Beyond the Artifact
Digital Interpretation of the Past

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Foreword

Franco Niccolucci and Sorin Hermon

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The present volume contains the proceeding of the CAA2004 Conference held in Prato, Italy, from 13 to 17 April 2004. The book is long overdue, and I – Franco Niccolucci – must apologize with the co-editor – Sorin Hermon – for sharing my fault, for which he bears no responsibility; and above all, apologies must go to all the authors and Conference attendees for such a long wait. There were various reasons for this, technical and personal, including our relocation to a different institution. Also the size of the volume and the amount of editorial work required contributed to the delay.

The Prato Conference was organized in parallel sessions. We sincerely thank the session chairs, who afterwards acted as review panel for the proceedings: Juan Antonio Barceló, Andrea Caiti, Maurizio Cattani, Jeffrey Clark, Andrea D’Andrea, Bernie Frischer, Maria Pia Guermandi, Pirjo Hamari, Hans Kamermans, Gary Lock, Clive Orton, Daniel Pletinckx, Nick Ryan, Donald Sanders, Apostolos Sarris, Uzi Smilansky, Sophia Topouzi, Luc Van Gool and Martijn van Leusen.

In the volume, the papers are grouped under the headings: “Archaeological Theory, Methods and Techniques”, “The Archaeological Record”, “Archaeological Landscapes and GIS Applications”, “Underwater Archaeology”, “Predictive Modelling”, “Visualization, 3D and Virtual Reconstructions”, “Quantitative Methods”, “Geophysics and Survey” and “Cultural Heritage Communication”. This organization reflects the Conference session structure.

The invited speakers were Amilcare Bietti, Gabriella Poggesi and Zoran Staničić. Profesoor Bietti passed away prematurely and we regret not having been able to collect his contribution in time. Zoran had just been nominated in 2004 to a prestigious position with the European Commission, where he still is, and gave a lecture on European perspectives of innovative applications to Cultural Heritage. The very interesting paper by Gabriella Poggesi and her colleagues on the discovery of an Etruscan city near the Conference venue, and the technologies used to facilitate investigations on it, opens the present volume, and establishes strong connections between the Prato territory, where the Conference took place, and the Conference subject, digital and quantitative applications.

As Conference organizers, we want to thank the local institutions that generously supported the Conference: the Prato Province, the Prato Municipality and PIN – Servizi Didattici e Scientifici per l’Università di Firenze.

Finally, we want to express our gratitude to the people in charge of organization and logistics: Achille Felicetti, Laura Grassi, Maria Chiara Milone, Ginevra Niccolucci, Cristina Pugi and Teresa Varricchio. The good memories that we hope most of you still have of the Prato event, are much more their merit than ours.

Prato – Nicosia, April 2009