

Strade di Sabbia

**Genti, contatti
e influenze tra
Roma e l'Egitto**

*Nuovi dati e prospettive
di ricerca*





DIPARTIMENTO
PER LA VALORIZZAZIONE
CULTURALE

P•AR•C
ARCHEOLOGICO
DEL COLOSSEO



Con il patrocinio dell'Ufficio Culturale dell'Ambasciata della Repubblica Araba d'Egitto a Roma:



Ufficio Culturale
Ambasciata della Repubblica
Araba d'Egitto a Roma

Strade di Sabbia

**Genti, contatti
e influenze tra
Roma e l'Egitto**

P•AR•©
ARCHEOLOGICO
DEL COLOSSEO

Direttore del Parco archeologico del Colosseo
Alfonsina Russo

Segreteria del Direttore
Gloria Nolfo, Luigi Daniele, Fernanda Spagnoli,
Ilaria Cataldi

Comitato scientifico e organizzatore
Alfonsina Russo, Capo Dipartimento per la
Valorizzazione del Patrimonio Culturale e
Direttore del Parco archeologico del Colosseo

Bassam Rady, Ambasciatore della Repubblica Araba
d'Egitto a Roma

Marwa Fawzy, Addetto Culturale dell'Ambasciata
della Repubblica Araba d'Egitto a Roma

Ali Abdelhalim Ali, Direttore del Museo Egizio del
Cairo

Wallaa Mostafa Mohamed Abdelaty, Direttrice del
Museo Greco-Romano di Alessandria

Christian Greco, Direttore del Museo Egizio di Torino

Laurent Bricault, Professore di Storia Romana,
Université Toulouse II Jean Jaurès

Francesca Guarneri, Funzionario Archeologo,
Parco archeologico del Colosseo

*Nuovi dati e prospettive
di ricerca*

Servizio Valorizzazione, mostre ed eventi
Daniele Fortuna (Responsabile)
Andrea Caracciolo di Feroletto
Eugenia de Francesco

**Servizio Comunicazione e relazioni con il
pubblico, la stampa, i social network e progetti
speciali**
Federica Rinaldi (Responsabile)
Astrid D'Eredità

Progetto grafico e impaginazione
Eugenia De Francesco

Si ringrazia per la collaborazione:
Martina Beneduce, Ilaria Capolupo, Cecilia de Leone,
Sara Iovine, Lucia Marsicano, Camilla Mastroianni,
Chiara Sardu

Programma

14 Maggio / May 2025

9.00-9.30 - ARRIVO PARTECIPANTI E REGISTRAZIONE

9.30 - SALUTI ISTITUZIONALI

Alfonsina Russo, *Capo Dipartimento per la Valorizzazione del Patrimonio Culturale e Direttore del Parco archeologico del Colosseo*

Bassam Rady, *Ambasciatore della Repubblica Araba d'Egitto a Roma*

Marwa Fawzy, *Addetto Culturale dell'Ambasciata della Repubblica Araba d'Egitto a Roma*

PRESIDENTE: ALI ABDELHALIM ALI, DIRETTORE DEL MUSEO EGIZIO DEL CAIRO

10.00 - Nicolas Cacace, "Il a fait une nouvelle Résidence pour Rome": adaptations politiques et religieuses à la conquête romaine de l'Égypte

10.30 - Nicola Barbagli, Pharaoh Augustus: the representations of a Roman emperor in Egypt

11.00 - PAUSA CAFFÈ

11.30 - Lucia Rossi, *Des chrématismoi aux apochai*. Permanences et mutations dans les pratiques du transport fluvial du blé d'Égypte (Ier s. av. J.-C. - Ier s. ap. J.-C.)

12.00 - Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi, Strade di sabbia e vie d'acqua tra il Mediterraneo e il Mar Rosso. Il caso studio di Tell el-Maskhuta

12.30 - DISCUSSIONE

13.00-14.45 - PAUSA PRANZO

PRESIDENTE: CHRISTIAN GRECO, DIRETTORE DEL MUSEO EGIZIO DI TORINO

15.00 - Patrizia Piacentini, Massimiliana Pozzi, Stefano Nava, Lo scavo della necropoli dell'Aga Khan ad Aswan (Egitto): nuove evidenze dell'interazione egizio-romana dal I sec. a.C. al II sec. d.C.

15.30 - Alexandra Dardenay, Roman-period painted cycles from the "tower-houses" of Tuna-el-Gebel (Egypt)

16.00 - PAUSA CAFFÈ

16.30 - Livia Capponi, *Architectante Pontio* tra Roma e l'Egitto di Augusto

17.00 - Hoda Mohamed Aman, The Impact of Egypt-Rome trade Exchange in raw materials and handicrafts

PRESIDENTE: WALLAA MOSTAFA MOHAMED ABDELATY, DIRETTRICE DEL MUSEO GRECO-ROMANO DI ALESSANDRIA

9.30 - Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, Il culto di Iside fra Egitto e Roma (I sec. a.C.-I sec. d.C.): una definizione di “modelli” storico-religiosi

10.00 - Beatrice Cacciotti, I molti volti di Iside tra *Antium* e Roma: oracoli, naviganti, nascite

10.30 - Laurent Bricault, Richard Veymiers, Les multiples vies de trois autels romains

11.00 - PAUSA CAFFÈ

11.30 - Nicolas Amoroso, Polymorphic images of deities with Egyptian symbols from Roman Italy

12.00 - Daniela Candilio, Sculture e decorazioni nella Domus degli Aradii

12.30 - Eleonora Voltan, Percezioni d'Egitto. La rappresentazione paesaggistica e il gusto egittizzante nella pittura parietale del Grande Criptoportico della Domus Aurea

13.00 - DISCUSSIONE

13.30-15.00 - PAUSA PRANZO

15.30 - Visita alla Domus Aurea

PRESIDENTE: JEAN WINAND, PROFESSORE DELL'UNIVERSITÀ DI LIEGI

9.30 - Nicola Luciani, The management of the Imperial marble industry and the diffusion of *sacra peregrina* across Roman Etruria: notes on the role of the public administration in promoting religious artefacts and doctrines

10.00 - Alberto Gavini, Dalle sabbie egizie alle sabbie sarde: cultori e culti isiaci nella Sardegna romana nel I sec. d.C.

10.30 - Inga Vilogorac Brčić, Calpurnia, *L. Pisonis filia*, and the cults of Isis in Dalmatia

11.00 - PAUSA CAFFÈ

11.30 - Valentino Gasparini, The Sands of Time. Augustus' "Alexandrian" Calendar and the Enduring Festivals of Isis and Osiris

12.00 - Ennio Sanzi, Incontro e scontro tra Roma ed Egitto. Testimonianze letterarie ed epigrafiche a confronto

12.30 - DISCUSSIONE

12.50 - CONCLUSIONI, Laurent Bricault

Nicolas Cacace

**“IL A FAIT UNE NOUVELLE
RÈSIDENTE POUR ROME”
ADAPTATIONS POLITIQUES ET
RELIGIEUSES À LA CONQUÊTE
ROMAINE DE L’ÉGYPTE.**

**“HE MADE A NEW RESIDENCE
FOR ROME” POLITICAL AND
RELIGIOUS ADAPTATIONS
TO THE ROMAN CONQUEST
OF EGYPT.**

Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès,
Maître de conférence en Histoire ancienne et Docteur ès Histoire
nicolas.cacace@univ-tlse2.fr



1. CNRS-CFEETK 155146. Karnak, KIU 3938 / Temple of Opet, south outer face, base, 2nd entablature register (Opet 264-265), reign of Augustus
© K. Guadagnini, S. Bisyon- Moulin

KEYWORDS : CONQUEST OF EGYPT, RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS, POLITICAL ADAPTATIONS

Octavian's conquest of Egypt brought the Egyptian kingdom into Rome's empire. This contribution examines the way in which the priestly elites were able to integrate this event, based on the inscription KIU3938 from the Temple of Opet within the cult complex of Karnak.

The narrative shows Octavian's integration as heir to the divine sovereign line, while also emphasising the unusual nature of this assumption of power. As a new foreign monarch, the challenge was to present the conqueror as a new Pharaonic Horus with no connection to his

Lagid predecessors on the throne. The choice of words and hieroglyphic signs reveals the conception of this new era within the kingdom itself. The Augustan conquest marked an important stage in monarchical ideology: with no king or queen physically present, the divine couple Osiris-Isis emerged as one of the privileged rulers of Egypt.

Compared with the Alexandrian couple Isis-Sarapis, the changes of the iconographic attributes confirm a new perspective to conceive the heredity of divine sovereignty in the Nile Valley. So, the text from the Temple of Opet, bearing this new vision of Roman rule in Egypt, fits in this dynamic of the 1st c. BCE and the 1st c. AD.

Nicola Barbagli

PHARAOH AUGUSTUS: THE REPRESENTATIONS OF A ROMAN EMPEROR IN EGYPT

Universität Trier

Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellow

barbagli@uni-trier.de

**KEYWORDS: AUGUSTUS, RECEPTION,
REPRESENTATION**

What was the Roman emperor to the inhabitants of Egypt? From the monumental depictions carved for the eternity on the walls of the temples to the hastily-written dating formulas of fleeting papyrus receipts, the modern interpreter has a wide array of evidence to answer this question. Tackling such an issue does not solely mean to shed light on the varied reception of the emperor at different levels of the Egyptian society.

It also offers a chance to observe how the inclusion of Egypt within the wider Roman world impacted on the local communities and their cultures.

This talk aims to address the topic of the Egyptian representations of the Roman emperor through the analysis of some case studies concerning Augustus (30 BC–AD 14). The focus will be on the ways the ruler was conceptualised and visualised in diverse contexts and medias—for instance his statues as king of Egypt or his different titularies.

It will also be discussed what these records reveal us about the expectations and mindset of the inhabitants of Egypt. It is thus hoped that this presentation will contribute to our understanding of the emperor's role in the local society and the degree of participation of the Egyptians in the cultural dynamics of the Roman empire.

2. Augustus as pharaoh offering to Hathor and Ihy. Dendera, eastern gate of the precinct of Hathor, © Martina Minas-Nerpel



Lucia Rossi

Des *chrématismoi* aux *apochai*. Permanences et mutations dans les pratiques du transport fluvial du blé d'Égypte (Ier s. av. J.-C. – Ier s. ap. J.-C.)

From *chrématismoi* to *apochai*. Continuity and changes in the practices of river transport of Egyptian wheat (1st century BC, 1st century AD)

Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne - ANHIMA (UMR 8210)

Maîtresse de conférence en histoire grecque hellénistique

lucia.rossi@univ-paris1.fr



3. Two joint *chrêmatismoi*, SB V 8754 (= P. Berlin 16876), 77 BC, © Department of Papyrology, University of Warsaw

KEYWORDS: TRANSPORT, GRAIN, TAXATION

The aim of our study is to define and measure the impact of the institution of Rome's tribute on the system of fluvial wheat transport. Our corpus consists of 30 papyri in Greek, relating to the procedures for transporting grain collected by the public authorities as a tax contribution and sent to Alexandria.

Originating from the Arsinoïte, Heracleopolite and Oxyrhynchite nomes and dating from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD our corpus sheds light on a pivotal phase in the transformations of the transport system, which involved both endogenous and exogenous factors.

We will focus on three themes. The first is an examination of the designations, formularies and legal value of documents certifying the transport of wheat on behalf of the tax authorities.

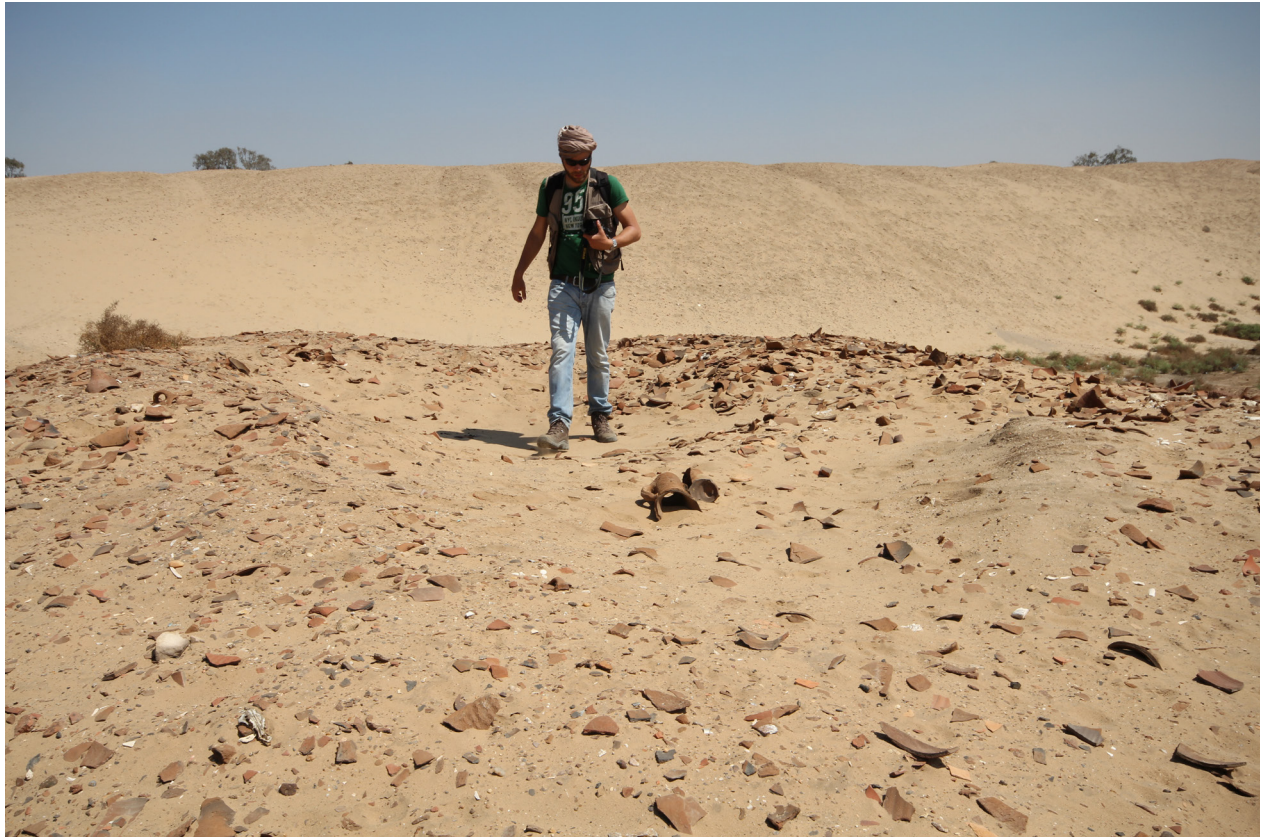
The second concerns administrative structures, more specifically the government officials who issued the documents, the individuals involved in monitoring transport and the physical arrangements for control. The third topic concerns transporters, whose professional status, legal constraints and economic behavior will be examined.

Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi

STRADE DI SABBIA
E VIE D'ACQUA TRA
IL MEDITERRANEO
E IL MAR ROSSO.
IL CASO STUDIO DI
TELL EL-MASKHUTA

*SAND ROADS AND
WATERWAYS BETWEEN
THE MEDITERRANEAN
AND THE RED SEA.
THE CASE STUDY
OF TELL EL-MASKHUTA*

Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche – Istituto di scienze del patrimonio
culturale (CNR-ISPC) - Prima Ricercatrice
giuseppina.capriotti@cnr.it



4. The western summit of the Roman amphorae dump near the port on the canal between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea © CNR Multidisciplinary Egyptological Mission

KEYWORDS: TELL EL-MASKHUTA (EGYPT), CANAL OF THE PHARAOHS, ROMAN TRADE

Tell el-Maskhuta is a large archaeological site, not far from the Suez Canal. The archaeological mission of the National Research Council of Italy has been working there for several years, bringing to light a large international city, located along one of the most important land routes between the heart of Egypt and Palestine, but also along a very important waterway, the so-called Canal of the Pharaohs, which connected the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, like the current Suez Canal.

During the latest excavation campaigns, a large port structure pertaining to the canal was found, as well as a significant amphora dump. Only the upper layers of the eastern part of the amphora dump, dating between the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, were excavated so far.

The contribution presents some new data from the archaeological excavation, concerning the activity of the canal between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea and the framing of the data in the context of commercial and cultural exchanges between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean through Egypt, underlining the function of the country of the pharaohs as a crossroads and cultural interface.

Patrizia Piacentini, Massimiliana Pozzi, Stefano Nava

LO SCAVO DELLA NECROPOLI DELL'AGA KHAN AD ASWAN (EGITTO): NUOVE EVIDENZE DELL'INTERAZIONE EGIZIO-ROMANA DAL I SEC. A.C. AL II SEC. D.C.

THE EXCAVATION OF THE AGA KHAN NECROPOLIS IN ASWAN (EGYPT): NEW EVIDENCE OF EGYPTIAN-ROMAN INTERACTION FROM THE 1ST CENTURY BC TO THE 2ND CENTURY AD

Patrizia Piacentini. Università degli Studi di Milano,
Dipartimento di Studi Letterari, Filologici e Linguistici, Professore ordinario,
patrizia.piacentini@unimi.it

Massimiliana Pozzi.
SCA – Società Cooperativa Archeologica, massimiliana.pozzi@libero.it

Stefano Nava.
Università degli Studi di Milano, Missione EIMAWA, stefind@tiscali.it



5. View of some excavated tombs located on a terrace of the gebel at West Aswan © EIMAWA - UNIMI

KEYWORDS: AUGUSTUS, RECEPTION, REPRESENTATION

Since 2019, the University of Milan has been collaborating with the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities on the emergency excavation of a large necropolis on the western bank of Aswan, called “of the Aga Khan” because of its proximity to the Mausoleum of the Ismailite Imam.

Since pharaonic antiquity, Aswan played a crucial role in trade with sub-Saharan Africa, was a starting point for the desert tracks to the western oases, and a very significant site for the quarries of valuable stones such as pink granite. In Roman times this role grew in importance. Excavations by the Egyptian-Italian Mission

at West Aswan (EIMAWA) have revealed tombs and structures dating mostly to the Ptolemaic-Roman period and in particular to the 1st century BC - 2nd century AD. Among the almost 400 tombs already identified, those excavated so far demonstrate strong cultural interaction between local and incoming populations over the centuries.

The Romans impact local production and import different styles, such as à la barbotine pottery, particular glass vessels, and figurines of syncretic deities. On the other side, they adopt Egyptian funerary practices in substance, but adapted it to their aesthetic taste.

Alexandra Dardenay

ROMAN-PERIOD PAINTED CYCLES FROM THE “TOWER-HOUSES” OF TUNA-EL-GEBEL (EGYPT)

University of Toulouse, CNRS

Professeure des Universités, Histoire de l’art antique et Archéologie.

alexandra.dardenay@univ-tlse2.fr



6. Oedipus in a wall painting from Tuna-el-Gebel. Cairo Museum, inv. JE 63609 , Credits by Alexandra Dardenay

**KEYWORDS : ROMAN WALL-PAINTING,
TUNA EL GEBEL, GREEK MYTHOLOGY**

Wall paintings from the Roman period that have come to light in Egypt are relatively little known and little studied. However, the painted cycles of Tuna El Gebel, a necropolis in the city of Hermapolis Magna, attest to the quality and interest of the pictorial works produced during this period.

Several tombs whose architecture was inspired by 'tower houses' - characteristic buildings of Egyptian domestic architecture - revealed iconographic cycles inspired by Greek mythology.

These include cycles depicting the myths of Oedipus and Electra, as well as scenes from the Trojan War. In this paper, we will show how these paintings are fully in keeping with the Roman pictorial tradition of the late Republican and early Imperial periods, both stylistically and iconographically.

The joint and comparative analysis of these ensembles will shed light on the transmission of Greco-Roman pictorial techniques and iconographic schemes between Rome and Egypt.

Livia Capponi

Architectante Pontio tra Roma e l'Egitto di Augusto

*Architectante Pontio
between Rome
and Augustus's
Egypt*

Università di Pavia

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici

Professoressa associata di storia romana

livia.capponi@unipv.it

**KEYWORDS: CLEOPATRA'S
NEEDLES, PYRAMID OF CAIUS
CESTIUS, AUGUSTUS**

This communication examines some of the most famous monuments of Augustus' building programme in Egypt: the so-called "Cleopatra's Needles", two obelisks placed by the prefect of Egypt Rubrius Barbarus in the *forum Iulium* in Alexandria, in front of the temple in honour of Julius Caesar and later Augustus, the *Caesareum-Sebasteum*. The inscription on the bronze crabs at the base of the obelisk today in Central Park, NYC, dates the work to 12 BC, under the



7. Greek inscription on the bronze crab at the base of the Central Park obelisk, 'Cleopatra's Needle' Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City (Public domain)



7.1. Latin inscription on the bronze crab at the base of the Central Park obelisk, 'Cleopatra's Needle' Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City (Public domain)

prefecture of Rubrius Barbarus; and indicates Pontius as the architect. It is highly likely that the latter is to be identified with the Roman architect L. Pontius Mela, who is explicitly mentioned as the builder of the Pyramid of Gaius Cestius on the Via Ostiense. A reinterpretation of the inscriptions found in the pyramid will shed light on the relationship between Augustus and the promoters of his monuments both at Rome and in Egypt, casting light on the mechanisms and limits of homage to the *princeps*.

Hoda Aman

THE IMPACT OF EGYPT-ROME TRADE EXCHANGE IN RAW MATERIALS AND HANDICRAFTS

Artifica -Research Center for innovation materials & Cultural Industries - Spain.

Founder & Director

hoda.aman@uniroma1.it



8. Roman wall mosaic discovered in Rome, depicting a ship sailing from the port of Alexandria, with the Pharos Lighthouse visible on the left side of the scene. It's believed to represent one of the ships from the Egyptian grain fleet en route to Rome (Wikimedia Commons CC BY-SA 4.0)

KEYWORDS: RAW MATERIALS, TRADITIONAL CRAFTS, TRADE

Egypt and Rome enjoyed an exchange of raw materials and handicrafts in that era, from which both civilizations greatly benefited. Egypt's Nile Valley and its strategic location between East and West, made it a powerful Roman province with significant influence over Rome, providing grain, drinking water, and important commodities such as glass, cloth and metals. This was crucial to the Roman economy, to securing food through the "An-nuna" system, which granted free grain to Roman citizens. Papyrus was important to the Romans as a writing medium.

Meanwhile, Egypt received an influx of Roman innovations in textiles, pottery, and glass, introducing improved techniques and new styles to many traditional crafts, which led to groundbreaking technological developments, such as blown glass and pottery designs. Trade routes facilitated cultural exchange beyond just goods, as Roman architecture and art incorporated Egyptian designs, while the cult of Isis spread throughout the Roman Empire.

This exchange represented an early form of tangible globalization, as raw materials, crafts, and cultural influences linked the two empires.

Giulia Sfameni Gasparro

IL CULTO DI ISIDE FRA EGITTO E ROMA (I SEC.A.C. - I SEC.D.C.): UNA DEFINIZIONE DI “MODELLI” STORICO-RELIGIOSI

THE ISIS CULT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ROME (1ST CENTURY BC - 1ST CENTURY AD): A DEFINITION OF RELIGIOUS-HISTORICAL PATTERNS

Università di Messina
Professore Ordinario f.r.
rosagiulia.gasparro@libero.it



KEYWORDS: ISIS, EGYPT, ROME

In order to provide a historical-religious interpretation, the contribution intends to discuss the consolidated interpretative “model” of the “diffusion” of the Isis cult starting from its national “center” towards Rome and its vast territorial domains over the course of two centuries, decisive for the definition of the phenomenon itself.

Without eliminating this “model” from the historical perspective, the alternative and complementary one is proposed of a “continuous creation”, with more or less strong modifications and innovations of such a “national” religious horizon in contact and comparison with local traditions, in which it is “transferred” and takes root in various ways.

9. Terracotta from Abella: Isis, Anubis, Harpocrates (V. Tran Tam Tinh, *Le culte des divinités orientales en Campanie*, EPRO 27, Leiden 1972 1972, ls.34, fig.26)

Beatrice Cacciotti

I molti volti di Iside tra Antium e Roma. Oracoli, naviganti, nascite

The many faces of
Isis between Antium
and Rome. Oracles,
sailors, births

Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata
Professore Associato di Archeologia Classica
cacciotti@lettere.uniroma2.it



10. Statues of *Fortunae Antiatinae* on a *ferculum*, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Palestrina (Arachne ID.1108238)

KEYWORDS: ISIS, FORTUNAE ANTIATINAE, NERONIAN ERA

Although there is no ground evidence of structures related to an Iseum in Antium, however we can reflect on the possible cult of Isis here. First of all we can underline the condition of port city, that is favourable position for the reception of foreign cults. In fact the first Egyptian sanctuaries were built near harbour towns. It could be noticed also the relationship with Delos (the main channel for the spread of the cult of Isis in Italy) by *negotiatores* native from Antium.

The city, however, was the landing place of Praeneste's trades and was the passage for new religions through the inland, as, for example, the syncretism of Isis Tyche

and Fortuna Primigenia and the introduction of Isis Pelagia, the patroness of navigation, in the sanctuary of Praeneste. The practice of divination, the maternal sphere and the sea-related aspect, common elements between Isis and the goddess of Praeneste, are also observed in the main cult of Antium, that is the cult of *Fortunae Antiatinae* whose ex-voto was found in Praeneste.

The paper focuses on these aspects, on assimilation of the Antium Fortuna as “*domina aequoris*” (Horatius, Carm. I, 36.6) with Isis's seas's guardian and on the devotion of *Fortunae Antiatinae* related to the maternal aspect of Isis through Horus during the Neronian era, when their simulacrum was moved to Rome for the Claudia Augusta's birth.

Laurent Bricault, Richard Veymiers

LES MULTIPLES VIES DE TROIS AUTELS ROMAINS

THE MULTIPLE LIVES OF THREE ROMAN ALTARS

Laurent Bricault

Université de Toulouse, Professeur d'histoire romaine

laurent.bricault@univ-tlse2.fr

Richard Veymiers

Domaine & Musée royal de Mariemont, Director

Université de Liège, Valorisation scientifique du patrimoine culturel (AAP), Professeur

Richard.VEYMIERS@musee-mariemont.be

**KEYWORDS: EGYPTIANISM, CULTS OF
ISIS, ROME, SEASONS**

The agency of most ancient monuments did not disappear with the end of the ancient world. It just faded away for a while.

Resurrected from the soil of Latium, and even from Rome itself, the altars we present here were given new life in modern times, with the help of the people who unearthed them, designed them, traded them, sold them, transported them over long distances to take their place in new settings, where they continued to act on their environment, their owners and their viewers.

In cabinets of curiosities, in private collections open to visitors, among public museum pieces, they have never ceased to question and intrigue.



11. One of the two "Townley altars",
Credits by Laurent Bricault

Nicolas Amoroso

POLYMORPHIC IMAGES OF DEITIES WITH EGYPTIAN SYMBOLS FROM ROMAN ITALY

Musée royal de Mariemont, Curator of Greek and Roman Antiquities

UCLouvain, Scientific collaborator

Nicolas.AMOROSO@musee-mariemont.be

**KEYWORDS: ISIS AND HARPOCRATES,
MARBLE GROUPS, POLYMORPHY**

The Royal Museum of Mariemont in Belgium houses a notable collection of Roman statues, including an original marble sculpture that has been associated with the Isiac sphere since its acquisition by the Museum.

Originally located at the Palazzo Sciarra in Rome at the end of the 19th century, this piece passed through the Belgian collection of Somzée before being acquired in 1904 by Raoul Warocqué, the founder of the Mariemont collection. It is suggested that this group represents a polymorphic image of the goddess Isis holding a cornucopia and a snake with her child Harpocrates. Although some parts of this marble group are missing, the traces of struts and comparisons with selected parallels help reconstruct the image, raising questions about its polysemic significance and the origins of the sculptural model. Starting with this case study, this paper will re-examine a rich corpus of polymorphic images of deities bearing Egyptian features, based on “contextualized” evidence from Italy and Egypt dated between the 1st and the 2nd c. AD.

The evidence illustrates how artisans and patrons have sought to express the multifaceted nature of Isiac deities by combining elements from both Roman and Egyptian traditions.



12. Statue of Isis and Harpocrates in marble, 2nd century AD (formerly at Palazzo Sciarra in Rome), © Musée royal de Mariemont, inv. B. 157.

Daniela Candilio

Sculture e decorazioni nella Domus degli Aradii

Sculptures and Decorations in the Aradii Domus

Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma
già Funzionario Archeologo
danielacandilio@virgilio.it



13. Statue of Isis from Villa Grandi © Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma, Archivio fotografico

KEYWORDS: SCULPTURES, INSCRIPTION

In 1944 the Antiquities Office recovered several archeological findings lodged in a villa formerly belonging to Dino Grandi, an important politician in the fascist regime.

The villa lies on the slopes of the Golden Mount, between Via di Porta Latina and the Aurelian Walls, presently the residence of the Ambassador of Canada.

The archeological findings, the result of a chance discovery in 1937, were quite interesting. There was a set of almost life-sized sculptures including a beautiful statue of Isis with polychrome remnants, 120 cm tall, and other slightly smaller statues.

The Antiquities Office decided therefore to undertake an excavation campaign in 1945. The excavation was directed by Superintendent Salvatore Aurigemma and carried out by his assistant Edoardo Cocozza, who also realized drawings of the walls and the findings.

Besides some sculptures, an important inscription was discovered and later on studied by Silvio Panciera who could trace it back to the Aradii, a family of African origin from Bulla Regia. They held important positions during the 3rd and 4th century AD and were members of the Senate during the Severi dynasty.

Eleonora Voltan

**PERCEZIONI D'EGITTO.
LA RAPPRESENTAZIONE
PAESAGGISTICA E IL GUSTO
EGITTIZZANTE NELLA PITTURA
PARIETALE DEL GRANDE
CRIPTOPORTICO DELLA
DOMUS AUREA**

**THE PERCEPTION OF EGYPT.
THE LANDSCAPE REPRESENTATION
AND EGYPTIAN TASTE
IN THE PAINTING OF THE DOMUS
AUREA'S GREAT CRYPTOPORTICUS**

UNED Madrid, Postdoctoral researcher
eleonora.voltan92@gmail.com; evoltan@invi.uned.es



14. Orto photo north wall, west section of the Great Cryptoporticus, Domus Aurea © Parco archeologico del Colosseo, German Archaeological Institute in Rome.

KEYWORDS: EGYPT, LANDSCAPE, ROMAN PAINTING

The strong interest in Egypt was expressed also in Roman artistic creation, which, from the earliest evidence at the end of the Republican period, was strengthened in the Imperial period and became a fashion encouraged by the intensifying contacts between Egypt and Rome, especially after the battle of Actium (31 BC).

In this regard, an interesting case study is represented by the wall painting of the Great Cryptoporticus of the Domus Aurea, where religious motifs, while evoking the manifestation of the divine, are used in the decoration of this room with an ornamental function, combined with real

and imaginary animals, plant and geometric elements.

This is therefore a clear example of the spread of Egyptian-style materials that characterised the mid-1st century AD in particular. In addition to these figurative elements, it is also worth noting the restored landscape representations that stand out along the north wall (western section) of this space. The aim of the paper is thus to analyse the still unpublished painted landscapes and their relation to the Egyptian motifs displayed along the wall decoration of the Domus Aurea's Great Cryptoporticus.

Nicola Luciani

THE MANAGEMENT OF
THE IMPERIAL MARBLE
INDUSTRY AND THE
DIFFUSION OF *SACRA
PEREGRINA* ACROSS
ROMAN ETRURIA:
NOTES ON THE ROLE OF
THE PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION IN
PROMOTING
RELIGIOUS ARTEFACTS
AND DOCTRINES

Università degli Studi di Padova

Assegnista di ricerca

nicola.luciani@unipd.it

**KEYWORDS: IMPERIAL ADMINISTRATION,
SACRA PEREGRINA, ROMAN ETRURIA**

The focus of the paper is on the connection between the Roman Imperial administration and the chain of production/circulation of marble artefacts related to some of the Greco-Roman religious systems often identified as *sacra peregrina* (that, despite being very different from each other, were characterized by some shared traits, such as often pivoting on religious figures of Eastern origin and having exercised, within specific geographical/chronological contexts, direct or indirect civic/political functions).

In this regard, the *Regio Etruria* provides a fortunate ground, due to both its proximity to Rome and its incorporation of the major Italian quarries. Furthermore, within its boundaries a great variety of findings have been discovered, linked to the cults of Isis/Serapis, Cybele, Mithras and Sabazios.

The paper will analyze the dynamics of production/circulation of such findings, whether in cases where they were the creation of local craftsmen or where direct imports from the Imperial capital can be traced.

A key aspect under analysis will be the role of the Imperial administration in both managing the circulation of raw material/finished products and promoting the assimilation of government-sponsored religious iconographies into the social fabric.



15. Findings connected to *sacra peregrina* within the borders of *Regio VII Etruria*.

Alberto Gavini

DALLE SABBIE EGIZIE ALLE SABBIE SARDE: CULTORI E CULTI ISIACI NELLA SARDEGNA ROMANA NEL I SEC. D.C.

FROM EGYPTIAN SANDS TO SARDINIAN SANDS: WORSHIPPERS AND CULTS OF ISIS IN ROMAN SARDINIA IN THE 1ST CENTURY AD

University of Sassari

Department of History, Humanities and Educational Sciences

Type A Researcher (RTD-A)

gavini@uniss.it



16. The Altar of *Bubastis*, Snapshot of the 3d relief, Museo archeologico nazionale Antiquarium Turritano di Porto Torres, © Ministero della Cultura - Direzione Regionale Musei Nazionali Sardegna. 3d realized by Salvatore Ganga

KEYWORDS: SARDINIA, ISIAIC CULTS, 3D MODELING

The Isiac cults can be attested along the coasts of *Sardinia* with a series of testimonies indicating contacts with other shores of the Mediterranean, particularly with *Campania*. This development could be connected to the Sardinian wheat trade, which maintained significance, notwithstanding the growing consequence of the Egyptian wheat.

The presence of the Isiac cults is concentrated in two of the main harbors of the island: *Turris Libisonis* and *Karales*. The altar of *Bubastis*, dated to 35 CE, was discovered in *Turris Libisonis* in the second half of the last century.

For the last 15 years, the altar of *Bubastis* has received renewed attention and has been the object of in-depth studies that have shown previously ignored details.

These studies are going to be illustrated by 3D reliefs that remain mostly unpublished. In *Karales* was found a statue of an Isiac priest dated to the Flavian period, which closely resembles similar discoveries from Benevento: from a research perspective, it is proposed to undergo a detailed analysis of these findings to highlight their points of contact and assess any differences.

Inga Vilogorac Brčić

CALPURNIA
L. PISONIS
FILIA AND THE
CULTS OF ISIS
IN DALMATIA

University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Assistant professor

ivbrcic@ffzg.hr

KEYWORDS: ISIS, CULT, DALMATIA

In 19 AD the Egyptian and Jewish rites were forbidden and their followers banished to Sardinia by emperor Tiberius. Caska (Cissa) at the island of Pag in the Roman province of Dalmatia boasts the earliest known evidence of the cult of Isis in the Eastern Adriatic and it is dated in the time of Tiberius' and/or Caligula's reign!

Four altars dedicated to Isis and to gods from her circle were erected in the 1st century AD by Calpurnia, a member of the aristocratic family of Calpurnii Pisones from the City of Rome.

In this paper I will analyze and interpret four Calpurnia's inscriptions trying to explain her devotion to Isis and gods from her circle and to identify the sources of unique epithets she added to Isis name. Additionally, I will try to determine if Calpurnia's worship of Isis and gods of her circle had an influence to the acceptance of their cults in the Roman province of Dalmatia in the 1st century AD.



17. Calpurnia's altar with the dedication to Isis, Serapis, Osiris and Anubis © Novalja City Museum, photo by Nikola Cesarik

Valentino Gasparini

The Sands of Time. Augustus’ “Alexandrian” Calendar and the Enduring Festivals of Isis and Osiris

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
Associate Professor
vgaspari@hum.uc3m.es

Ennio Sanzi

**INCONTRO E SCONTRO
TRA ROMA ED EGITTO.
TESTIMONIANZE
LETTERARIE ED
EPIGRAFICHE A CONFRONTO
MEETINGS AND CLASHES
BETWEEN ROME
AND EGYPT: LITERARY
AND EPIGRAPHIC
TESTIMONIES COMPARED**

Pontificium Institutum Orientale; Istituto superiore di scienze religiose Ecclesia

Mater, Accademia Vivarium Novum, Professor

esanzi@orientale.it



19. Serapis and Isis, mosaic, early 3rd century AD, Altes Museum, Berlin (<https://artresearchsite.wordpress.com/2016/11/07>)

**KEYWORDS: LATIN POETRY, “ISIAC”
EPIGRAPHY, EGYPTIAN RELIGIOSITY**

The aim of this contribution is to relate some literary testimonies produced by authors of the golden age such as Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid (and other authors whose voices contribute to the dialectic underlying our research) with the living voice of the believers of the Egyptian deities as it is testified by the epigraphic heritage.

The chosen terrain in which these meetings and clashes took place is the city of Rome and the testimonies that refer to

the eternal city will be privileged in our analysis. Among the various Egyptian deities attested, a relevant place will be ensured for Isis and the Sunnaoi gods.

Thanks to this comparison it will be possible to verify how much and how the literary texts constitute in all respects a historical testimony and contribute to a better de facto knowledge of the religious sensitivity of an axial era which dates back to the 1st century BC until the 1st century AD.

Strade di Sabbia. Genti, contatti e influenze tra Roma e l'Egitto.

14-15-16 maggio 2025, Curia Iulia
Parco archeologico del Colosseo