Road networks, settlement and landscape: the dioceses of Roselle, Populonia and Sovana (5th-11th century)

The relationship between socio-settlement choices and the road network inherited from the Roman world, in their geographical and environmental context, represents the focus of this research. The selected chronological range is the period between the 5th and 11th centuries, during which the process of castle foundation began in a systematic way. The area we examined corresponds with the territories belonging to the dioceses of Populonia, Roselle and Sovana, whose boundaries have over time undergone a series of shifts that have been at the centre of a complex historiographical debate. For the diocese of Roselle we chose the hypothesis proposed by Carlo Citter, while for the boundaries of Populonia and Sovana that suggested by Maria Luisa Ceccarelli Lemut and Roberto Farinelli.

The starting point was the process of systematic gathering and cataloguing of the relevant and up-to-date published literature. We decided to make a distinction between data from archaeological and written sources, and to subdivide these data on a chronological basis. The road network was divided between the primary routes inherited from the Roman world, comprising the *Via Aurelia*, the *Via Aemilia Scauri* and the *Via Clodia*, and the secondary routes. To proceed with the georeferencing of the evidence we used the CTR cartography at 1:10000, with the usual differences in accuracy between archaeological data and written sources. We thus carried out proximity analyses and, in particular, density calculation within a buffer zone of one and two miles from the Roman roads.

These areas have been covered in a near-systematic manner by intense scientific archaeological research. The results obtained can therefore be considered significant. There are, however, areas that have been less well investigated for the medieval period, and this influences the results. The data obtained for the 7th- to 11th-century sites in the diocese of Sovana should be read accordingly.