

**SEAC**



SOCIÉTÉ EUROPÉENNE POUR L'ASTRONOMIE DANS LA CULTURE

EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR ASTRONOMY IN CULTURE

# Astronomy in Past and Present Cultures

*Rome, 9-13 November 2015*

**ABSTRACTS BOOK**



LA CITTÀ DEL SOLE





**Società Italiana di Archeoastronomia**  
(SIA, Italian Archaeoastronomy Society)



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(Italian Astronomical Society)



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## FOREWORD

The European Society for Astronomy in Culture (SEAC; web site <http://www.archeoastronomy.org/>) is a professional association of scientists working in the field of Cultural Astronomy, including the interdisciplinary fields of Archaeoastronomy and Ethnoastronomy. In principle, past cultures should have been interested in all astronomical phenomena visible to the naked eye. However, it is obvious that some of these phenomena are so evident and linked to vital factors that it is difficult to believe they were ignored in any cultural context (see, e.g., Polcaro & Polcaro, 2009). The term “Archaeoastronomy” is currently used to define the studies concerning “what peoples throughout history and prehistory have made of the phenomena in the sky, how they used these phenomena and what role they played in their cultures” (Sinclair 2006), while Ethnoastronomy concerns the study of the influence of celestial phenomena on present day population folklore. To date, Archaeoastronomy, Ethnoastronomy and Historical Astronomy (the studies dedicated to recovering data of astrophysical interest from historical documents of pre-telescopic epoch, i.e. before the 17<sup>th</sup> century AD) are grouped as “Cultural Astronomy”. However, researchers in nearby fields of science like History of Astronomy and Mythology are also welcomed in SEAC conferences. Furthermore, the present day cultures are also strongly influenced by astronomy: these relationships are of course important topics of Cultural Astronomy and are usually discussed in SEAC conferences.

The filter for the acceptance of the memories to the SEAC Conferences is very tight: every communication submitted for presentation at the SEAC 2015 Conference in Rome was assessed, on the base of an extended abstract, by at least two professional international referees, an astronomer and a human scientist, expert in the specific field, being interdisciplinary

consensus a necessary condition of scientific proof in Cultural Astronomy (Murray, 1998). Certainly, before being accepted for publication in the proceedings, these works will be further evaluated, taking into account the discussions that they have raised at the conference and the opinion of the *Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry* referees. In any case, however, these abstracts present reasonable assumptions and they deserve to be taken into account by scholars who will deal in the future with these topics. For this reason, I believe that the accepted abstract merit publication on a real book.

Vito Francesco Polcaro  
Chair of SEAC 2015 Scientific Committee

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## A STONE OBSERVATORY AT BRIC PINARELLA (ITALY)

Mario Codebò, Henry de Santis,  
Gian Luca Pesce  
*Archeoastronomia Ligustica*

Some years ago at “Bric Pinarella” (i.e. Mount or Hill Pinarella, where Pinarella means pine tree), Finale Ligure, Savona, Italy, by the staff of the Archaeological Museum of Finale Ligure, a stone building was found in the thick of the wood little beneath the top of the hill. The building consists of:

- a stone, rectangular hut without roof (that probably crashed), partially collapsed;
- a couple of short standing stones, not aligned with the main axis of the hut and on its south side;
- a little, natural and pierced pillar, deliberately embedded into a natural rift of a slab-rock about m 30 far off the hut.

The building is in a resort very rich in archaeological finds, especially of Prehistoric Age (Codebò 1996; 1997; 1999; Del Lucchese 1987; Frondoni 1990; Maggi e Pastorino 1984; Odetti 1987a; 1987b; Priuli and Pucci 1994).

A scout hole by the Bureau of the Ligurian Archaeological Heritage did not allowed to date the monument by means finds, but according to the archaeological analysis of the walls and of their building technique, carried out by the archaeologist Dr. Gianluca Pesce, it seems “ancient”, although it is impossible to ascertain its age.

Thanks to information by Mr. Pino Piccardo, a member of the Association of the Friends of the Finale Museum, we studied the astronomical data of the building and we published our conclusions in the Proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> S.I.A. Meeting (Codebò, de Santis, Pesce 2011). In short:

the couple of the short standing stones fix the course of the local meridian and therefore allows to determine the true (or astronomical, or local) noon;

the natural hole of the little pillar shows the aequinoctial sunrising on the east skyline in front of the slab-rock.

Therefore, the building could accomplish the task of “observatory” of the two main times: the midday and the beginning of the spring (or of the year).

This poster is the English report and the updating of our studies about it.

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