



The Archaeological Institute of America
Lincoln/Omaha Society Presents



Etruscan Human Sacrifice In Myth and Ritual

Professor Nancy T. de Grummond
Florida State University

Sunday, September 11
2:00 pm
Abbott Lecture Hall, Joslyn Art Museum



All AIA lectures are free and open to the public. This event is sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Fine and Performing Arts, Creighton University.

Creighton
UNIVERSITY



Joslyn Art Museum

2200 Dodge Street
Omaha, NE 68102

Phone 402.342.3300
www.joslyn.org



The Archaeological Institute of America

Lincoln/Omaha Society

Etruscan Human Sacrifice In Myth and Ritual

Nancy T. de Grummond

Florida State University

Scholars have been reluctant to believe that the Etruscans practiced human sacrifice. There are many specific references in written sources and in representations of human sacrifice that have at one time or another been dismissed as not sufficient for determining if the Etruscans did in fact engage in this practice. Recent excavations in the monumental sacred area on the Pian di Civita at Tarquinia by the University of Milan (directed by M. Bonghi Jovino and G. Bagnasco Gianni) have proven once and for all that human sacrifice was indeed practiced by the Etruscans, through the discovery of a number of burials in this non-funerary context, of infants, children and adults. Some individuals were demonstrably "marginal" in society, as diseased, foreign or of lower social status. One child, an 8-year old, was decapitated and his feet placed at the base of and underneath a wall, evidently as a foundation deposit. A stone altar, a sacred building, and a ritual deposit of symbols of secular power (an axe, a shield and a *lituus* trumpet) were all part of the archaeological context in which the killings took place.

There are many representations in Etruscan mythic art that clearly depict human sacrifice. While the myths may show a kind of surrogate for actual killing, they nevertheless may reflect actual rituals and beliefs associated with such killing. This presentation assembles literary, archaeological and iconographical evidence to be studied anew with an open mind in order to determine what is most likely to have represented real sacrificial practice as opposed to fictional, exaggerated, symbolic, or mythological matter.

For more information:

Prof. Erin Walcek Averett
Resident Assistant Professor of Art History
Creighton University
402.280.2261
erinaverett@creighton.edu

Prof. Michael Hoff
Professor of Art History
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
402.472.5342
mhoff1@unl.edu