aegean during the second millennium B.C. has greatly improved and many aspects are now clearer than before, this is to a large extent due to Lucia’s seminal work on the relationships between the two areas.

One could perhaps think that, not having been a professor, Lucia has not had students. However, her pioneering academic work, her generosity and her open-mindedness attracted many collaborators and young scholars, with whom she interacted in various ways, by passing down her experiences, by giving them her advices or simply by encouraging them with humanity and discretion. From this point of view, each of the editors of this volume considers himself as a student or a “disciple” of Lucia and has many reasons for being grateful to her.

Great scholars not only transmit knowledge, but also pass on a certain attitude in research and life in general. Lucia, generously, has inspired, helped and coached many younger scholars, in a way “sowing” in a new field and “cultivating” what was growing. This is why we consider her, not only a great scholar but also a great teacher.

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