

webinar series

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# LE SCIENZE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE ON AIR

## Borders not Limits

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JULY, 8th 2024  
3.00 - 5.00 PM

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STREAMING ON **ZOOM CNR ISPC:**  
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pwd=qyIwsUMPyH8G9VJtnbmTlIfSaPhxVq.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87349881745?pwd=qyIwsUMPyH8G9VJtnbmTlIfSaPhxVq.1)

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# Borders not Limits

JULY, 8th 2024 | 3.00-5.00 PM

Organizer **Giuseppina Capriotti**

**Borders not Limits** is a project financed by the Italian-French University through the Galileo Call and involves researchers from the Istituto di Scienze del Patrimonio Culturale – Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche and the UMR 8167 Orient et Méditerranée–Mondes Pharaoniques - Centre national de la recherche scientifique.

The project was born from collaborative contacts between two researchers – Giuseppina Capriotti (CNR-ISPC) and Gihane Zaki (CNRS - UMR 8167, SHS) – who have been engaged for years in studying the two most important **border areas of ancient Egypt, the southern one and the north-eastern**. Since late prehistory and throughout the period of dynastic Egypt, these regions have provided important and very ancient evidence of **intercultural contacts, phenomena of dispersion and migration, exchanges, diplomatic as well as political initiatives**.

These studies have led to an interest in ancient models of adaptation, contact, coexistence and inclusiveness, in the face of critical situations and relative resilience.

The seminar presents the research of **three scholars and an artist on Egypt's ability**, through the millennia, to be a centre of propulsion and attraction, a place of contact and meeting.

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ZOOM CNR ISPC

**3.00 PM****Costanza Miliani**

Director of CNR ISPC

**Welcome speech****3.10 PM****Giuseppina Capriotti** 

CNR ISPC, Rome - Senior Researcher and project PI

**Ancient Tjeku: living on the north-eastern border  
of Egypt**

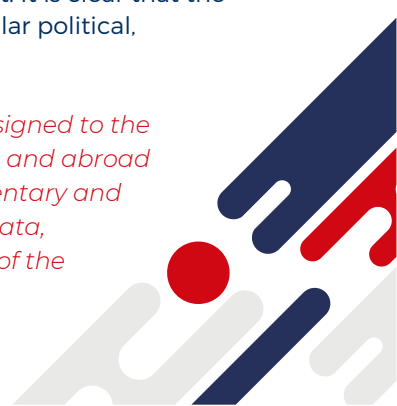
IMaskhuta (ancient Tjeku) is located in northeast Egypt, a problematic border over the millennia, along a road (the Wadi Tumilat) between Egypt and Palestine, travelled by merchants, migrants and armies. In the Wadi Tumilat, a navigable canal (Canal of the Pharaohs) that connected the Mediterranean and the Red Sea was dug. The area has been the scene of cultural and technological exchanges, population displacements and bloody conflicts. The large and thriving ancient city of Tjeku, through archaeological excavations, shows the signs of a rich multicultural population which, in a problematic area, evidently benefited from the environmental situation, thanks to the enhancement of the territorial peculiarities.

*Giuseppina Capriotti is Senior Researcher of the National Research Council of Italy, Institute of Heritage Science. Former Archaeological Attaché IIC-CAI Italian Embassy Cairo, qualified Full Professor of Egyptology. She founded the archaeological mission at Tell el-Maskhuta, of which she has the scientific direction together with Andrea Angelini. She has led several interdisciplinary projects.*

**3.30 PM****Gihane Zaki** CNRS - UMR 8167, SHS - Ingénieur de recherche and  
project PI**The southern frontier and the diplomacy of the  
regional elite in the 2nd century BC. J.C.**

In a political context as particular as that of the southern border of Egypt, endowed with a particular geography and a singular cultural topography, our interest focused on the pragmatic/Western approach of the Lagide power towards this area, located almost 1000 km south of Alexandria, their new capital. According to the late texts collected and published so far, it has been clearly demonstrated that this distant fringe, fluctuating throughout history, was closely linked to the mode of management of the first nome of Upper Egypt To-seti and has always received particular attention from the kings of Egypt. It is clear that the multiple mutations of this southern margin have conferred – as a consequence – a singular political, administrative and religious status to this entire region of the first cataract.

*Gihane Zaki is Ingénieur de recherche in analysis of historical and cultural sources assigned to the Pharaonic Worlds component. In interaction with the various research teams in France and abroad (Europe, Middle East, Egypt), she works on the enrichment and valorization of documentary and scientific sources in Egyptology. Her main mission is to develop and exploit historical data, defined within the framework of a research team. Her main research area is the area of the First Cataract of the Nile, the southern frontier of Pharaonic Egypt.*





3.50 PM

**Alessandra Molinari** 

University of Rome Tor Vergata

Full Professor of Medieval Archaeology

Department of History, Cultural Heritage, Education and Society

**Islamic Egypt as the hinge between the  
Mediterranean, India and China (10th-12th centuries):  
an archaeological perspective**

Islamic Egypt, particularly during the centuries between the 10th and 12th centuries, saw strong economic growth and was particularly receptive to receiving, reworking and passing on to the Mediterranean craft techniques, plants and agricultural techniques, objects and tastes from China, India or other parts of the Islamic world. In those centuries, the repertoire of tableware was completely renewed, papyrus was replaced by paper, natron by vegetable ashes to produce glass, cotton and sugar were introduced, to name but a few of the most striking innovations. Through an analysis of archaeological finds, a reflection on this important role of Egypt as a crucial area in medieval economies will be proposed.

*Alessandra Molinari is full professor of Medieval Archaeology at the University of Rome Tor Vergata (Department of History, Cultural Heritage, Education and Society). She directed with M.O.H. Carver (University of York) the ERC project 'The archaeology of Regime Change. Sicily in Transition (6th to 13th)' and participated as senior researcher in the ERC project Petrifying wealth, directed by A. Rodriguez (CESIC Madrid). Her studies have mainly concerned the city of Rome in the Middle Ages, medieval Tuscany, but above all Sicily from the Byzantine to the Swabian age. She is currently planning a multidisciplinary research project on Egypt, Sicily and Tunisia between the 9th and 14th centuries.*



4.20 PM

**Antonella Leoni**

Italian artist in Cairo

**"The Art of 'embracing cultures'. Welcoming Islam  
through the Art of Calligraphy"**

Antonella Leoni is an Italian artist in Cairo, passionate about the Art of Arabic Calligraphy and Marbling, expert in Islamic Art. Her artistic approach combines ancient techniques with a mystical connotation that makes her works known for her imagination and contemplation of the Divine. Verses from the Holy Qur'an, Hadith and old poems inspire her feelings and imagination, as well as the ancient pattern marbling motifs which create unique effects. Indeed, the marbling process symbolizes both the abstract expression, which constitutes the most basic philosophy in Islamic Art, and submission to Divine, which constitutes the most basic attitude in Islam. The creative process of Antonella, started and developed in Egypt, seems to be born directly from the Egyptian cultural climate, since its oldest origins. Not only it is inspired by Islamic culture, but it lives in the intuition of the Pharaonic tradition. In Antonella's works, figures and letters emerge from the papyrus coming out of the water, and recognised by the artist, to create an intense, colorful, and powerful universe, fantastic and at the same time rooted in history.

*Antonella Leoni obtained her Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art and the Arts of Islamic World from the Holloway University, London and the British Museum in 2003, and the Diploma in the Art of Arabic Calligraphy and Ornaments at the Academia Khalil Agha in Cairo in 2019.*

4.40 PM **Q&A**

5.00 PM **Final notes**