

The Bronze Age settlement of Moscosi-Cingoli (MC)

MARA SILVESTRINI & GAIA PIGNOCCHI

ABSTRACT - The presence of an Iron Age site referable to the VI century BC and settlements of the Middle Bronze and Final Bronze Age has been confirmed. Two settlement phases refer to the Medium Final Bronze Age and are attributed to the Apennine Culture. The most significant evidence as to the working of bronze is the vast amount of objects found and above all, the finding of a sandstone fusion form. These typologies of metal objects, especially known in Peschiera, in Terramare complexes and in the Central Adriatic area, document that these sub-Apennine communities were part of a vast trading and cultural movement which continues up to the beginning of the Final Bronze Age.

KEY WORDS: Settlement, Bronze Age, Moscosi-Cingoli

PAROLE CHIAVE: Insediamento, Età del Bronzo, Moscosi-Cingoli

Mara Silvestrini & Gaia Pignocchi - Soprintendenza Archeologica per le Marche, Via Birarelli 18, I-60100 Ancona

As a result of continuous surface findings and of the project of the construction of the Castrecioni dam, which would have completely covered the rich archaeological deposit, the Soprintendenza Archeologica per le Marche carried out a series of excavation campaigns from 1986 to 1997. The campaigns are still being carried out and have confirmed the presence of an Iron Age site referable to the VI century BC and settlements of the Middle Bronze and Final Bronze Age on the fluvial terrace of the River Musone, at an altitude between 330 and 345 metres.

Two settlement phases refer to the Medium Final Bronze Age (US193b-202) and are attributed to the Apennine Culture. At Moscosi an initial phase of the Apennine Culture (Apennine 1) can be identified in the inferior levels (US202-200). It is represented by bowl fragments with a low careen (Fig.1:C4), S. Paolina di Filottrano type vase handles with revolute apexes (Fig.1:C1) and axe shaped vase handles with an internal faceted face (PERONI, 1959:97, axe-shaped handle B), similar to the type found at Conelle di Arcevia and Cortine di Fabriano (LOLLINI, 1979:185, fig. 1:10), which are at the moment only attested to the Marche culture (Fig.1:C5).

The decorative motifs include a curvilinear band design on a background of a median line of engraved dots, that in the Marche area can be compared with those of S.Paoline di Filottrano (RELLINI, 1931, table II:17) and characterize the beginning of the late phase of the Medium Bronze Age in the Grotta a Male (layer 4c) (PANNUTI, 1969:163, fig.8:6). At Moscosi, the transition from a final Apennine phase (Apennine 2) (US200-193b) can be clearly seen from the linear right angle meander decorations (Fig.1:C2), which prevail on the upper levels of the Grotta a Male (layer 4b and 4a), assigned to the final phase of the Apennine Middle Bronze Age (PANNUTI, 1969, fig.11:1, 12:2; PERONI, 1969:250). There are also angular motifs engraved on the edge of the vase, which can find evident parallels in the Marche Apennine stations (Pievetorina, S.Paolina di Filottrano, Spineto) (RELLINI, 1931, tab.III:1), in the typology of the band-shaped handles with revolute apexes and raised edges with a circular hole, as in the example from US2009 which still features the Apennine type engraved and impressed decoration which disappear in the examples of the higher levels US198 (LOLLINI, 1979, fig.6:24, 7:45; RELLINI, 1931, tab.IV-VI; PANNUTI, 1969:213, fig.39:2; PERONI, 1969:250).

There are also straight cylindrical elevated handles, crescent-shaped with a conical ashlar at the base (Fig.1:C6), which are similar to samples of Grotta a Male (layer 3) (PANNUTI, 1969:206, fig.32:7) and to Cortine di Fabriano (LOLLINI, 1979, fig.2:4).

The coarse mixture ceramic is characterised by large containers with straight flared rims and handles with vertical bands, egg-shaped ollae with smooth ribs or with finger impressions and with notches even on the rim.

A timber structure, only partly explored, made of modular boarding of joined planks, on a framework of trunks of oak tree and carbonized ash trees, constructed not far from the ancient riverside dates to the initial phase of the Recent Bronze Age (US196). The areas of "concolato" found on the planking give rise to the hypothesis that there was a compact beaten earth flooring caused by fire. This timber structure can be interpreted as part of a planking used as a flooring similar to the one that came to light in the Terramare settlement of S. Rosa di Poviglio (RE) (BERNABO'BREA & CREMASCHI, 1997:198, fig.77). The Recent Bronze Age levels (US192-171) covering the timber structure (US196) have yielded a large quantity of ceramic findings, artefacts made of bone, antler and bronze objects, which attest the beginning of craftsman activities on site.

The pure mixture ceramic is represented by careened bowls mainly with a low careen, with straight elevated cylindrical and horn-shaped handles and particularly a ribbed band handle with a short and widened crescent-shaped raised part and bowls with rounded bodies (Fig.1:B1-4).

Among the new typologies, there are bowls with triangular holds applied to the flat rims (Fig.1:B5), diffused in the Marche at Conelle di Arcevia, Pianello di Genga and Cortine di Fabriano (LOLLINI, 1979:182, fig.1:22-23, 2:8,15,20) and smooth surfaced bowls with turned-in rims, sometimes with a dimple base. These forms are also found in the next phase.

Vase handles with a rod shaped raised part and median ribs can also be found and are attributed to the Recent Bronze Age (ANDREOTTI & ZANINI, 1995-96:304, fig.3:7).

The coarse mixture ceramic includes vase containers with brimmed rims and walls decorated with smooth ribs with crossed intersections, ollae with ribs that are smooth or decorated with fingerprints or notches (Fig.1:B7), large bowls with smooth undulated ribs, plates with straight low flared walls (Fig.1:B6). These typologies and decorative patterns are common during the whole of the Bronze Age and in particular during the sub-Apennine phase (Cortine di Fabriano, Pianello di

Genga, Montefranco di Pollenza) (LOLLINI, 1979:182, fig.2:25, p.204, fig.7:47).

Among the bronze objects of particular interest is the winged axe (Fig.1:B8), pins with curly heads (CARANCINI, 1975:116-119), pins with square heads and pins with eyelet perforations of the Bocatura del Mincio type (CARANCINI, 1975:177-178) (Fig.1:B9) which, even if only fragmentary, is attested in the Marche in the sub-Apennine settlement of Cortine di Fabriano (LOLLINI, 1979:187, fig.1:3). These typologies are diffused mainly in the Lake Garda area.

The bone artefacts include spatulas and ornamental elements represented by an indistinct square bone.

A successive settlement level, which lasted uninterruptedly until the beginning of the Final Bronze Age (US154-163) yielded hearths and other finds. A suburban area of the village, assigned to production activities also came to light. Among the ceramic typologies, many forms of sub-Apennine repertory persist as for example the careened and the turned-in rim bowls, now ornate with linear and angular groove decorations and with impressed dots and cupels, in a completely new style, typical of the proto-Villanova Culture (Fig.1:A1-2).

The amount of spiral handles and handle grips of the proto-Villanova type increases. These elements are greatly diffused during the Final Bronze Age (Bachero di Cingoli and Fontevicchia di Camerano) (LOLLINI, 1979:207, fig.6:6, 8:11).

The bowls with raised band handles decorated with wide grooves are diffused in northern cultures and attested even in Umbria (ANDREOTTI & ZANINI, 1995-96:304, fig.3:3) like the bowls with turned-in rims decorated with horizontal grooves, distributed from Lombardia to Veneto, Emilia and Tuscany (ANDREOTTI & ZANINI, 1995-96:310, fig.4:10-11).

The coarse mixture ceramics includes large containers and ollae with ribs.

Fragments of circular type stove diaphragms with holes, spherical cap-shaped (PERONI, 1959:162, Fusarole B) and flat truncated-biconical fusaroles and the characteristic fictile animal figurines (Fig.1:A9).

The antler industry is very developed. There are finished objects and a lot of work discards, mainly of agriculture implements like small spades and hoes, particularly diffused in the Marche during the Final Bronze Age (Monte Croce Guardia di Arcevia and Colle dei Cappuccini - Ancona). In Northern Italy there were also pitchforks made from long segments of perforated antlers (FORNI, 1997:463, fig.264a, p.466, fig.266:10-11) and ard-

shares (FORNI, 1997, fig.257,259). Chisel handles made from segments of horns with a transversal hole were also found.

The bone industry is represented by "awl" handles (Fig.1:A8), decorated with the characteristic engraved circles and lozenge expansion stem and hourglass-shaped head (PERONI, 1959:178, Handle A3), which are already diffused in the Marche in the Recent Bronze Age (Cortine di Fabriano, Conelle di Arcevia, S.Paolina di Filottrano) (LOLLINI, 1979:187, fig.1:11) and throughout the whole of the Final Bronze Age even in different styles (Bachero-Cingoli) (LOLLINI, 1979:207, fig.6:3).

Even bone wheel-shaped pinheads with six beams are quite numerous (Fig.1:A7), a typical element of the proto-Villanova Culture (Pianello di Genga and Monte Croce Guardia di Arcevia) (LOLLINI, 1979:198, fig.4:5). Among the ornamental objects made of bone, there are pendants made of wild-boar fangs and a *sus* tooth, perforated for hanging purposes.

The most significant evidence as to the working of bronze is the vast amount of objects found and above all, the finding of a sandstone fusion form.

These artefacts mainly consist of perfectly preserved daggers referring to two main types: tang ones and tongue-shaped hilt ones with raised-up edges. The first class includes the type with an ogival tang and lance-shaped blade with angular shoulders, Torre Castelluccia type, (Fig.1:A4), which is documented in level D of the Grotta dei Baffoni (BIANCO PERONI, 1994:122, tab.65:1162) in the Marche and the dagger with wide tang with slightly raised edges which is similar to the S. Agata type (BIANCO PERONI, 1994:146, tab.79), respectively from US154 and 156.

There are two types of daggers with long blades and tongue-shaped hilts with raised edges, generally called Peschiera type (PERONI, 1959:168): the Pertosa type (Fig.1:A3), with just one nail at the base of the blade marked with two lateral ducts and with convex inclined shoulders, represented by two specimens, one from US163 and the other sporadic one from the Apignanesi collection, which preserves a fragment of the bone hilt (BIANCO PERONI, 1994:149-152, tab.82-83, p.150, tab.82:1487). The second type is the Bertarina type with two lateral ducts underneath the shoulders (BIANCO PERONI, 1994:154). These typologies are largely diffused in the Emilia-Marche area, at Filottrano (RELLINI, 1931:27), at Bertarina di Vecchiazano (MASSI PASI, 1978:377, fig.8), Capocolle di Bertinoro (VEGGIANI, 1977, fig.3,B) and in other sites

during the sub-Apennine Period, between XIII and XII century BC.

Among the ornamental objects there is a fibula with arched foliate and "Peschiera" type nodules (Fig.1:A6) (VON ELES MASI, 1986:10, tab.3:53), attested to the beginning of the initial proto-Villanova phase or, however from XII century B.C. onwards, even though there is evidence of this in the sub-Apennine context.

Amongst the pins there is also a sample with a double truncated-cone head with transversal ribs of the Mezzocorona variety A type, (CARANCINI, 1975:116-119) which is also diffused in the Lake Garda area but generally in the Terramare Culture.

Also interesting were the finds of a chisel with a thin concave cut, which was surely used to finish the artefacts made of antler, the signs of which are evident in the objects during the working phase (Fig.1:A5).

These typologies of metal objects, especially known in Peschiera, in Terramare complexes and in the Central Adriatic area, document that these sub-Apennine communities were part of a vast trading and cultural movement which continues up to the beginning of the Final Bronze Age (half way through XII century BC). This is also tied to the presence of amber which is confirmed by the findings of a few pieces of indistinct fragments at Moscosi in the Recent and Final Bronze Age levels. The US154-163 levels of Moscosi di Cingoli seem to belong to that phase of transition from sub-Apennine to proto-Villanova datable between XII and XI century BC, referable to the Final Bronze Age (PERONI, 1959). Here, as well as relevant traditional sub-Apennine elements, there are other new ones, like oblique grooves, sometimes associated with cupels on careened cups and cups with turned-in rims, with a smooth surface of the layers immediately below and a raised rod shaped vertical handle, ornate with grooves which are definitely asserted in the proto-Villanova phase. Even after a preliminary analysis, the archaeological site of Moscosi di Cingoli appears extremely important, not only for the abundant findings which were still in their original place, but mainly for the stratigraphic sequence of the deposit which allowed us to understand the various phases of the evolutionary process which was brought about during the Bronze Age.

Moscosi is part of the group of settlement areas of the Marche which has witnessed continuous settlements from the Middle Bronze Age up until the Final Bronze Age, like Bachero di Cingoli, Montefranco di Pollenza and S.Paolina di Filottrano. In these settlements there is proof of a mixture of traditional Apennine, sub-Apennine and

proto-Villanova elements. These elements do not, however, allow us to determine the phases of an articulate evolutive process. This is not the case for the Cingoli site where we can gather traditional elements and innovations, not only from the ceramic productions but also from other artifacts, particularly metal ones, which, at the moment, are completely missing in the inferior levels but continue to increase during the sub-Appennine period.

The presence of weapons and implements, together with ornamental objects, increase more and more and the finding of a sand stone form of fusion proves the presence of local specialized artisans, as well as the existence of intensive trading and cultural contacts with the area of Peschiera and Lake Garda.

The horn and bone industry assumes an extraordinary importance mainly during the Final Bronze Age. The preference for antlers proves an intentional choice of this raw material and its exploitation for its plastic and volumetric qualities and testifies the perfect mastery of the means of production which adopts new decorticating and finishing techniques using implements such as the chisel and using the saw for cutting. The objects which were produced were not typologically varied but they were very highly standardized, they could have been used for agricultural and domestic activities or as ornaments. The great amount of discards also shows that the use of hard animal materials in the manufacturing of artefacts gave rise to a local production of specialized craftsmanship which implied a profound knowledge of the

raw material and of methods of supply as well as of great technological mastery.

It is difficult, however, to establish whether these artefacts were for internal use or for trading. The fragmentary amber pearls, recovered during the Recent and Final Bronze Age settlements, were surely trading objects. They probably represented a status symbol of dominant social groups. Amber is a very fragile material, which burns easily and therefore, has the disadvantage of deteriorating easily.

Even from a palaeo-economical point of view, the study of fauna remains has provided important information on the significant variations of the type of animals which were reared and hunted. In particular, in the inferior levels, the percentage of sheep-goat remains compared to bovine remains could confirm an economy based on sheep-farming in the final phase of the Medium Bronze Age (Appennine culture). Stock raising and agriculture became fundamental in the following sub-Appennine period when deer hunting became necessary for the supply of raw materials for the manufacturing of agricultural implements.

The abandoning of the Moscosi sites and other sites in the initial phase of the Final Bronze Age are contemporary to the rise of the settlement areas of proto-Villanova dislocated in higher areas for strategic and proto-urban type needs as in Monte Croce Guardia di Arcevia and the Colle dei Cappuccini in Ancona, where the effects of morphological-topographical factors in the choice of the settlement place is evident.

SUMMARY - The presence of an Iron Age site referable to the VI century BC and settlements of the Middle Bronze and Final Bronze Age has been confirmed. Two settlement phases refer to the Medium Final Bronze Age and are attributed to the Appennine Culture. The most significant evidence as to the working of bronze is the vast amount of objects found and above all, the finding of a sandstone fusion form. These typologies of metal objects, especially known in Peschiera, in Terramare complexes and in the Central Adriatic area, document that these sub-Appennine communities were part of a vast trading and cultural movement which continues up to the beginning of the Final Bronze Age.

RIASSUNTO - Si conferma la presenza dell'Età del Ferro riferibile al VI sec. AC e di insediamenti del Bronzo Medio e Finale. All'Età del Bronzo medio e finale si riferiscono due fasi insediamentali attribuite alla cultura Appenninica. Il dato principale relativo alla lavorazione del bronzo è rappresentato dalla grande quantità di oggetti e soprattutto di una forma di fusione. Le tipologie degli oggetti metallici, particolarmente note a Peschiera, nei complessi delle terramare e nell'area adriatica centrale, documentano che le comunità sub-Appennine facevano parte di un vasto movimento commerciale e culturale che perdura fino al Bronzo finale.

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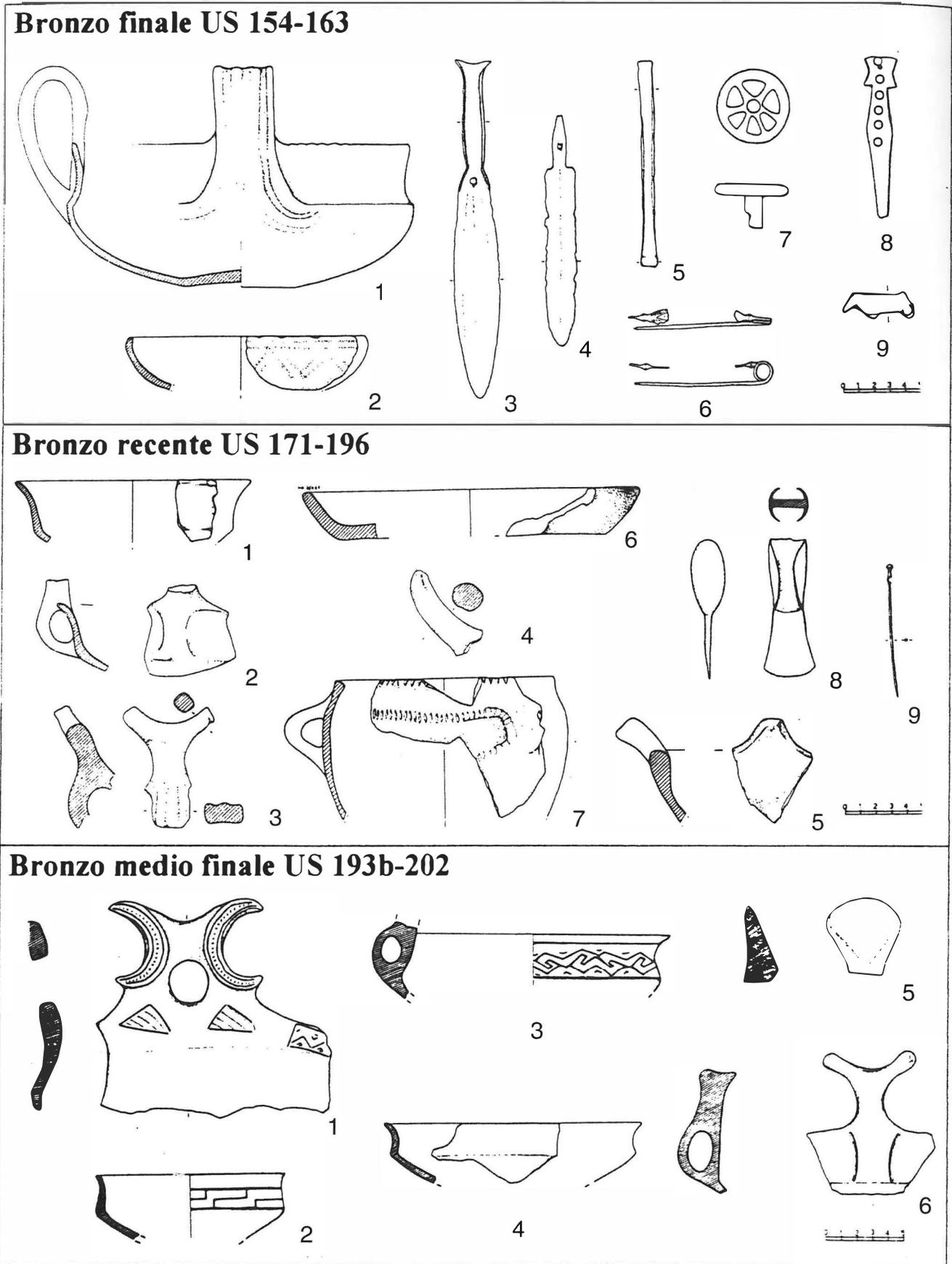


Fig. 1 - Table of the typological-stratigraphic summary of Moscosi di Cingoli (MC)