

**Veterans' Identity, Memory and Networks of Powers.
The case of Northern Etruria in the Roman Empire
(centuries 1st- 3rd AD)**

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Even if writers of the Ciceronian age first used the term *veteranus* to describe a discharged soldier, more frequently, it was an adjective used for long-term service soldier in opposition to *miles*, the newly recruit. One of the main problems to investigate the themes of identity and political involvement of Roman veterans is related to the absence of the title *veteranus* from epitaphs. Thus, it is very often quite difficult to distinguish discharged officers from those still serving. Despite this, the theme of veterans' identity and political power in the provinces of the Roman Empire received growing attention from scholars since the last decades of the nineteenth centuries.

This paper aims to show that the case of northern Etruria, which appears under-investigated, actively contributes to a better understanding of the themes of the veteran's identity, memory, and control of local policies during Roman times. Through a comparative and flexible approach to the category of 'veterans', comprising in this group also the experienced soldiers for whom there is no epigraphic attestation of their military career, the paper will demonstrate that traditional interpretations could be updated and reassessed. Taking into account the archaeological and epigraphic evidence, iconography and prosopography, from the main centres of Roman Northern Etruria (Arezzo, Chiusi, Fiesole, Firenze, Lucca, Pisa, Siena, Volterra), it will be possible to underline different phenomena related to the proud display of veterans' identity and virtues, as well as more latent networks among political and family strategies aimed at the benefit of private agendas. The chronological period of the centuries 1st-3rd AD will be fundamental to highlight trends and developments critical to understand the importance of the northern Etruria case into the broader context of Roman Italy.

Keywords: Northern Etruria, Roman Italy, Veterans, Networks of power, Identity

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