Preface

The chora of Metaponto was filled with ancient sites from all periods in the history of this land, from the Neolithic to the Medieval, represented by a variety of structures. The period of the Greek settlement, of the chora proper, is by far the most present. Approximately 95% of the sites recorded in the Institute of Classical Archaeology's (ICA's) field survey of the chora (1981–2001) were Greek, though often with a prehistoric (usually Neolithic) component and, in a limited number of cases, an afterlife in the Roman period. We know all of this thanks to the foresight and energy of Dinu Adamesteanu, who organized the first systematic surveys and excavations in the 1960s. Adamesteanu's deep concern to preserve all of the history was manifest in his active stewardship (*tutela*) of the whole of the very large area—all of Basilicata—for which he, as its first Soprintendente, was responsible. In the 1970s, an ill-considered government-sponsored program of remodeling the landscape to create flatter fields was destroying ancient sites by the hundreds. The inspectors of the Soprintendenza were very busy.

I remember clearly that day in late May of 1979 when the assistant to the Soprintendente, Antonio Indice, took me to Sant'Angelo, where the remains of a large deposit of terracotta figurines and plaques was still visible along the road. At that time, Ingrid Edlund, with a group of professionals, students, volunteers, and highly skilled workmen, were preparing to continue the excavation of the Pantanello sanctuary. She was apprised of the urgency of the situation, and she and the group rose to the occasion. The site of Sant'Angelo Vecchio was excavated, essentially, that summer, with some follow-up in subsequent years.

The site proved unexpectedly rich. There was epigraphic evidence of a sanctuary here in the 6th century BC—one of a number of extra-urban sanctuaries that included Pantanello and San Biagio on the Basento River and the Tavole Palatine on the Bradano. There was a small farmhouse of the second half of the 6th century BC on the slope above the spring where the sanctuary would have been located; there was a small

necropolis with burials of some importance. Among the grave goods were alabastra and red-figure vases, including one of the very first by the pioneer Italiote Greek vase painter, the Pisticci Painter. (Before the excavations in the chora revealed many burials with his work, it was mostly known from museum collections.) A ceramic production center flourished here from the 4th century BC to the early 1st century AD, thanks to the abundant good clay of the Basento valley and the presence of the spring, an essential element of all settlements in the countryside.

The site was safe because the landowners, the Santoro family, were not only friendly and helpful during the excavation, but took seriously their informal responsibility for the protection of the site. The current owners, the Sarubbo family, have continued to respect it.

Objects from the site were restored, cataloged, and documented photographically, and site plans and sections were drawn. Ingrid Edlund made a two-volume report in 1982 for the ICA archive, and there it may have continued to sit, had it not been for the generous support of the Packard Humanities Institute (PHI).

Sant'Angelo Vecchio and a number of other sites were saved for the historical record of Greek settlements in Italy by a program as foresighted and original as that of Adamesteanu. PHI made it possible to employ young, very well-prepared Italian scholars and other experts from around the globe in the study of unpublished excavations in the chora. This began in 2000 and received a big boost in 2007. The result is an extensive, ongoing publication series. The current volume is one of a half-dozen titles (10 separate volumes) completed so far,¹ with several more in the works, including one devoted exclusively to the abundant terracotta votive plaques found at Sant'Angelo Vecchio by Rebecca Ammerman. The scholars are based in the study center at Pantanello with its library and living quarters, while the editorial production staff works at ICA's offices in Austin.

¹ *Necropoleis*; Bökönyi and Gál 2010; *Survey*; *San Biagio*; *Fattoria Fabrizio*.

This is where Francesca Silvestrelli joined forces with ICA. An imaginative and meticulous scholar, she organized the study team and undertook a complete re-evaluation of the evidence from the original excavations at Sant'Angelo Vecchio, as well as that of some new excavation in 2010 and 2011. The publication follows the general outline of previous volumes in the series. There is a strong emphasis on the study of ceramics by top specialists in the field, including Francesca herself. This volume provides an invaluable tool for others working in Greek and Roman sites in southern Italy. There are chapters on little-known subjects like red ware. An unexpected Roman and Late Roman phase at the site came to light, based on a few unprepossessing fragments that could easily have been overlooked by a less attentive and prepared team. Sant'Angelo itself, in a quite limited area, illustrates with a wide range of materials the variety of activities that characterized the chora in the heyday of the Greek settlement and its successors.

The whole, however, is considerably greater than the sum of the parts. That is because Silvestrelli has seen connections with other sites and studies, and with the overarching picture that the survey results provide.² The archaeobotanical analysis, for example, re-creates the landscape surrounding the site, but it is part of a larger picture, one tessera in the mosaic of the ancient countryside that is slowly, piece by piece, coming into view at Metaponto—a historic reality that for now is unique in the Greek West. The authors are to be commended for the skill and persistence with which they have guided this impressive collaborative effort to completion.

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² See *Survey*.