

Dear participants,

We are delighted to give you our warmest welcome to the University of Leicester and to the '*De Africa Romaque – Merging Cultures across North Africa*' conference!

This two day international event is a major gathering of academic scholars, early career researchers and postgraduate students, all of them sharing the same interest and passion towards the field of North African studies.

The aim of the conference is to explore the mutual relationships between North African peoples and Rome from the second century BC up to the fourth century AD, though some presentations will consider earlier and later periods as well. The encounter of different cultures is a very current and vibrant field of study. In recent years, research has moved away from a Rome-centred standpoint which used to portray local populations as passive recipients of Rome's superior culture. Attention has been turned instead to the multiple ways in which these peoples re-created or reinforced their identity and negotiated with the imperial power of Rome.

The debate that we aim to promote will be oriented around the following questions (and beyond): How did local traditions manage to survive, and how were they altered or revived under Roman rule? Is it possible to trace the role played by pre-Roman legacies in this process? How did Roman influence and innovation in art, architecture, economy, technology, town planning and agriculture suit to local needs and vice-versa? Did the diverse regions of North Africa react differently to the power of Rome?

Presentations will embrace research on the archaeology and history of Roman period North Africa, placing strong emphasis on archaeological fieldwork, material approaches and theory, epigraphy and philology. The geographical area encompassed includes a large variety of countries: Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco.

Papers are grouped in four sessions reflecting the themes treated, and a poster session will further extend the topics and discussion.

Session 1 – '*Creating a lasting impression: Artistic and decorative motifs in North Africa*' will focus on how Roman period art and architectural decoration were perceived and re-elaborated by the various North African cultures. It will also look at the persistence and re-invention of Punic and Hellenistic motifs, thus resulting in very diverse expressions of local identities and substrata.

Session 2 – *‘Economies of North Africa: Technology, tradition and innovation’* aims to analyse the character of the North African economy by looking at the different regional productions. This will provide information on the survival of traditional technologies, on the impact of the Roman conquest in the productive process, and on any changes to local economic life.

In **Session 3** – *‘Shaping the African landscapes: Architecture, urbanism and rural settlements’*, evolution and changes in settlement patterns during the Roman period will be investigated. Both rural sites and urban realities are considered in order to highlight the effects of local engagement in this process, the development of urban trajectories, and the use of private and public spaces across North Africa.

Finally, in **Session 4** – *‘Africans and Romans: Perspectives from the written evidence’* the interrelation of cultures is approached through the information provided by literary texts and epigraphic documents: looking at how local populations were perceived by Rome (and vice-versa), how the elites interacted with the imperial system, and what was instead the impact on the rest of the provincial community.

We would like to thank all of you for attending the conference and we do hope that you will enjoy these two days in Leicester.

The organization of this event required substantial efforts, in terms of financial assistance, logistics and amount of work. For this reason, we would very much like to thank all our sponsors for the valuable support provided: the **College of Arts, Humanities and Law** (University of Leicester); the **Graduate School Researcher Development Fund** (University of Leicester); the **School of Archaeology and Ancient History** (University of Leicester); the **Institute of Classical Studies** (University of London); the **Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies**; the **Society for Libyan Studies**; and the **Trans-Sahara Project**.

We would also like to thank the administrative team of the School of Archaeology and Ancient History for their outstanding help and kindness.

Last but not least, many thanks to Prof. David Mattingly for his precious advice and endless patience.

Niccolò Mugnai and Julia Nikolaus

‘De Africa Romaque’ Organizing Committee

De Africa Romaque



DAY 1 – SATURDAY 26TH OCTOBER (Henry Wellcome Building)

8:15 – 9:15: Registration

9:15 – 9:30: Welcome and introduction (*N. Mugnai, J. Nikolaus, D. Mattingly*)

9:30 – 12:35: SESSION 1 – CREATING A LASTING IMPRESSION: ARTISTIC AND DECORATIVE MOTIFS IN NORTH AFRICA (chair: *J. DeLaine*)

9:30 – 9:55: Stones of memory: The presentation of the individual in the cemeteries of Roman Cyrene (*S. Walker*);

9:55 – 10:20: Beyond Ghirza: Funerary iconography and regional diversity in Tripolitania (Libya) (*J. Nikolaus*);

10:20 – 10:45: The architectural decoration at *Sala* (Chellah-Rabat, Morocco) and in *Mauretania Tingitana*: Punic-Hellenistic legacies, Roman official art, and local motifs (*N. Mugnai*);

10:45 – 11:00: Discussion

11:00 – 11:30: Coffee break

11:30 – 11:55: Revival and continuity of Hellenistic traditions in Late Antique architecture and decoration in Egypt, North Africa and other provinces of the Roman Empire (*P. Pensabene*);

11:55 – 12:20: Imperial statues in the urban context of Late Antique North Africa: Reinterpreting spaces and recycling marbles (*A. Leone*);

12:20 – 12:35: Discussion

12:35 – 14:00: Lunch and Poster Session

14:00 – 17:05: SESSION 2 – ECONOMIES OF NORTH AFRICA: TECHNOLOGY, TRADITION AND INNOVATION (chair: *E. Fentress*)

14:00 – 14:25: Oil production at *Dyonisias* (Qrs Qarun – Egypt) and in Roman Fayyum. The other sides of technology: Botany and taxes (*L. Bigli*);

14:25 – 14:50: The productive activities at Cyrenaican harbours during the Roman period (*M. Hesein*);

14:50 – 15:15: Libya and Egypt: More questions than answers (*R. Morkot*);

15:15 – 15:30: Discussion

15:30 – 16:00: Coffee break

16:00 – 16:25: Poverty and wealth in Roman North Africa (*M. Hobson*);

16:25 – 16:50: Prestige economies in North Africa (*D. Stone*);

16:50 – 17:05: Discussion

DAY 2 – SUNDAY 27TH OCTOBER (Henry Wellcome Building)

8:30 – 9:30: Registration

9:30 – 12:35: SESSION 3 – SHAPING THE AFRICAN LANDSCAPE: ARCHITECTURE, URBANISM AND RURAL SETTLEMENTS (chair: *A. Wilson*)

9:30 – 9:55: Who shaped Africa? The origins of agriculture and urbanism in Maghreb and Sahara (*D. Mattingly*);

9:55 – 10:20: Continuity and change in Hellenistic town planning in the Fayyum (Egypt): Between tradition and innovation (*G. Carpentiero*);

10:20 – 10:45: The *λόγια* temples of Fayyum in the Late Ptolemaic and Roman period (*I. Rossetti*);

10:45 – 11:00: Discussion

11:00 – 11:30: Coffee break

11:30 – 11:55: Building techniques and building tradition in North Africa (*S. Camporeale*);

11:55 – 12:20: Fortified farms (*qsar*) in Cyrenaica: Typology, chronology and the Libyan dimension (*A. Emrage*);

12:20 – 12:35: Discussion

12:35 – 14:15: Lunch and Poster Session

14:15 – 17:05: SESSION 4 – AFRICANS AND ROMANS: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE WRITTEN EVIDENCE (chair: *J. Crawley Quinn*)

14:15 – 14:40: Tumuli, graves and epitaphs in western *Mauretania* (sixth century BC – fifth century AD) (*E. Papi*);

14:40 – 15:05: North Africa in the triumph of Cornelius Balbus (*A. Merrills*);

15:05 – 15:20: Discussion

15:20 – 15:50: Coffee break

15:50 – 16:15: Marshes, deserts, birds and invaders. The limits of Ancient Egypt (*J.-R. Pérez-Accino*);

16:15 – 16:40: Religious identity and *Tipasa*: From Donatist to Arian persecution? (*G. Sears*);

16:40 – 16:55: Discussion

16:55 – 17:05: Conclusions (*D. Stone, N. Mugnai, J. Nikolaus*)

SESSION 1

STONES OF MEMORY: THE PRESENTATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE CEMETERIES OF ROMAN CYRENE

- Dr Susan Walker -

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (UK)

Keywords: Cyrene; funerary portraits; regional practices; marble; Greek, Ptolemaic and Roman periods.

The people of Roman Cyrenaica developed a distinctive style of presenting themselves in personal memorials. Frontal, bust-length portraits were carved from small blocks of stone with personal text incised on the lower portion of the block, which effectively served as a plinth.

The funerary portraits of Roman Cyrenaica have often been compared to the painted mummy portraits of Roman Egypt, where the presentation of the individual is indeed very similar. However, these are just two regional traditions of funerary portraiture within the Roman Empire. There were many more: for example, the stone reliefs of Palmyra, Bourges or Carthage, or the multiple portraits of the Balkan provinces.

Where Cyrene is unusual is that in the Greek and Ptolemaic periods, too, a distinctive memorial was produced, with partially aniconic, three-dimensional figures not of deceased individuals but considered by many to represent goddesses connected with the underworld, such as Demeter and Persephone. Most of these local types of commemoration were commissioned in imported marble. Who commissioned them, and how did the memorials fit into the funerary landscape of Cyrene?

**BEYOND GHIRZA: FUNERARY ICONOGRAPHY AND REGIONAL DIVERSITY
IN TRIPOLITANIA (LIBYA)**

- Julia Nikolaus -

University of Leicester (UK)

Keywords: Tripolitania; funerary iconography; Roman, Punic and provincial art; *mausolea*; regional diversity.

The outstanding funerary iconography that decorates the numerous *mausolea* at the pre-desert settlement of Ghirza (Tripolitania, Libya) has lost nothing of its fascination to visitors and scholars alike. The large carved stone friezes depict animals, floral motifs, abstract decorations, portraits and whole figural scenes representing, for instance, agricultural activities, religious practices, martial scenes or power related imagery.

Ghirza is frequently cited as a prime example of provincial Tripolitanian funerary art and iconography during the Roman period; however, how ‘typical’ is this iconography in relation to the many other *mausolea* that can be found in other areas of the pre-desert and desert regions? Or is it indeed possible to detect regional styles and variety of scenes, suggesting a much wider local diversity?

This paper will particularly concentrate on the *mausolea* ‘beyond Ghirza’ while considering localized North African traditions in an attempt to place Ghirza within the wider context of Tripolitanian funerary iconography. It will investigate the differences and similarities in the selection of scenes that are displayed on the monument, as well as the choice of portrait of the deceased. Aspects that may have influenced the commissioner’s choice of a particular scene or style will be considered.

**THE ARCHITECTURAL DECORATION AT *SALA* (CHELLAH-RABAT, MOROCCO)
AND IN *MAURETANIA TINGITANA*: PUNICHELLENISTIC LEGACIES,
ROMAN OFFICIAL ART, AND LOCAL MOTIFS**

- Niccolò Mugnai -

University of Leicester (UK)

Keywords: *Sala* (Chellah); *Mauretania Tingitana* (Morocco); architectural decoration; Roman and provincial art; pre-Roman legacies.

The ancient town of *Sala* is located at the south-west edge of the Roman Empire, in the province of *Mauretania Tingitana* (Morocco). The main urbanization phases of this settlement date from the first century BC (Late Mauretanian era) to the second century AD (Roman provincial era), though the town witnessed a continuity of occupation in the Late Roman and Byzantine periods as well. Today, the ruins of the Mauretano-Roman town are enclosed in the Merinid ribat of Chellah.

Being part of a broader research on *Tingitana*'s architectural decoration, this paper aims to present a preliminary study of *Sala*'s ornament. The interrelations of different artistic traditions across the Late Mauretanian and Roman eras are well reflected in the decorative motifs adopted in this site. The permanence of Punic-Hellenistic substrata is evident in the specimens of Punic-Ionic capitals and Egyptian gorge cornices recovered in the excavations. At the same time, the adherence to the art of the Empire is attested through the import of marble Asiatic Corinthian capitals, and through locally-made capitals with smooth leaves reproducing a simplified version of the Roman official models. Moreover, local creations such as pseudo-lotus capitals or Corinthian capitals with three calyces represent peculiar types of decoration that find no parallels outside *Tingitana*.

A further goal of this analysis is to trace the circulation of artistic motifs and schools of stonemasons across the province, by looking at the existence of similar decorative patterns in sites such as *Lixus*, *Banasa* and *Volubilis*. The continuity of pre-Roman traditions and their relationship with the art promoted by Rome are themes of current debate that involve all the regions of North Africa (and beyond), and they can shed light on the social, cultural and historical features of the Maghreb's peoples in this time-frame.

**REVIVAL AND CONTINUITY OF HELLENISTIC TRADITIONS IN LATE ANTIQUE
ARCHITECTURE AND DECORATION IN EGYPT, NORTH AFRICA AND OTHER
PROVINCES OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE**

- Prof. Patrizio Pensabene -

Università di Roma 'La Sapienza' (Italy)

Keywords: Egypt; architectural decoration; Coptic art; Ptolemaic motifs; North Africa.

One of the most striking features that emerged during the study of many so-called 'Coptic' buildings in Egypt is the presence of Ptolemaic motifs that overlap with Roman Imperial architecture. Such is the case, for instance, of the Corinthian capitals with circular eyelets between the lobes of the leaves that recall Hellenistic decorative traditions. This phenomenon differs from what we observe in the Theodosian period at Constantinople, where some revivals of Hellenistic decoration (e.g. the friezes with naturalistic scrolls) were integrated into the canonical forms of Imperial architectural ornament.

In the towns of Egypt's hinterland, this Late Antique revival is not always distinguishable from the continuity of local traditions that survived throughout the Roman Imperial era. On the other hand, public architecture at Alexandria shows a permanence of Ptolemaic motifs until Hadrian's reign, while the following period witnessed a stronger adherence to Roman official art and architecture, also encouraged by the widespread use of marble. As to private architecture, the situation at Alexandria and in the other centres of Egypt is rather alike, since the continuity of Ptolemaic traditions represents a leading theme for all of them. From the late third century AD, and especially in the fourth – sixth centuries AD, joint Ptolemaic and Byzantine motifs can be recognized in many funerary complexes and Christian buildings.

We can thus speak of a 'regional' art, and Late Roman Egypt is not an isolated case in the Mediterranean. The decoration of the funerary monuments of Ghirza in Libya, the Ionic capitals inspired to the models of the Punic-Numidian tombs of *Africa proconsularis*, and the capitals from *Volubilis* in *Mauretania Tingitana* – together with the evidence from regions such as northern Syria, Spain and Gaul – are all examples that confirm the existence of interrelations between local traditions and Roman official art.

SESSION 1

IMPERIAL STATUES IN THE URBAN CONTEXT OF LATE ANTIQUE NORTH AFRICA: REINTERPRETING SPACES AND RECYCLING MARBLES

- Dr Anna Leone -
Durham University (UK)

Keywords: Imperial statuary; reuse, change and display; North Africa; Late Antiquity; fourth century AD.

This paper focuses on the findings of imperial statues in various contexts of North African cities. In particular from the perspective of Late Antique towns there are some issues to consider: where were these late imperial statues to be dedicated at? How did the use, function, and understanding of public spaces change? And finally what evidence do we have to discuss the fate, use and reuse of these statues?

The analysis considers dedicatory inscriptions and portraits from the Diocletianic period, up to at least the end of the fourth century AD. Their location within the urban context provides some information on the display of these statues and the changing function of urban spaces (as well as of the statues themselves); in particular porticoes at the entrance of baths appear to have had a new central role.

Moreover the reuse of some specific imperial statues in a new context suggest that the images had lost their symbolic and cult function, to become objects of art for display and decoration of the city. Recycling of statues also indicates the presence of a market activity that seems to be proved by archaeological evidence.

OIL PRODUCTION AT *DYONISIAS* (QRS QARUN – EGYPT) AND IN ROMAN FAYYUM. THE OTHER SIDES OF TECHNOLOGY: BOTANY AND TAXES

- Leonardo Bigi -

Università di Pisa (Italy)

Keywords: Fayyum; *Dionysias*; oil production; economy; technology.

Recent surface analyses of the site of *Dionysias* have yielded data that deepen our knowledge of Roman Fayyum and help us more fully understand one of the most essential elements for the area's economy: oil production. Different prospection methodologies (magnetometry, land survey, and remote sensing) have contributed to the identification of oil mills and of a large number of artefacts including mortars, *molae oleariae* and catchment vats.

The visibility of some structures, but also the deterioration of many archaeological contexts of the site, was due to the excavations of the *sebbakhin* at the beginning of the twentieth century. The comparison between written sources and botanic studies is instrumental in casting new light on the great variety of plants employed in oil production, on the required tools and seasons of production, and on the kinds of oils produced (castor, ben, sesame, *raphanus*, flax, *carthamus*, and lettuce).

Another interesting aspect for understanding the origin of Egypt's high level technology – reached with the invention of the direct screw press (attested at *Dionysias* as well) – can probably be found in economic policy and fiscal systems. Under the Ptolemies the State exercised a monopoly on oil production, fixing prices, time and spaces, and import-export quantities. In the Roman period this was replaced by a heavy form of taxation. Several taxes, imposed to every step of oil production, are mentioned in the Fayyum papyri. It is likely that the State intervention in the economy of oil production since the Hellenistic age had consequences in developing the former technology and in maintaining it over time. The invention of the screw pressing system likely derived from the necessity to increase both production and profits, especially through the optimization of time and spaces.

**THE PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES AT CYRENAICAN HARBOURS
DURING THE ROMAN PERIOD**

- Mohamed Hesein -
University of Leicester (UK)

Keywords: Cyrenaica; harbours; productive sites; coastal archaeology; large-scale economic activities.

The last two decades have witnessed a growing body of interest in studying Roman North Africa in terms of economic and archaeological aspects. The unique geographical location of North Africa served as an economic bridge between the north, south, east and west of the Roman Empire.

The archaeological evidence of productive installations distributed along the coast of North Africa indicates a large-scale of economic activity. The increase in production and manufacturing at harbour sites appears to reflect a growth in exports and the high demand for African commodities and products in the whole Mediterranean basin. Hence, this flourishing productive activity undoubtedly contributed to the growth of trade and commerce, not only in the Mediterranean area but also in the whole Roman Empire. However, so far most attention has been paid to the coastal archaeology of North Africa in Tunisia and Tripolitania, while information about the economic and productive activities of Roman Cyrenaica has the potential to contribute to the debate too.

Since previous studies have not addressed the scale of economy and archaeology of this area in North Africa, this paper will attempt to shed light on the productive features on the coast of Cyrenaica and compare them with features that have been identified in Tripolitania and Tunisia.

SESSION 2

LIBYA AND EGYPT: MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS

- Dr Robert Morkot -

University of Exeter (UK)

Keywords: Libya; Egypt; routes and connections; roads; Late Bronze Age to Roman period.

‘Libya’ and ‘Egypt’ are linked by coastal routes and desert-oasis roads. This paper raises questions about connections from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman period: trade and cultural connections, and the extent and exploitation of routes. The introduction of horses and camels is considered.

There is more speculation than substance, more questions than answers.

SESSION 2

POVERTY AND WEALTH IN ROMAN NORTH AFRICA

- Dr Matthew S. Hobson -
Universiteit Leiden (Netherlands)

Keywords: North African society; economic changes; post-structuralist analysis; exploitation; economic imperialism.

This paper will examine the changing social structure of North African society, from the expropriation of Carthaginian territory and dividing up of the best agricultural land following the Third Punic War, to the widespread unrest gripping the rural countryside in the fourth century AD. An attempt is made to analyse some of the causes of the export boom in olive oil, wine and marine products of mid-late second century AD, and to examine the impact of these economic changes on North African society, from the richest landowners and corrupt imperial officials, down to the lowest household slaves and agricultural labourers.

A secondary aim is to reject the recent call, being made most insistently by the Stanford school, to adopt the outlook and methodology of development economics in the study of the ancient world. A post-structuralist critique of this field has taught us that the modern West has not simply responded to a reality of material and economic crises in the present, but has been instrumental in creating an image of 'poverty' and of a 'Third World', closely linked with enabling the process of economic imperialism. At a time when we are being encouraged to examine the ancient world within a post-colonial framework, which jettisons the outmoded relics of a colonial and imperialist past, it is worth stopping for a moment to consider how uneasily the ideology of development economics sits with this agenda.

Finally, the habit of splitting the problem of Roman society up into atomized categories for publication in special volumes, on slavery or poverty, for example, makes of each a fairly anodyne issue. Some interesting recent work has analysed how Roman aristocratic and early Christian writers viewed poverty and wealth, but little of it has focused specifically on North Africa, and much of it has not attempted the sort of holistic method advocated here.

SESSION 2

PRESTIGE ECONOMIES IN NORTH AFRICA

- Dr David L. Stone -

Ann Arbor, Michigan (USA)

Keywords: North African economy; prestige goods; North African states; power; interdisciplinary.

Production and distribution have been the topics most commonly analysed in the study of the ancient North African economy.

This paper asks instead what we can say about prestige goods, urbanism, and state formation. What were luxury goods, how was the availability of these controlled, and how were they used to demonstrate power? How does their use fit into the development of North African states?

An interdisciplinary and comparative approach will be sketched out, and case-studies evaluated, to show how North African material may be integrated to wider debates about the development of complex societies.

SESSION 3

WHO SHAPED AFRICA? THE ORIGINS OF AGRICULTURE AND URBANISM IN MAGHREB AND SAHARA

- Prof. David J. Mattingly -
University of Leicester (UK)

Keywords: North Africa; African peoples; agriculture; urban settlements; first millennium BC.

The prevailing orthodoxy in North African history and archaeology has been that the formation of the agricultural and heavily urbanized landscapes of Roman Africa was primarily due to external colonizing peoples, with native Africans generally believed to have remained in small-scale, pastoralist communities until the late first millennium BC. Then under Carthaginian influence, the rise of the Numidian kingdom of Massinissa saw some initial experimentation with sedentary farming and urban modes of settlement.

Recent work in northern Tunisia and in the Sahara suggests that this model – part of a modern colonialist discourse – needs a complete re-evaluation. The uptake of agriculture by African peoples and the occupation of permanent nucleated settlement sites can now be dated much earlier in the first millennium BC than hitherto suspected.

**CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN HELLENISTIC TOWN PLANNING IN THE
FAYYUM (EGYPT): BETWEEN TRADITION AND INNOVATION**

- Dr Gabriella Carpentiero -
Università degli Studi di Siena (Italy)

Keywords: Fayyum; *Dionysias*; Hellenistic town planning; Hippodamian theories; building tradition.

The aim of this study is to analyse how external town planning schemes were adopted in Egypt, what was their influence on local building tradition and what were the consequent changes in local patterns. The analysis will be focused on the case study of the Fayyum – and of *Dionysias* in particular – drawing from recent research on the site that employed integrated remote sensing techniques.

In the third century BC the Fayyum was the most Hellenized of the whole Lagid Egypt. Its role is fundamental for understanding how the Hippodamian theories were exported to Egypt and how this scheme was adopted by the Egyptian society.

This paper will show the organization of *Dionysias*'s town plan and its limits. The discussion will focus on the hypothesis that some features of Egyptian building tradition were merged together with Hellenistic innovation and that the new Hellenistic design was based on Egyptian know-how and knowledge. The orthogonal planning was certainly a feature of rigorous partition of areas and functions, as well as a reflection of the central power coming from the mainland. The 'city' was perceived not only as a construction, or as a political and sociological idea, but also as a transposition of the notion of *polis*. For this reason, Hippodamian town planning was adopted in the Fayyum not only in new foundations, such as the well-known cases of *Philadelphia* (founded in the first half of the third century BC) and *Dionysias* (dating between the end of the third and the end of the second century BC), but also in reconstructions of pre-existing cities (e.g. *Tebtynis* or *Soknopaion Nesos*), from the Ptolemaic period up to the Roman era.

**THE ΛΟΓΙΜΑ TEMPLES OF FAYYUM IN THE LATE PTOLEMAIC
AND ROMAN PERIOD**

- Ilaria Rossetti -

Università degli Studi di Siena (Italy)

Keywords: Egyptian religion; Fayyum; first-rank temples (λόγιμα ιερά); Sobek; temple administration.

According to Ptolemaic administrative sources, Egyptian temples were divided into three different ranks: first, second, and third class (πρῶτα, δεύτερα, ἐλάσσονα ιερά). In the Late Ptolemaic and Roman periods, on the other hand, sacred buildings were probably classified in two ranks only, the denomination of which is unknown. However, the most important temples were designated as λόγιμα ιερά.

This paper aims to understand the exact meaning of this honorific and administrative epithet – λόγιμα ιερά – by investigating, in particular, different aspects of the Fayyum region where available archaeological, as well as documentary sources are more numerous.

For this purpose, the administrative papyri containing the term λόγιμα ιερά will be analysed. This study will clarify the architectural diversity of first-rank holy buildings and of their annexes throughout the Fayyum region. Indeed, some of the sacred buildings located in the main cities are known as λόγιμα from the sources, while some others are considered to be first-class temples in the light of their importance within the area. These main temples are usually dedicated to the most important deity of the region: the crocodile Sobek. The manner in which Sobek was worshipped in first-rank temples will also be further investigated and assessed during this research.

BUILDING TECHNIQUES AND BUILDING TRADITION IN NORTH AFRICA

- Dr Stefano Camporeale -

École Normale Supérieure, Paris (France)

Keywords: Building techniques; *opus quadratum*; *opus Africanum*; Punic to Roman period; North Africa.

This paper aims to investigate the relationships between North African cultures and Rome through the analysis of local, Punic-Hellenistic, and Greco-Roman building techniques. The study is based on a re-interpretation of an article published by F. Rakob in 1982: ‘Römische Architektur in Nordafrika. Bautechnik und Bautradition’, where the author presented a general overview of the changes and diffusion of building technology from the Punic to the Roman period. Since then North African building techniques have not been the object of more comprehensive studies.

The paper looks at how Roman building techniques were adopted in North Africa and what was the outcome of their encounter with local influences. Given the vastness of this territory – as well as the variety of cultural, economic, administrative and geological contexts – the spread of technological knowledge and its problematic is focused on some new case studies and on some main techniques, such as *opus quadratum* and *opus Africanum*. The latter is made of vertical frameworks of stone blocks and was diffused all over North Africa during the Roman era – hence the label *opus Africanum*. As a result of this definition, it is often considered as a cultural indicator for the dissemination of ‘African’ building technology, not only in North Africa but also in other Mediterranean regions.

**FORTIFIED FARMS (*QSUR*) IN CYRENAICA: TYPOLOGY, CHRONOLOGY
AND THE LIBYAN DIMENSION**

- Ahmad Emrage -

University of Leicester (UK)

Keywords: Cyrenaica; fortified buildings (*qsur*); settlements; architectural evidence; indigenous traditions.

Fortified buildings (*qsur*) that formed part of wider settlements and were often associated with agricultural and industrial features are the most obvious architectural monuments of the countryside of Cyrenaica. However, this important and remarkable class of sites has not received a great deal of attention in the past.

The main aim of this paper is to shed light on the typology, chronology and function of these fortified structures, drawing on archaeological and literary sources and on recent survey data. It will also attempt to highlight indigenous cultural influences at the newly recorded sites and to compare this with evidence from some previous studies on similar sites in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania.

**TUMULI, GRAVES AND EPITAPHS IN WESTERN *MAURETANIA*
(SIXTH CENTURY BC – FIFTH CENTURY AD)**

- Prof. Emanuele Papi -

Università degli Studi di Siena (Italy)

Keywords: Western *Mauretania*; tumuli; funerary practices; Punic language; Libyan and Latin inscriptions.

In the Mauretanian tribes and chefferies known from the first millennium BC until the end of Roman occupation (fifth century AD), the indigenous communities buried their dead in cist tombs. These were differentiated by their grave goods and, for the chiefs, by the presence of dolmens, tumuli and anepigraphic *stelae*.

As societies became based on monarchy from the third century BC, new cosmopolitan practices were introduced: inscriptions with Punic and Punic/Libyan script, monumental architecture, and incineration rituals. The Roman occupation caused the abandonment of the Punic language and of incineration as a funerary practice. New types of tombs diffused all across the Mediterranean, such as the *cupa*, were introduced. Latin was far predominant in both military and civilian epitaphs, while Libyan inscriptions became increasingly rare and peripheral.

In the first three centuries AD, Latin epitaphs were based on very limited and standardized sets of formulas which varied according to the different communities. These began to change only with the spread of Christianity in the fourth century AD.

NORTH AFRICA IN THE TRIUMPH OF CORNELIUS BALBUS

- Dr Andrew Merrills -
University of Leicester (UK)

Keywords: Roman military triumphs; empire; geographic knowledge; Cornelius Balbus; Pliny the Elder.

This paper will examine the geographical information presented in the triumph of Cornelius Balbus, as preserved in the Natural History of the Elder Pliny. Scholars have long expressed their frustration at Pliny for the apparently anarchic manner in which this information is presented, while ignoring what this passage can tell us about the ways in which the Romans conceptualized their new empire.

The paper will take Pliny at his word that he replicated faithfully the triumphal records. From here, it will argue that Roman military triumphs adhered to a geographical syntax that was as meaningful for contemporary observers as it was alien to modern readers trapped by the epistemological framework of the Barrington Atlas.

The conclusions will cast little new light upon Balbus' important expedition against the *Garamantes*, but it will help explain how the information that he learned about the desert fringe was incorporated within imperial knowledge about the wider world.

SESSION 4

MARSHES, DESERTS, BIRDS AND INVADERS. THE LIMITS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

- Dr Jose-R. Pérez-Accino -

Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain)

Keywords: Egypt; geography; physical limits; perception; Egyptian mentality.

Ancient Egypt had a unique geographical setting. A narrow strip of land extending along thousands of miles and that makes life in society as a spatial structure determined by the physical limits.

The strict separation of the habitable and uninhabitable allowed an intellectual conception of the created world as coincident with the content between these physical limits, excluding from that world created what was outside it. Thus foreigners were associated directly with the world in which creation had taken place and, therefore, the physical limits become a mental image associated with the foreign, chaotic, messy, primal.

The paper will attempt to present the main lines of this approach in the ancient Egyptian mentality.

SESSION 4

RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND *TIPASA*: FROM DONATIST TO ARIAN PERSECUTION?

- Dr Gareth Sears -

University of Birmingham (UK)

Keywords: *Tipasa*; *Mauretania Caesariensis* (Algeria); religious identity; Christian communities; long-term analysis.

It is generally difficult to examine the religious identity of a particular African community and its interactions with external power over the long-term. Some elements of local religious identity might be evoked in our literary material for the most part we have to interpret mere moments of religious turmoil. Archaeologically we might examine construction or destruction of buildings such as temples or churches, but given the nature of that material it is difficult to tie such developments to particular Christian communities, given the mosaic of religious identities in Late Roman African cities.

One of the few communities where we can examine more than one moment through literary material, set within the context of substantial clearance of the ancient ruins, is *Tipasa* in *Mauretania Caesariensis*. Here, a Christian-‘Catholic’ religious identity is presented to us over a century, despite moments of persecution by both Donatists and Arians.

This paper will examine the hagiographic and polemical texts that comprise our evidence and consider whether they actually tell us anything about the Tipasan Christian community and what we can reconstruct about the religious identity of the community over the long-term.

**ROMAN AMPHORA PRODUCTION IN THE REGION OF TUNISIAN TRIPOLITANIA:
THE WORKSHOPS OF ZITHA AND HENCHIR KALKH**

- Elyssa Jerray -

Aix-Marseille Université (France) – Université de Sousse (Tunisia)

Keywords: Tunisia; Tripolitania; workshop; amphora; economy.

Our knowledge of pottery productive sites in Tunisia has considerably increased in these last years. New kilns are still regularly discovered during excavations, surveys or incidental findings. Thanks to some recent studies, it was possible to identify the products of some workshops. However, such studies are still rare and are mainly focused on the kilns of the Cap Bon and Sahel regions. The aim of this contribution is to highlight the ceramic production in a less studied region of southern Tunisia, by focusing on the sites of Zitha and Henchir Kalkh.

The first was discovered at the end of the 1990s. Zitha has been the subject of a first typological characterization which has linked the productions of this coastal region to a ceramic tradition best known in the east (current Libya). The presence of a workshop in Tunisia which produced these amphora types (Tripolitanian amphorae and imitations of Dressel 2/4) widens further west the area of this production, in a period predating the creation of the province of Tripolitania. Recent surveys have also led to the discovery of new workshops including that of Henchir Kalkh.

If the detailed typological study of these two workshops confirmed a Tripolitanian tradition, we would be able to assert that they also ‘borrowed’ some forms better known in the north of Tunisia (Africaine IIA, Keay 25?). In addition to this typological approach, the choice of these two sites provides a glimpse of two different productive contexts: Zitha is an important semi-urban workshop, specializing in ceramic production with more standardized forms; on the other hand, Henchir Kalkh is a rural context with a smaller production and a later chronology. Through the use of ceramic evidence, we can thus discern some first elements about a particular aspect of the economic life of this region.

**THE NORTH AFRICAN ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE: PRODUCTION
TOPOGRAPHY AND TRADE IN *ZEUGITANA* AND *BYZACENA*
DURING THE FOURTH CENTURY AD**

- Dr Lilia Palmieri -

Università degli Studi di Milano (Italy)

Keywords: *Zeugitana* and *Byzacena*; economic landscapes; production; transition and continuity; fourth century AD.

As part of a doctoral research on the socio-economic transformations in North Africa between the fourth and the seventh century AD, this poster aims to analyse the production topography of *Zeugitana* and *Byzacena* in the fourth century AD, a key transition period in continuity with the Roman imperial age. The goal is to investigate the distribution patterns of the production sites and the routes for intra- and inter-provincial trade, in order to reconstruct the socio-economic dynamics of the two provinces in the moment when Roman influence on the North African territory ended.

Surveys carried out in North Africa have revealed the existence of an intense production, through the identification of hundreds of foodstuff production facilities (such as olive oil and wine presses, fish-salting factories), and of dozens of amphorae workshops – all involved in the *annona* system to supply Rome.

Zeugitana and *Byzacena* show two different economic landscapes, with different rural production sites and urban realities. *Zeugitana* is characterized by a parcelling of the rural landscape in small production units gravitating around many different towns, and by urban spaces involved in foodstuff and pottery production. On the other hand, the organization of production in *Byzacena* was based on an inter-provincial trade system, with a rural landscape made of large production centres and a urban landscape in which only the periphery was involved in the production. Both these territories made use of the trade route connecting to Carthage (and to Rome?) as a preferential commercial axis, like in the previous centuries. However, *Byzacena* is also connected to the large commercial ports of the east coast.

**ROADS AS A SOCIAL FACTOR. ARTICULATION OF THE PROVINCIAL LANDSCAPE
OF ROMAN NORTH AFRICA THROUGH THE ROAD NETWORK**

- Patricia A. Argüelles Álvarez -

Universidad de Oviedo (Spain)

- Sergio España-Chamorro -

Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain)

Keywords: Roman road networks; North Africa; Romanization; archaeological landscape; trade.

The articulation of a provincial landscape is determined by the predominant geographic conditions of the local surroundings. The designs proposed by the Roman engineers varied according to the different locations and, although they followed the same basic principles of Roman land surveying and engineering, it was necessary to change and adapt their plans to the areas where they were to be implemented. For instance, the hard soils of North Africa are in stark contrast with the rocky mountainous areas of the Alpine mountain passes.

The importance of establishing stable travel routes for the articulation of the provincial landscape was driven by the need of interconnecting and communicating with the African continent – a territory which contributed to a great extent to the economy of the Empire. Roads were a way of communication, but they are also a guideline for understanding the forms of socialization between communities, as well as a driving force for active economical contacts.

This contribution analyses the landscape evolution by looking at the trade relations which influenced the construction of the road networks associated with geostrategic and trading purposes. The investigation is focused on the social role of roads as a main promoter of transcultural relations, on the trading activities favoured by this network, and on the importance of the surrounding landscape. As specific case studies, we have analysed the roads connecting *Hippo Regius* – key site of the terrestrial routes from the north towards Carthage – and the north cities of *Cirta*, *Thagaste* and *Rusicade*, and the passage towards *Mauretania Caesariensis*.

MERGING CULTURES IN FAZZAN: TOMBS AND MATERIAL CULTURE

- Dr Nick Ray -

University of Leicester (UK)

Keywords: *Garamantes*; Fazzan; burial traditions; ritual consumption; Garamantian and Roman material culture.

Garamantian funerary practices in Fazzan, Libya, often incorporate elements from both Saharan North Africa and the Roman world. As a result, they represent a merging of cultural components beyond the limits of the Roman Empire. In addition to large monuments visible within the landscape, such as classically-inspired *mausolea* at Uat Uat, Tuwash, and Fugar, portable material culture of Mediterranean origin is found within Garamantian-style burials, alongside more locally produced items.

Recent work by the Desert Migrations Project has seen thousands of tombs surveyed in the Wadi-al-Ajal area of Fazzan and over one hundred and fifty have been fully excavated, dating from the Proto-urban Garamantian period through to the Late Garamantian period (c. 500 BC – AD 700). The research team is in the process of writing-up and analysing these burials and this poster presents some preliminary results, focusing on material culture within the tombs to indicate chronological and geographical patterns. This study also highlights changes in ritual consumption, such as from aceramic burial assemblages to ceramic ones. This suggests the shift was from no pottery, to the placement of local handmade pottery outside of the tombs for offering vessels, to varied assemblages of ceramic vessels within the tombs.

The purpose of mapping the different ceramic assemblages over time and space is twofold: firstly, to trace possible trading connections and periods of economic growth and decline; secondly, to identify trends between different cemeteries that could suggest changes in burial practices, the movement of people across the landscape, and shifting centres of power. There are strong implications for demonstrating the surprisingly sophisticated commercial networks that must have operated across this arid stretch of desert, distributing goods, as well as ideas.

**A TROUPE OF AFRICAN ACROBAT TERRACOTTAS FROM *THMUIS* (EGYPT):
ARTISTIC CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ROME
AND THE EGYPTIAN NILE DELTA**

- James Bennett -
Durham University (UK)

Keywords: Terracotta figurines; acrobats; *Thmuis* (Egypt); Greco-Roman period; cross cultural connection.

Excavations by the University of Hawaii at the Greco-Roman city of *Thmuis* in 2011 found a group of acrobat terracotta figurines in a votive pit located up on the centre of the tell in the heart of the ancient city. Examination of the terracottas and the material from within the pit showed that these figurines were deposited in the pit in the early Roman period.

The acrobats are modelled in classical Greek style and form part of the genre of figurines and scenes representing Africans that were popular in Egypt during the Greco-Roman period. These terracotta figurines are the first example of this terracotta mould series to be found in Egypt depicting this pose. These terracottas have parallels with Roman statuary being erected in the city of Rome in the early Roman period indicating a cross cultural connection of artistic representations of African acrobats in Rome and the Egyptian Nile Delta.

THE MAALGA OF CARTHAGE: BETWEEN CITY AND HINTERLAND

- Dr Elisa Panero -

Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici del Piemonte (Italy)

Keywords: Maalga; Carthage; city and hinterland; ‘Great Cisterns’; Punic and Roman phases.

The aim of this research (started in 2003 with the Project ‘Parc culturel et environnemental de la Maalga et valorisation des Ports Poniques’) is to analyse the area located north-west of Carthage. It is a strip of land that since the origin of the Punic centre acted as a border area between the city and its hinterland.

The most important archaeological find is the imposing complex of the ‘Great Cisterns’. This is a Roman building, though at the current state of research it cannot be dated with certainty. However, a comparison with similar structures found during the archaeological survey in 2003-2005 and the results of the chemical analyses performed on the building materials would suggest a pre-Roman/Late Punic chronology, with subsequent modifications thorough time.

The area also shows evident traces of agricultural land organization that, in its final stage, could date to the Roman period, although its origins are presumably Late Punic (the Megara mentioned in literary sources?). In the Roman era, this sector seems to maintain its peculiar agricultural features. The threat of the barbarian invasions is again confirmed by the evidence found in the area between the city and its hinterland: for instance, in the Maalga’s south-east sector we find traces of walls built in the Theodosian period (of which some ruins are visible, and other legible traces emerged from the geophysical survey).

Therefore, in the Maalga area it is possible to trace the role played by Rome and by the Punic substrata, and, in the Late Roman era, by the imperial power and African populations, with a respective influence on architecture, technology and agriculture.

**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE ROMAN THEATRE IN THE CONTEXT
OF ROMANIZATION OF *LEPTIS MAGNA***

- Jakub Mosiejczyk -

Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń (Poland)

Keywords: *Leptis Magna*; ancient theatre; Romanization; Roman architecture; Roman propaganda.

This work deals with the décor and architecture of the theatre at *Leptis Magna*, which acted as a vehicle of Romanization of the cosmopolitan society inhabiting the *municipium*. The people of *Leptis Magna*, coming from different ethnical groups and presenting diverse cultural activities, were all united by the Romans who spread the culture of the Empire to the conquered territories.

The structures of Roman administration helped unify the diverse ethnical substrate of the society, drawing from a rich cultural inheritance. Unlike acts of law and monumental architecture of various functions, the Roman theatre engaged all senses and was accessible to the people of *Leptis Magna*. Both culture and propaganda were spread not only through classical plays, but also through the whole architecture of the building, the inscriptions and artistic motifs represented in over 130 sculptures.

This study is an attempt to summarize all the aspects of Romanization in the Lepcitanian theatre. The original placement of the sculptures can be determined thanks to the favourable weather conditions of North Africa, which have contributed to preserve the ruins in a very good state. This has provided an exceptional opportunity for developing archaeological theories. The present contribution describes various parts of the theatre where sculptures constitute homogeneous thematic groups addressing the diversified Tripolitanian society.

THE FORTIFIED FARMS OF CYRENAICA

- Ana de Francisco Heredero -

Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain)

Keywords: Cyrenaica; *gsur*; fortified farms; nomadism; Late Roman Empire.

The Libyan landscape of the Late Roman Empire is characterized by the existence of numerous *gsur* or fortified farms. Even though its defensive nature has been discussed, their proliferation from the third century AD is related to the raids of nomadic tribes that frequently invaded Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

This poster will present an architectural analysis of the fortified buildings in Cyrenaica, in addition to examining its economic importance, from the discovery of numerous oil and wine presses at various sites. Besides, social connotations will be proposed, given that the size of some of these farming centres may suggest the existence of abundant local labour that might have worked in dependency status – perhaps as *coloni*. Also, it will be suggested that some of the nomadic tribes who inhabited the territory beyond the frontier crossed the *limes* of Cyrenaica to work on farms seasonally, as epigraphic evidence suggests.

To sum up, we will present a brief architectural, economic and social survey of these buildings in connection with the historical context of Late Roman Cyrenaica and with the existence of nomadism.

VENATIONES IN ROMAN AFRICA (FIRST – FOURTH CENTURY AD)

- Anna Sparreboom -

Universiteit van Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Keywords: *Venationes*; cultural performance; meaning; local; Roman Africa.

The notion that amphitheatre spectacles epitomize the essence of *Romanitas* is central to many modern studies of the Roman games. Drawing on anthropological theory, some ancient historians have understood arena spectacles as ‘cultural performances’: occasions that were important for the ‘reproduction of cultural and social norms’, events during which people exhibited their culture to themselves and others. As such, spectacles are also considered to have been important as tools or vehicles of Romanization.

Surprisingly, however, arena shows in the Roman provinces have not received much scholarly attention. Furthermore, even though animal spectacles (*venationes*) were an integral part of *munera* throughout the Empire, they are not often analysed in detail.

This contribution aims to partially address this lacuna by investigating the significance and function of *venationes* in provincial contexts: that of Roman-African cities. Considering the physical proximity of exotic animals and the involvement of local associations in capturing and shipping them to Rome, we might expect that the Africans’ disposition towards *venationes* differed from that of Romans or other provincials. Did local traditions and involvement influence the development and meaning of *venationes* in the African towns? Furthermore, it seems unlikely that African *venationes* celebrated Roman hegemony, the extent of the Empire and the power of human over nature in the same way as the imperial shows in Rome.

By examining different types of sources – particularly inscriptions, curses aimed at *venatores* and mosaic depictions – I will investigate the meaning, function and message of *venationes* in the specific contexts of Roman African towns.

THE ANCIENT ROMAN CYRENE: THE CITY OF THE GOD APOLLO

- Krystian Luczak -

Polska Akademia Nauk, Wrocław (Poland)

Keywords: Cyrene; Apollo; Greek tradition; *silphium*; Romanization.

According to the Greek historian Herodotus the ancient city of Cyrene was sacred to Apollo of Delphi. It was founded on the African coast by settlers from Thera in 631 BC and stretched on two hills of the plateau called Gebel Akhdar (Green Mountain) about fifteen kilometers from the coast. The ruins of the ancient town develop over this large area – 1600 m in length and 1000 m in width, leaving out the necropolis and the extra-urban sanctuaries. This wealthy colony quickly became an extraordinary pole of attraction for Mediterranean trade. Cyrene established commercial relations with numerous Greek cities, monopolized the trade of the *silphium* plant – highly prized by both Greeks and Romans, which made Cyrene the richest city in Africa. Cyrene was the hometown of several famous Greek scholars and scientists.

In 74 BC the region was officially annexed as a Roman province, and from that moment it underwent a gradual process of Romanization. As the Roman culture of the first century AD originated profoundly from the Greek tradition, the architecture of the early Roman period was rather traditional and followed Greek patterns too. Then, from the second century AD the city was extensively rebuilt to become a fascinating example of perfect coexistence between both Greek and Roman forms of urban planning.

Although Cyrene is definitely one of the most remarkable complexes of ruins in the entire world, it is also, unbelievably, one of the most neglected and endangered UNESCO World Heritage sites in the Mediterranean basin.

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