

SandMan “Shapes and Meaning”

The matt-painted pottery of the North-Lucanian district: culture, identity, symbols and gender. An interdisciplinary study of a local community in Southern Italy.



Presentation

Revisiting archaic communication systems.

The archaic communication systems of societies lacking conventional forms of writing remain understudied. Related research has focused on Greek objects, and has neglected the indigenous ceramic decorations and symbols on vases. The study of such objects can reveal their role in disseminating identity - and culture - related messages.

The EU-funded SandMan project will research the material culture of archaic societies lacking conventional forms of writing, between the end of the Iron Age and the Archaic Period (mid-7th/mid-5th cent. BC). The project will focus on the means of communication between the communities of southern Italy, through semiotic, archaeometric and typological approaches. SandMan will carry out a comprehensive and innovative study of the ceramics, to understand their symbolic ‘lexicon’ and their role in gender identification and communication.

Short summary

What were the communication systems of ancient societies without writing? Is it possible to use the decorations and symbols painted on the vases like a new Rosetta Stone? Is it possible to reconstruct the language of archaic communities that have disappeared? Objects convey ideas, memories and messages, and the ceramic decorations are certainly one of these vectors, of conservation but also dissemination of identity and cultural messages. Although it has all the potential to represent a privileged means of knowledge, most of its meanings still elude us.

The objective of project SandMan is to understand the ways of communication between the archaic communities of southern Italy, free of conventional forms of writing, between the end of Iron Age and the Archaic Period (mid-7th/ mid-5th cent. BC).

Project Details:

Type of Project: Horizon 2020, Actions Marie S. Curie (Individual Fellowship)

Coordinator: Rennes 2 University

Laureat name: Cesare Vita

Research Centre: CREAAH

Total funding: €184,707

Rennes 2 allocation: €184,707

Duration: Starting on September 1, 2021 - 2023 (24 months)

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H2020, Individual Fellowship, archaeology; anthropology; Gender; North-Lucanian area; Matt-Painted ware; Peuketiantes; post-colonial; interdisciplinarity; cultural identity; symbols meaning; material culture; holistic study

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