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# The Fettered Man from Populonia, Centro Velico

**Abstract:** *The aim of this contribution is to describe the burial context of the Fettered Man, which was found in the Gulf of Baratti near Populonia in the early days of November 2016 by a team from the Università degli Studi di Milano, under the scientific direction of Giorgio Baratti. Findings of means of constraint in formal burials are rare in ancient necropolises and have been unique to Etruscan culture until now. The (late) Archaic burial in Populonia is comparable to some graves within Greek necropolises, which have mostly been interpreted as slave burials. As for the fetters, the same type was found in the necropolis of Akanthos, in an isolated burial in Martigues, and also in votive contexts. A broader reflection on the use of such tools of constriction in antiquity – with the use of both iconographical and historiographical sources – can help to understand what the Fettered Man was subjected to.*

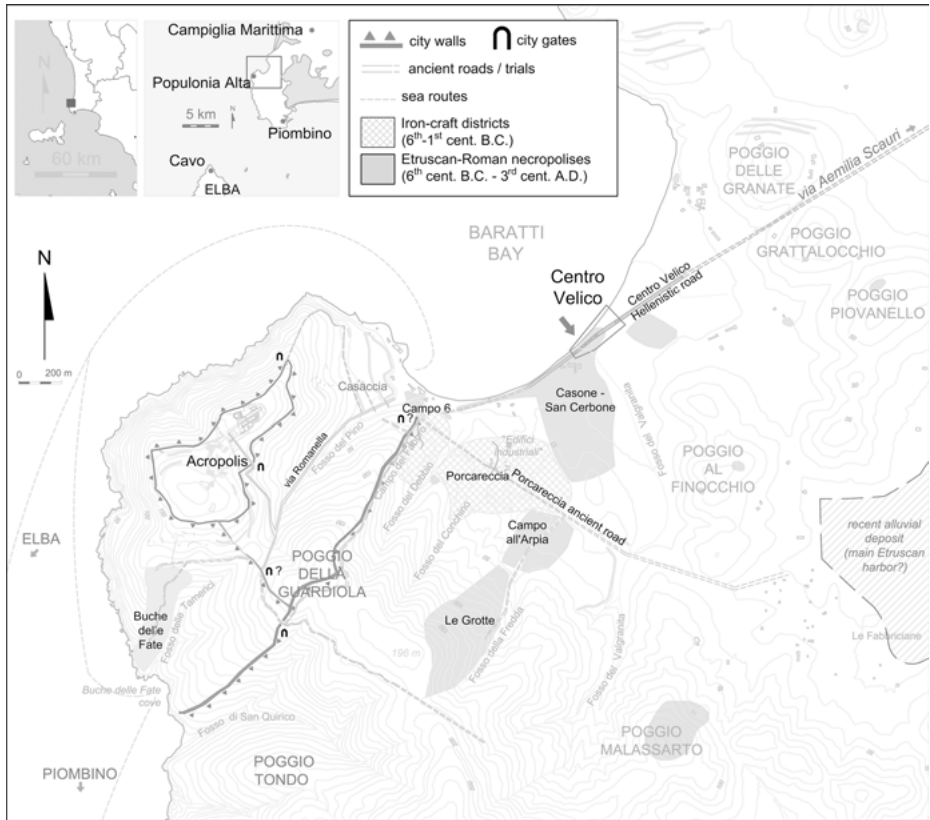
*Fetters around the ankles generally reflect a form of punishment which can be interpreted as being equivalent to strong subordination in ancient times. Shackles led to the further loss of freedom and movement of an individual probably already belonging to the margins of society. To be buried with shackles could either reflect a lack of care, or more likely the need and will to manifest the condition of subordination, even in the afterlife.*

## 1 The Discovery

The surveys, conducted from 2008 to 2016, involved a peripheral portion of the Casone and San Cerbone necropolis (Fig. 1), the main funeral area of the ancient city of Populonia; the areas of excavation were located in between the pinewood and the beach, right in front of Centro Velico Piombinese.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Giorgio Baratti, “Un sito per la produzione del sale sulla spiaggia di Baratti (area Centro Velico) alla fine dell’Età del Bronzo,” in *Materiali per Populonia*, vol. 9, ed. Giorgio Baratti and Fabio Fabiani (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2010): 234–60; Cristina Chiaramonte Trerè, “Golfo di Baratti, Area Centro Velico: scavi 2008,” in *Materiali per Populonia*, vol. 9, ed. Giorgio Baratti and Fabio Fabiani (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2010): 216–28; Lucia Mordeglia and Lia La Terra, “Gli scavi del 2009 dell’Università di Milano nel Golfo di Baratti, area Centro Velico,” in *Materiali per Populonia*, vol. 10, ed. Giulia Facchin and Matteo Milletti (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2011): 185–200; Giorgio Baratti, “Nuovi dati dagli scavi nella pineta del Casone e considerazioni sull’evoluzione dell’area tra età del bronzo ed età romana,” in *Materiali per Populonia*, vol. 11, ed. Valeria Di Cola and Federica Pitzalis (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2015): 211–26; Giorgio Baratti and Martina Sciortino, “Piombino (LI), Golfo di Baratti, Pineta del Casone: Area del Centro Velico



**Fig. 1:** Map of the Populonia-Baratti area showing Etruscan burial sites (Casone – San Cerbone, Le Grotte, Poggio Malassarto, Buche delle Fate).

piombinese (campagne 2014–2015),” *Notiziario SBAT 2015* (2016): 329–31. Specific bibliography about the finding of the Fettered Man: Giorgio Baratti, “Sepolto incatenato tra le dune di Baratti: Dallo scavo alla mostra,” in *Costruire il passato in Etruria: Il senso dell’archeologia nella società contemporanea* (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2018): 95–101. Giorgio Baratti, “Milano a Populonia: le ricerche delle università milanesi,” in *Il viaggio della chimera: Gli Etruschi a Milano tra archeologia e collezionismo*, ed. Giulio Paolucci and Anna Provenzali (Milano: Johan & Levi editore, 2018): 143–47, 286 (Scheda di catalogo 126. Corredo della tomba 73). Giorgio Baratti, “Uno sguardo su Populonia alla luce delle ricerche nel golfo di Baratti e le nuove ricerche a Campo Sei,” in *Ricerca, valorizzazione e management: tra passato e futuro del Parco archeologico di Baratti e Populonia*, ed. Marta Coccoluto (Firenze: Edifir, 2021): 113–22. Fundamental bibliography for analysis and comparison: Frederick Hugh Thompson, “Iron Age and Roman Slave-Shackles,” *The Archaeological Journal* 150, no. 1 (1993): 57–168; Frederick Hugh Thompson, “Fetters on the Wall,” *The Antiquaries Journal* 74 (1994): 12–15; Frederick Hugh Thompson, *The Archaeology of Greek and Roman Slavery* (London: Duckworth, 2003); Pier Giovanni Guzzo, “Ceppi in ferro da sepolture e da santuari (VIII–I sec. a.C.): Problemi di interpretazione,” *Aristonothos* 16 (2020): 127–202.

The shackle-bound skeleton, buried in Tomb 76, had a southwest/northeast orientation, with the cranium placed at the southwest end (Fig. 2). Around the ankles of the man were two thick, heavy iron rings; in the burial fill, another curved, semi-circular, and hook-shaped iron element with a square section was found. This item, found in the southwest superficial portion of the grave, could possibly be another part of the constraint system applied to the Fettered Man. Finally, on the man's left hand, there was a thin iron ring (for a catalogue of the findings from Tomb 76, see Appendix 1).



Fig. 2: Centro Velico, Tomb 76.

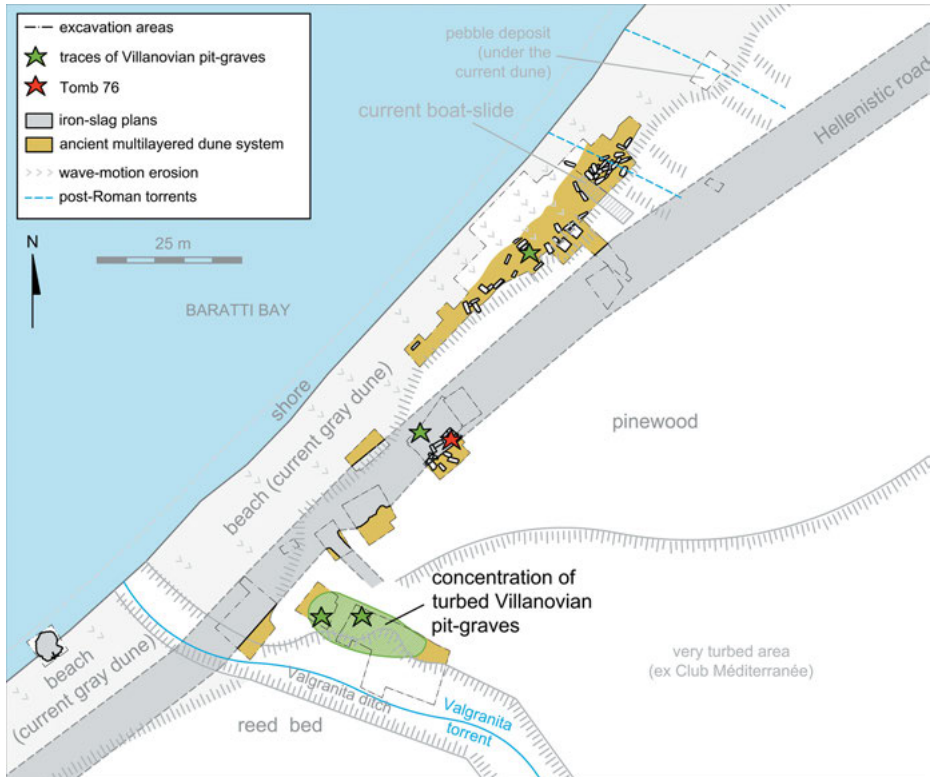
## 2 The Context and its History

Tomb 76 can be securely dated to the time before the middle of the fourth century BC. The first archaeological evidence known from this area can be dated to the period between the thirteenth and the tenth centuries BC (Late Bronze Age), and it consists of traces of a furnace meant for the production of salt loaves.<sup>2</sup> The area was then abandoned, and the environment changed; the plain, which had previously contained lagoons, was covered by a dune system.<sup>3</sup> Then, at least from the first decades of the

<sup>2</sup> Baratti, “Un sito per la produzione del sale”: 237–54.

<sup>3</sup> Baratti, “Nuovi dati dagli scavi”: 211–26. Giorgio Baratti, “Nuovi spunti per una ricostruzione del contesto della città bassa di Populonia alla luce dei nuovi scavi,” in *Paesaggi urbani e rurali in trasformazione: Contesti e dinamiche insediative alla luce del dato archeologico*, *Atti della Giornata di Studi dei Dottorandi in Archeologia* (Pisa, 22 novembre 2019), ed. Fabio Fabiani and Gabriele Gattiglia (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2021): 12–24.

seventh century BC, the yellow sand dunes started to be used as a funeral area. The oldest traces of burials comprise one or maybe two groups of cremation pit-graves (Phase 1, Orientalizing period); afterwards (sixth century BC), the land was incorporated into the Casone and San Cerbone necropolis (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 3:** Plant of the site of Centro Velico (Etruscan – Roman period).

From that moment on, three different chronological phases are clearly distinguishable in this funeral complex: Phase 2 (circa sixth–mid-fifth century BC), Phase 3 (circa mid-fifth–mid-/late third century BC), and Phase 4 (from the mid-/late third century BC to the second century AD at least).

In Phase 3, which is from the High Hellenistic period, the previous tomb orientation is no longer respected, and we can use the burial direction as a possible dating tool in combination with the findings of grave goods. The last phase of the necropolis is the late Hellenistic and Roman period, and the dividing line between these last two phases is the presence of an impressive road structure, which has been identified in different surveys. This road was built at the beginning of the Romanisation, around the middle or in the second half of the third century BC, and was probably meant to

link Populonia with the *Via Aemilia Scauri*.<sup>4</sup> The particular building technique for the massive road consisted of the reuse of the metallurgical waste, which was easy to find in such an industrial place.

### 3 The Chronology of Tomb 76

The Fettered Man had clearly been buried before the building of the road: Tomb 76 was found under the southern edge of the roadway. Even if there are no other dating elements, as no grave goods have been found in his tomb, the stratigraphy helps us best to rebuild the chronology of this finding, thanks to another burial (Tomb 73) that cuts the earlier Tomb 76 (Fig. 4).<sup>5</sup>

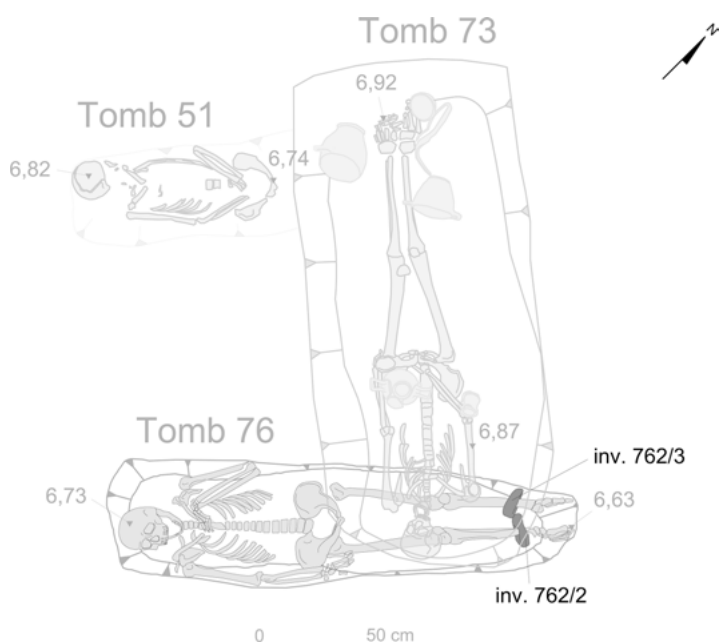


Fig. 4: Plant of Tombs 51, 73, 76.

The funerary kit found in Tomb 73 provides us with a reliable *terminus ante quem* for Tomb 76, which is around the middle of the fourth century BC. According to the burial orientation, we can probably date Tomb 76 more accurately to the Archaic or Late Archaic period (Phase 2).

4 Baratti, “Nuovi dati dagli scavi”: 221–26; Baratti, “Uno sguardo su Populonia”: 117–20.

5 Baratti, “Milano a Populonia”: 286.

## 4 Anthropological Analysis

After the cleaning and restoration of the skeletal remains, the biological profile was reconstructed according to methods commonly suggested by the literature. Sexing was performed by applying both morphological and metric methods,<sup>6</sup> whereas age at death was assessed by evaluating the state of fusion of the epiphyses and the dental eruption and formation, as well as the morphological changes in the pubic symphysis.<sup>7</sup> Stature was estimated by measuring the maximum length of the long bones and applying the formulae described by Trotter and Gleser.<sup>8</sup> Finally, ancestry was analysed by considering both anthroposcopic (using the OSSA and Hefner applications)<sup>9</sup> and anthropometric methods, and also through the software Fordisc in the second case.<sup>10</sup>

Skeletal remains were further examined carefully at a macroscopic level in order to identify signs of possible pathology and/or trauma which occurred in a period before, after, or at the moment of death.<sup>11</sup>

The bone elements showing paleopathological and/or traumatic signs were compared with findings in the modern literature, especially those in clinical and epidemiological studies<sup>12</sup> and forensic anthropological data,<sup>13</sup> in order to describe the scenario more accurately and in detail.

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6 Angi M. Christensen et al., *Forensic Anthropology: Current Methods and Practice* (London: Academic Press, 2014); Phillip L. Walker, "Sexing Skulls Using Discriminant Function Analysis of Visually Assessed Traits," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 136, no. 1 (2008): 39–50; Phillip L. Walker, "Greater Sciatic Notch Morphology: Sex, Age, and Population Differences," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 127, no. 4 (2005): 385–91.

7 Erin H. Kimmerle et al., "Analysis of Age-at-Death Estimation through the Use of Pubic Symphyseal Data," *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 53, no. 3 (2008): 558–68; C. Owen Lovejoy et al. "Chronological Metamorphosis of the Auricular Surface of the Ilium: A New Method for the Determination of Adult Skeletal Age at Death," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 68 (1985): 15–28.

8 Mildred Trotter and Goldine C. Gleser, "A Re-Evaluation of Estimation of Stature Based on Measurements of Stature Taken during Life and of Long Bones after Death," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 16, no. 1 (1958): 79–123.

9 Joseph T. Hefner and Stephen D. Ousley, "Statistical Classification Methods for Estimating Ancestry Using Morphoscopic Traits," *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 59, no. 4 (2014): 883–90; Joseph T. Hefner, "Cranial Nonmetric Variation and Estimating Ancestry," *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 54, no. 5 (2009): 985–95.

10 Richard L. Jantz and Stephen D. Ousley, *FORDISC 3.0: Personal Computer Forensic Discriminant Functions* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 2015).

11 Charlotte Roberts and Keith Manchester, *The Archaeology of Disease*, 3rd ed. (Cheltenham: History Press, 2010); Jane E. Buikstra, ed., *Ortner's Identification of Pathological Conditions in Human Skeletal Remains* (London: Academic Press, 2019).

12 Dan L. Longo et al., *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, vol. 2 (London: McGraw-Hill, 2011).

13 Norman J. Sauer, "The Timing of Injuries and Manner of Death: Distinguishing among Antemortem, Perimortem and Postmortem Trauma," in *Forensic Osteology: Advances in the Identification of*

After the analyses, it was seen that the bones belonged to an adult male (based on skull and pelvis characteristics), age at death was between 35 and 44 years (based on the auricular surface and pubic symphysis morphology), and that he was 173 cm tall and of African ancestry. The results obtained through the OSSA<sup>14</sup> and Hefner<sup>15</sup> applications were used for this diagnosis. There were signs of occupational stress on the arms, shoulders, and back, as well as healed fractures on the fingers that had been produced several years before death, which indicate the heavy use of the upper limbs.

The iron rings must have been applied to the ankles not too long before the man's death, since the bones did not present signs of alteration due to the long-term presence of shackles or of infection due to lesions produced by their presence.

## 5 The Necropolis, the Area of Centro Velico, and Similar Contexts

As already mentioned, the area of Centro Velico was meant to be the offshoot of a major necropolis, called Casone and San Cerbone, and most tombs in it can be dated to the Hellenistic phase. Among the nine Archaic or Late Archaic burials contemporary to that of the Fettered Man, only four offer items of clothing and accessories of non-perishable material as grave goods.

In this phase, the low number of tombs, the total lack of remarkable grave goods, and the peripheral position could allow us to consider geographical marginality as a possible reflection of social factors. Since the tombs are in a peripheral sector of the necropolis, they may be occupied by people who were on the margins of Populonian society.

There are no other examples – at least for now – of burials from Etruscan necropolises with such means of constraint, and that is why it represents a unique case. However, similar findings (formal burials of fettered men) from almost the same period have been attested in some Greek necropolises, both in Greece and Southern Italy. In the Buonfornello necropolis in Himera, three different graves with shackled bodies were found: a man, a boy, and a woman with fetters around the ankles dating back from the end of the sixth to the end of the fifth century BC (Tombs W2831, W2832, and

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*Human Remains*, ed. Kathleen J. Reichs and William M. Bass (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1998): 321–31.

14 Hefner and Ousley, “Estimating Ancestry Using Morphoscopic Traits.”

15 Hefner, “Estimating Ancestry”; application developed by João d'Oliveira Coelho and David Navega.

W2466).<sup>16</sup> According to the interpretation of the other burials in the necropolis, this could actually be an area reserved for the lowest social classes. No grave goods were found, and the three individuals were recognized as slaves by the authors.

Another example comes from Passo Marinaro in Camarina (Tomb 839), a funeral context where an adult male was buried with fetters around the ankles.<sup>17</sup> The feet were close to each other, and that could testify that the movement of this individual was really limited. A black painted cup dates the burial to the middle of the fifth century BC, and it is the only element contained in the funerary kit.

In Phthiotic Thebes, Tomb 3 from the Hellenistic necropolis contained a man with shackles around his ankles.<sup>18</sup> The two rings were connected to a third smaller one through two linking elements.

The most extraordinary context comes from the necropolis of Akanthos in Ierisos.<sup>19</sup> Here, twelve tombs of people with fetters around their ankles were found. The tombs did not contain any grave goods, and the burials were apparently not connected to each other. The shackles were of different types: The best-preserved specimen has rings joined by a link or multiple metal links; the others are ankle rings composed of round-section bars or flat strips with their ends overlapping or simply butt-jointed, with no metal link between the two round elements. These individuals were identified by the authors as prisoners who had been sent to labour, the ones caught by Alexander the Great during the Battle of the Granicus (334 BC).

It is necessary to admit here that individuals who are buried with means of restriction may have been identified as the burials of slaves or prisoners in an arbitrary manner, leaving room for reasonable doubt. It is also clear, however, that the hypothesis that they are slaves, although sometimes a priori, seems to be the best interpretation to date, as supported by iconographic and historiographical sources (see here subchapters 7 and 8).

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**16** Stefano Vassallo, "Himera: Indagini nella necropoli (con appendice di Matteo Valentino)," in *Tra Etruria, Lazio e Magna Grecia: indagini sulle necropoli*, ed. Raffaella Bonaudo et al. (Paestum: Pandemus, 2009): 233–60; Stefano Vassallo, "Indigeni ad Himera? Il ruolo dei Sicani nelle vicende della colonia," in *Segni di appartenenza e identità di comunità nel mondo indigeno*, ed. Bianca Ferrara and Giovanna Greco (Napoli: Naus Editoria, 2014): 355–68; Guzzo, "Ceppi in ferro": 151–52.

**17** Giovanni Di Stefano and Giorgia Tulumello, "Dati preliminari sulle sepolture infantili della necropoli di Camarina – Passo Marinaro (RG, Sicilia): Scavi 1980–1983," in *Una favola breve: archeologia e antropologia per la storia dell'infanzia*, ed. Claudia Lambrugo (Sesto Fiorentino: All'insegna del Giglio, 2019): 87–90; Guzzo, "Ceppi in ferro": 152.

**18** Evanhélia Deilaki, "Epiphoreia Klassikou archaiotitou Bolou," *Archaiologikon Deltion* 29, no. 2, 2 (1973–1974): 548–49; Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 222; Guzzo, "Ceppi in ferro": 152–53.

**19** Panagiotis Faklaris, "The Fettered Men of Acanthus," *Archaiologika analekta ex Athenon* 19 (1986): 178–84; Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 222; Guzzo, "Ceppi in ferro": 154–57.



A more recent case (dated to the second–first century BC) is the burial of a woman with shackles around the ankles, attested in the Vallon du Fou in Martigues, France.<sup>20</sup> She was not found in a necropolis, but in an isolated context far from the known inhabited area, so it cannot be considered as a formal burial as the other examples.

More findings of fetters in burials have in fact been confirmed for the pre-Roman period, but in those cases, there are some interpretation problems or a lack of stratigraphical information, and the exact position of the shackles is unknown.<sup>21</sup>

## 6 The Constraint System

The type of shackles from Populonia (Fig. 5, 6, 8) appears to be technically simpler than the ones later and better attested from the Roman period, and even in comparison to the technically more complex examples from the Iron Age (all catalogued by Frederick Hugh Thompson in 1993).<sup>22</sup>

They consist of two iron bars that are “O”-shaped, open, and with overlapping and flattened ends. After the restoration, little holes were found at the ends of the bars; the part of the shackles joining the two rings was not conserved – or rather, it had not been buried with the body. Either it was made of perishable material, or the connecting element was re-used on other people and had been removed before the burial. Yet, it could be possible that the two fetters were used alone, without any linking element, to make it difficult to walk, or even to run.

The only resemblance with the specimens from Thompson’s catalogue may be the “without parallel” shackle from Sanzeno (92) no. 1289, which has perforated, flattened, zoomorphic heads and looks similar to the following comparisons.<sup>23</sup>

The fetters from Populonia are resemblant to the above-mentioned type  $\beta$  of the classification made by Panagiotis Faklaris for the shackles found on the fettered men in the necropolis of Akanthos.<sup>24</sup>

The “Akanthos  $\beta$ ” type has mainly been found in burials from Classic and Hellenistic times. However, some findings have been documented in sacred areas as well. For example, a pair of iron ankle rings of the same kind and dated to the early fourth

<sup>20</sup> Sandrine Duval, “La défunte aux entraves: L’inhumation d’une esclave de la fin de l’âge du Fer,” in *Préhistoires Méditerranéennes* 14 (2008): 19–27; Guzzo, “Ceppi in ferro”: 169.

<sup>21</sup> For these further examples, see Guzzo, “Ceppi in ferro” and Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 217–38.

<sup>22</sup> Thompson “Slave-Shackles”: 151–64.

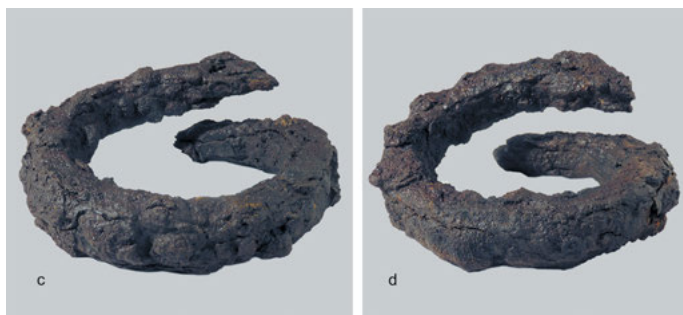
<sup>23</sup> Thompson “Slave-Shackles”: 88–97.

<sup>24</sup> Faklaris, “The Fettered Men of Acanthus”: 179, see fig. 1.

century BC has been found in a pit in the Shrine of Demeter in Policoro.<sup>25</sup> They were open and are interpreted as an offer to the goodness by a freed man to celebrate his release.



**Fig. 5:** Fetters from Tomb 76, after restoration (c–d. inv. 762.2 and inv. 762.3; see Fig. 8) – view from above.



**Fig. 6:** Fetters from Tomb 76, after restoration (c–d. inv. 762.2 and inv. 762.3; see Fig. 8) – lateral view.

Another resemblance with the fetters from Populonia can be seen in the shackles documented in Gallo-Roman contexts, between Late La Tène and the second–first century BC;<sup>26</sup> an example would be the finding from Martigues, where the ends of one shackle appear to be jointed and bonded hot by riveting on the ankle of the individual.

The constraint system found in Tomb 76 could be composed by other items. Indeed, a dark and limited spot was documented on the sand right behind the neck of

<sup>25</sup> Guzzo, “Ceppi in ferro”: 162–64, with further bibliography; see page 201, fig. 26–27. These fetters are meant as manacles in Frederick Hugh Thompson’s interpretation: Thompson, “Slave-Shackles”: 152 (catalogued as no. 11).

<sup>26</sup> Duval, “La défunte aux entraves”: 19–27; see fig. 7–9.

the man, which may be a sign of a decomposed wooden object, such as a collar or even a sort of pillory.<sup>27</sup> In fact, the hook-shaped iron fragment (Fig. 7, 8), found just above the cranium, could be comparable with the pointed-ended metal cramps used in Phaleros, Athens (circa 650–625 BC), to hang the bodies of the waiting-the-death convicts onto wooden planks.<sup>28</sup> This form of brutal capital punishment was recognised as the custom of *apotympanismos*.<sup>29</sup>

All the iron findings from Tomb 76, including the iron ring (Fig. 7, 8), were analysed using ED-XRF techniques (see table in Appendix 2). The results have shown compatibility with regionally sourced material (such as those from Rio Marina mines on Elba Island or the Campiglia Marittima and Massa Marittima mines). Despite this, since some of the trace elements clearly referable to this mineralization are missing, more in-depth analysis is required.<sup>30</sup>



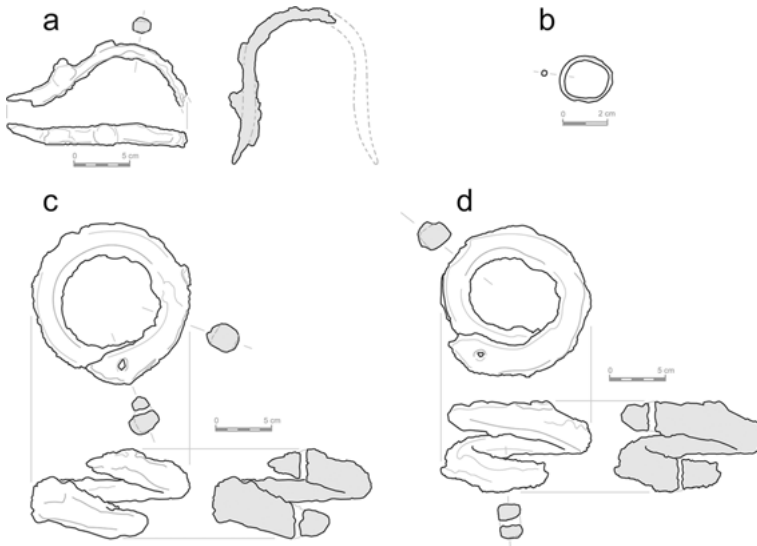
**Fig. 7:** Iron fragment (of a collar or a pillory? a. inv. 753.1) and digital ring (b. inv. 762.1) from Tomb 76 (see Fig. 8).

<sup>27</sup> A sort of ancient pillory could be attested by a black painted figuration on a crater from Cerveteri attributed to Ophelandros Painter (Pier Giovanni Guzzo, “Rappresentazione di ceppi su vasi corinzi e attici,” *Aristonothos* 17 (2021): 131–49).

<sup>28</sup> Thompson, “Slave-Shackles”: 140; Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 122; Guzzo, “Ceppi in ferro”: 133–35.

<sup>29</sup> Eva Cantarella, *I supplizi capitali: Origine e funzioni delle pene di morte in Grecia e Roma* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 2011): 124–32, with previous bibliography.

<sup>30</sup> Giulia Ruschioni, “Termografia IR e analisi XRF per la caratterizzazione del corredo dell’uomo in ceppi di Baratti” (bachelor’s thesis, Università degli studi di Milano, 2018/2019). Further information about signatures of iron ores from Elba Island: Marco Benvenuti et al., “The Tungsten and Tin Signature of Iron Ores from Elba Island (Italy): A Tool for Provenance Studies of Iron Production in the Mediterranean Region,” *Archaeometry* 55, no. 3 (2013): 479–506.



**Fig. 8:** The findings from Tomb 76: a. inv. 753.1 (fragment of a collar or a pillory?); b. inv. 762.1 (digital ring); c–d. inv. 762.2 and inv. 762.3 (fettters).

## 7 The Use of Means of Constraint in Antiquity

What we know about the use of shackles comes from both iconographical and written sources, which are informative, especially about Greek and Roman society in the Classical period. Nevertheless, they can also help to counter the lack of information about the Etruscan world and provide us with a wider point of view.<sup>31</sup> Apart from the written sources, which are inevitably lacking for Etruscan society, iconography helps us to understand more effectively the aim of the different means of constraint. Both its material and the part of the body tied by the constraint can define a different kind of constriction. First, the use of perishable materials, such as ropes or leather elements, may suggest a short-term constriction due to their durability. The best example is the rope represented in most of the figurative scenes about war prisoners on Roman monuments. Indeed, war captivity never represents a long-lasting condition because it is not a cost-effective solution.<sup>32</sup> Rather, the prisoners were killed (to show strength), used as bargaining chips with the enemies (to get something back), or – more fre-

<sup>31</sup> Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 217–25.

<sup>32</sup> Alain Testart, *L'institution de l'esclavage: Une approche mondiale: Édition révisée et complétée par Valérie Lécivain* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2018): 58–72.

quently – enslaved (a lot of prisoners, enslaved after a war, guaranteed economic and social enrichment to the society that held them).

In contrast, when iron chains are represented, such as those at the base of a column from a monument in Mainz<sup>33</sup> and on the grave relief from Nickenich,<sup>34</sup> the constraint condition of the chained men appears to be final. Even if this is not a strict rule, because there can be parts of a permanent means of constraint that are made of perishable material, iron chains still better suggest a permanent condition. Also, for this reason, the iron rings around the Fettered Man's ankles can signify at least a mid- or long-term constraint.

The kind of bond says much about the condition of the bounding, too. Again, iconography helps us to define the function and the aim of the different constraint tools. When the wrists are bound, the man is usually a prisoner that has just been caught, should probably be taken somewhere else, and, especially, must walk on his own legs. War prisoners, when caught, were represented with their wrists bound, both in front of the body or behind their backs.

When more people were bound and had to be moved together, then they were bound by the neck using collars or by their wrists, but they were usually linked to one another to prevent them from escaping. Several captured enemies or slaves (for example, during the sale) were presented in a row, one attached to the other, and they would usually move under the guide of a man that kept the rope or the chain in his hands. An example of this use can be found in the lowest register of the stele from Amphipolis, now at the Kavala Museum, where a row of bound people, tied at the neck, is represented going towards the right, led by a man that has the rope in his hands.<sup>35</sup>

The third type of bond, the one of interest to us here, concerns the feet: it is the one that most limited the movements. Iron fetters were probably some of the strongest constraint tools, allowing someone to use their body but preventing them from fleeing. Furthermore, more than one system could be used at the same time to ensure greater constraint, and this happened specifically under the condition of imprisonment.

Iconographic sources seem to attribute fetters to people recognized as slaves or the condemned. Fetters prevented the wearer from walking away and were probably used for several reasons, which we could better understand through written sources,

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33 Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 34–39, see page 38, fig. 8; Michele George, “Slavery and Roman Material Culture,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1, *The Ancient Mediterranean World*, ed. Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 399–400, see page 401, fig. 18, 5.

34 Jeanne-Nora Andrikopoulou-Strack, *Grabbauten des 1. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. im Rheingebiet: Untersuchungen zu Chronologie und Typologie* (Cologne: Rheinland-Verlag, 1986): 179; Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 40, fig. 9.

35 Jacques Roger, “Inscriptions de la région du Strymon,” *Revue Archéologique* 24 (1945): 49, fig. 8; Giuseppe Pucci, “Detrahis vestimenta venalibus,” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005): 235–40.

too. Limiting the movement of the ankles, as far as the Classical period is concerned, is normally a form of punishment associated with the lower members of society. They are in fact often mentioned as a form of punishment for slaves, especially ex-war prisoners who were subsequently enslaved. The use of shackles as a means of constraint for the ankles and legs, apart from their use on slaves, has been attested as a punishment for free men both in Athens and in Rome. It has also been established as a punishment for thieves in Attica by Lysias and Demosthenes, but it seems to be a harsher penalty and was only imposed when agreed to by the *Heliaia* (the supreme court of ancient Athens). In this case, the bond would have been limited in time (five days and nights).<sup>36</sup> One of the earliest Latin mentions of *compedes* (shackles) should probably be dated to the Twelve Tables, in Gellius's reconstruction:<sup>37</sup> there, the practice of chaining the ankles was reserved for debtors that could not pay the money back. As a matter of fact, such a constraint seems to be the worsening of a punishment.

In the ancient times, being bound and imprisoned was rarely the penalty itself; it was rather a moment of transition between the catch and the actual sentence. One could be sentenced to death, to hard labour, to the payment of a fine, or to slavery, but the only moment in which a man was imprisoned was a short phase in the process that took place before the actual sentence; it was not the penalty itself. According to ancient written sources, especially in the Roman tradition, slaves who had tried to flee were punished by obligating them to wear fetters during daily activities. Also, prisoners of war, when enslaved, could be chained and limited in their movement in order to prevent them from fleeing.<sup>38</sup>

## 8 Conclusion

We can assume that the constrained status of the Fettered Man was a mid- or long-term condition because the shackles were buried with him, even if he probably had not worn them long before he died, as the anthropological analysis suggests.

The man could have been part of the lower class of society, since – as far as we are informed – it appears that this kind of punishment was not applied to the upper classes (who were instead obliged to pay a fine or to go into exile); being obliged to wear such means of constraint was for sure considered demeaning for the upper members of society and for this reason could have been reserved for the lower members.

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<sup>36</sup> See Lys. 10, 16 and Dem. 24, 105.

<sup>37</sup> See Gell. 20, 1, 42–44 (*Tabula* III, 1–6).

<sup>38</sup> An analysis of these sources is in Thompson, *Greek and Roman Slavery*: 78–102, with further bibliography.

In the Greek world, constraint was strictly connected to punishment, both for the free and the unfree. We can then assume that whoever the man was, a slave or a free-man, he was under some sort of punishment. Since he does not present signs of occupational stress on the legs, he may not have been used as a part of the workforce for the heavier activities, at least not for a long time before his death.

So, the constraint system used on the man consisted of the two preserved shackles and something missing – the linking element that would have effectively prevented the movement of the man. Since it was not preserved in the Fettered Man's grave, we shall presume that it was either made of perishable material, or it was removed before the burial.

The aim of the study was to define the possible condition of a man that had been bound with shackles before death, rather than why he had been buried with them, because it would be difficult to prove it as a voluntary action or as an act of negligence. For sure the man had been buried with the means of constraint because he had them, at least for a short period before his death. As already said, shackles are a means of constraint used as a punishment for the lower classes of society: for slaves or, for example, for debtors (in the Roman Twelve Tables), or even for thieves (in Classical Athens).

The Fettered Man was either (1) a free man serving his sentence or, less probably, with a pending sentence, (2) an enslaved man or ex-war prisoner sentenced to hard labour, or (3) a slave under some sort of punishment. Moreover, if the shackles had been applied to a free man, it would have to be discussed if the means of constraint was just an imprisonment awaiting a sentence (1) or the punishment itself (2).

Since iron fetters are usually – if not always – associated with mid- or long-term punishment, the second option may be better; although, as already said, anthropological analysis suggests that the fetters were put on his body not too long before his death. If the shackles were the punishment, they should have been associated with a physical activity to which the man had been condemned, or rather the man should have kept doing his own job with the fetters on, which would have made it harder. They were in fact a way to prevent people from fleeing and to oblige them to work. If the man was already a non-free person (3) – that is, a slave – still putting the fetters to his ankles must have served as a sort of punishment, and again as a sentence to a harder form of slavery.

Even if it is not possible to find an unequivocal solution, a man buried in such a peripheral area, in a formal context, and with such means of constraint is to be seen as marginal to society, probably subjected to some sort of punishment for something he had done during his life as a freeman or as a slave. In the Latin *damnatio ad metalla*, the condemned people became *ipso facto* slaves of their own *poena*. Being buried with fetters suggests that the man was, if not a slave himself, in a condition like slavery, and that he must have been perceived by society in that way, even after his death.

Yet he had the right to have a formal burial and was not found, for example, in a mass grave (such as the ones in Pydna, in which fetters and chains were found among several skeletons).<sup>39</sup> Even if from a completely different context, Latin and Greek sources show us that a formal burial was not denied to slaves or to condemned people.<sup>40</sup>

The fact that anthropological analyses have returned probable African ancestry allows us take a step forward and think of the man as an outsider in anthropological terms. In social anthropology, slaves are normally considered as outsiders,<sup>41</sup> brought to a new society to perform activities that the members of that society find demeaning or too heavy. Even if we cannot verify the statements about the life of this individual in the absence of further evidence, the suggestion is clear. The man could possibly be perceived as – and could actually be – an outsider to the society, at least at the moment of his death, as he appears to have been subjected to some sort of punishment for the actions he had committed, as testified by the presence of the fetters.

## Appendix 1

Catalogue of the findings from Centro Velico, Tomb 76

1. Fragment of an unidentified object (Fig. 7 a)  
Iron fragment (of a collar or a pillory?), with a curved, hooked shape and a square section. Extensive traces of oxidation and corrosion.  
Inventory number: 753.1. Thickness: 1.0–1.6 cm.
2. Digital ring (Fig. 7 b)  
Iron digital ring with a square section. Extensive traces of oxidation and corrosion.  
Inventory number: 762.1. Maximum diameter: 2.3 cm. Thickness: 2.0 mm.
3. Fetter (Fig. 5 c; Fig. 6 c)  
Open-ended iron fetter, with a square section bar; overlapped and quite flattened ends; a through-hole is located on each termination. Extensive traces of oxidation and corrosion.  
Inventory number: 762.2.  
Maximum diameter: 14.0 cm. Thickness: 2.1–2.3 cm. Weight: circa 1.5 kg.

<sup>39</sup> For the burials in Pydna: see Matthaïos Bessios and Sevi Triantophyllou, “A Mass Grave in the North Cemetery of Ancient Pydna,” *To archaiologiko ergo ste Makedonia kai Thrake* 14 (2000): 393; Duval, “La défunte aux entraves”: 10; Guzzo, “Ceppi in ferro”: 157–60, with further bibliography. For the burials in Athens: Louis Gernet, *Anthropologie de la Grèce antique* (Paris: Maspéro, 1968): 302–29; Guzzo, “Ceppi in ferro”: 133–35, with further bibliography.

<sup>40</sup> See Dem. 43, 58; Jean Christian Dumont, “La mort de l’esclave,” in *La mort, les morts et l’au-delà dans le monde romain*, ed. François Hinard (Caen: Presses universitaires de Caen, 1987): 184–85 and Duval, “La défunte aux entraves”: 24–26.

<sup>41</sup> Alain Testart, *L’institution de l’esclavage*: 58–72; Fabio Viti, *Schiavi, servi e dipendenti: Antropologia delle forme di dipendenza personale in Africa* (Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2007): 1–35.



## 4. Fetter (Fig. 5 d; Fig. 6 d)

Open-ended iron fetter, with a square section bar; overlapped and quite flattened ends; a through-hole is located on each termination. Extensive traces of oxidation and corrosion.

Inventory number: 762.3.

Maximum diameter: 13.6 cm. Thickness: 2.0–2.5 cm. Weight: circa 1.5 kg.

## Appendix 2

**Tab. 1:** Table of XRF analysis results.<sup>42</sup> The values are expressed in percentages; the Fe/Zn ratio is provided in the last column.

		Ca	Fe	W	Zn	Pb	Fe/Zn
Fetter 762.2	a	6.58	21.70	trace	1.04		20.89
	b	3.06	50.27	trace	0.93		54.16
	c		51.21				/
	d		63.70				/
	e	13.29	22.62	trace	3.58		6.33
	f	6.90	24.99	trace	1.97		12.71
	g	7.34	19.45		2.28		8.52
	h	1.72	27.55		0.15		189.64
	i	12.29	9.63		0.79		12.18
Fetter 762.3	a		63.16	0.08	0.81		78.31
	b		57.21	trace	1.00		57.15
Digital ring 762.1	a	1.03	11.58				/
Fragment 753.1	a	12.55	28.16	trace	0.81	0.05	34.87
	b	12.07	26.80	1.31	trace		/

<sup>42</sup> Data from Ruschioni, *Termografia IR e analisi XRF*.

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