

Istituto Svizzero

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UNIVERSITÄT
BERN



Schweizerischer
Nationalfonds

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International Conference

Christian Sarcophagi: Iconography, Textual Sources, and Models

Roma, Istituto Svizzero di Roma, Sala Elvetica

11–13 September 2025

Thursday, 11 September

9:00 Greetings & Introduction: Manuela Studer-Karlen & Vasiliki Tsamakda

Session I: From Pagan to Christian Iconography

Chair: Vasiliki Tsamakda

9:10-9:50 Alessandro Vella (Musei Vaticani): *I sarcophagi nel IV secolo, tra Pagani e Cristiani*

9:50-10:30 Jaś Elsner (Corpus Christi College Oxford): *Inventing Christian Visuality in the Realm of the Dead: Sarcophagus, Catacomb and Inscription in the Roman Tombscape*

10:30-11:10 Edmund Thomas (Durham University): *Architecture and Biblical Narrative: the Early Christian Adoption of the Column Sarcophagus*

Coffee Break

Session II: Further Developments in Christian Iconography

Chair: Jaś Elsner

11:40-12:20 Barbara Mazzei (Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra): *L'Interscambio tra le Arti. Lo sviluppo del Repertorio Iconografico Paleocristiano*

12:20-13:00 Laura Lerchner (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz): *Überlegungen zur Gruppe der sog. Passionssarkophagi: Forschungsgeschichte und Ikonographie*

13:00-13:40 Philipp Niewöhner (Georg August-Universität Göttingen): *The Sarcophagi of New Rome. What Compares, What Does Not, and Why*

Lunch Break

Session III: New Discoveries - New Interpretations

Chair: Manuela Studer-Karlen

15:20-16:00 Umberto Utrio (Musei Vaticani): *I Sarcophagi del Museo Pio Cristiano: Recenti Acquisizioni Iconografiche*

16:00-16:40 Gaia Mariotti (Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana): *In una Scena di Miracolo. La possibile Rappresentazione del Defunto su un Sarcofago a Fregio Continuo del Museo Pio Cristiano in Vaticano*

16:40-17:20 Cecilia Proverbio (Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana): *The Punishment of the Elders in the Story of Susanna: A New Sample from San Sebastiano fuori le mura in Rome*

Coffee Break

18:00 Evening Lecture

Jutta Dresken-Weiland (Georg August-Universität Göttingen): *Die Sammlung frühchristlicher Sarkophage am Campo Santo Teutonico und der Stand der Sarkophagforschung*

19:30 Reception at the Istituto Svizzero di Roma

Friday, 12 September

Session IV: Iconographic Case Studies I

Chair: Philipp Niewöhner

9:00-9:40 Robin Jensen (University of Notre Dame): *The Diminutive Recipients of Jesus's Healing Miracles: Does Size Convey Meaning?*

9:40-10:20 Manuela Studer-Karlen (Universität Bern): *Resurrection of the Dead on Early Christian Sarcophagi*

10:20-11:00 Galit Noga-Banai (Hebrew University of Jerusalem): *Reflections on the Representation of the Ascension on Roman Sarcophagi*

Coffee Break

Session V: Iconographic Case Studies II

Chair: Jutta Dresken-Weiland

11:30-12:10 Mark D. Ellison (Brigham Young University): *The Allocation of Labors to Adam and Eve on Christian Sarcophagi: Patrons, Viewers, and New Perspectives*

12:10-12:50 Vasiliki Tsamakda (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz): *Der Sündenfall in der Sarkophagplastik*

12:50-13:30 Athanasios Semoglou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki): *Saint Thecla on the Decoration of the Early Christian Sarcophagi*

13:30-14:00: Conclusion

Lunch Break

16:00: Visit (and Discussion) of the Early Christian Sarcophagi in the Museo Pio Cristiano (only for speakers)

Saturday, 13 September

9:00-12:00 Visit (and Discussion) of the Via Latina Catacomb (only for speakers)