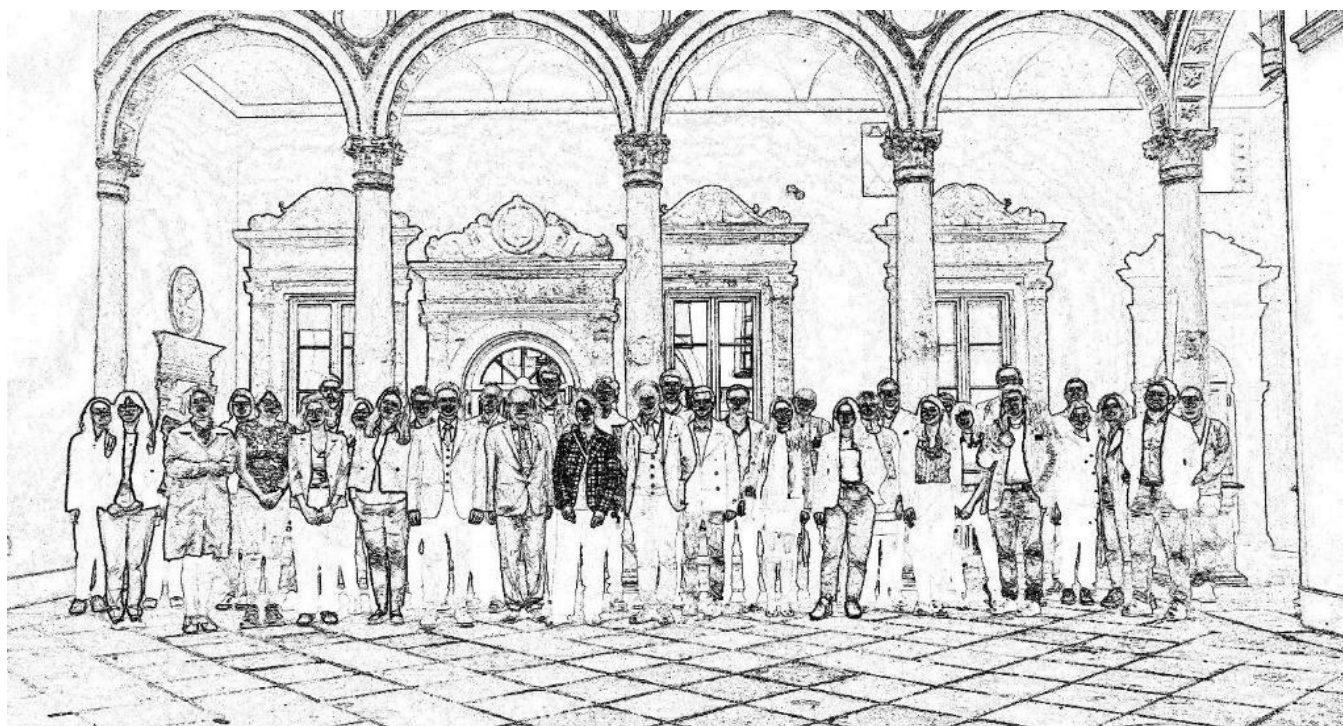
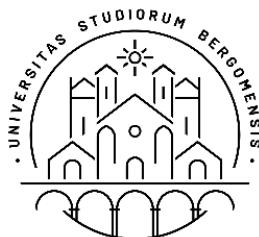


PROSOPOGRAFIE 2024

*Atti delle giornate di studio,
Università degli Studi di Bergamo,
16-18 maggio 2024*



A cura di Elena Gritti



Università degli Studi di Bergamo

2025

Prosopografie 2024. Atti delle giornate di studio, Università degli Studi di Bergamo, 16-18 maggio 2024
/ Elena Gritti (a cura di) – Bergamo: Università degli studi di Bergamo, 2025
ISBN: 978-88-97253-14-3
DOI: [10.13122/978-88-97253-14-3](https://doi.org/10.13122/978-88-97253-14-3)

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<https://aisberg.unibg.it/handle/10446/303412>

Progetto grafico: Servizi Editoriali
Università degli Studi di Bergamo
via Salvecchio, 19
24129 Bergamo
Cod. Fiscale 80004350163
P. IVA 01612800167

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Epistolary Migrants. A Digital Prosopographic Approach to Explore Migration and Mobility in the Correspondence of Cyprian of Carthage¹

Mobility and Religion

Researching migration and mobility and their political, economic, social, and religious implications is far from being an easy exercise for the ancient Roman world. The difficulty arises not so much from the rarity of the phenomenon or the presumed fixity of premodern societies², but rather from the scarcity of evidence documenting migration and mobility. Indeed, ancient sources are in general notoriously ignorant of addressing movement or movement-related issues directly³. In addition, especially literary sources have massive elite bias and often provide anecdotal evidence making any generalizations hazardous. The otherwise rich epigraphic record is largely opaque, too. Migrants, often freedmen, did their utmost to blend into the dominant epigraphic landscape of Rome when it came to self-representation in funerary inscriptions. They proudly promoted their newly gained achievement of Roman citizenship and disregarded anything that would suggest non-Roman origins, ethnicity, customs, or religion⁴. The emerging field of bioarchaeology promised to shed hard science-based light on the phenomenon by analysing stable isotopes from teeth and bones⁵. Although these methods allow for the quantification and subsequent analysis of the ratio of migrants in the population, the representativeness of the material remains as much in

¹ Acknowledgements. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Elena Gritti for organizing the 'Prosopographia 2024' conference in Bergamo and for her kind invitation to contribute to this volume. I would also like to thank for conference participants, especially Julia Hillner and Máirín MacCarron for their valuable comments and insightful feedback to my presentation. This research has received generous funding from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), grant nr. 217315 in form of an SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship to the author. Parts of this research has been conducted during my fellowship at the ERC project IN-ROME hosted at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa. I am deeply indebted to Barbara Borg for her support and her team, Antonio Campus, Francesca D'Andrea, Consuelo Manetta and Umberto Soldovieri for the welcoming and stimulating environment.

² Since the seminal work of N. Purcell - P. Horden, *The corrupting sea: a study of Mediterranean history*, Malden, MA 2000 the role and significance of mobility and migration has increasingly been recognised prompting C. Moatti, *Mobility in the Roman world: new concepts, new perspectives*, in *Migration and migrant identities in the Middle East from antiquity to the Middle Ages*, cur. J. Yoo et al., London 2019, 15–26 to declare recently the 'migration-turn' in ancient history. It remains debated, however, the extent to which the ancient Roman world was mobile. See G. Woolf, *Movers and Stayers*, in *Migration and mobility in the early Roman Empire*, cur. L. de Ligt - L. E. Tacoma, Leiden - Boston 2016, 438–461.

³ The phenomenon is prevalent not only in the Graeco-Roman world but also in later periods, such as the Byzantine era. C. Rapp et al. (ed.), *Mobility and Migration in Byzantium: A Sourcebook*, Göttingen 2023, 17; L. E. Tacoma - E. Lo Cascio, *Writing Migration*, in *The impact of mobility and migration in the Roman empire: proceedings of the twelfth workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Rome, June 17–19, 2015)*, cur. E. Lo Cascio et al., Leiden - Boston 2017, 1–24.

⁴ See e. g. D. Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: citizens and strangers*, London 2000; C. Ricci, *Stranieri illustri e comunità immigrate a Roma: vox diversa populorum*, Roma 2006. The phenomenon is not confined to Rome, as Claire Holleran has recently demonstrated through her analysis of over 30.000 surviving inscriptions from Iberia. Approximately 550 of these inscriptions pertain to migration and mobility, accounting only for ca. 1.7% of the total. See C. Holleran, *Mapping Roman Migration*, 2021, <https://mappingromanmigration.exeter.ac.uk/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

⁵ C. Bruun, *Water, oxygen isotopes, and immigration to Ostia-Portus*, «Journal of Roman Archaeology», 23 (2010), 109–132; K. Killgrove, *Migration and mobility in Imperial Rome*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2011.

the dark as the story behind individual migrants⁶. In short, despite the abundance and versatility of historical record, migrants are virtually invisible.

The challenges are equally, if not more significant when addressing the religious implications of migration and mobility during the period of the Principate (27 BCE–284 CE). Scholarly investigations frequently focus on ‘foreign’ or ‘migrant cults,’ specifically examining the spread of local, often ‘oriental’ deities such as Isis within the Mediterranean⁷. Nevertheless, inquiries repeatedly encounter the same persistent issue: the scarcity of sources, often, but not exclusively, limited to the epigraphic and archaeological record⁸. It is noteworthy that the emerging cult of Christ, which—despite some unique features—shares many characteristics with its main competitors such as Mithras or Isis, received so far little attention in this context⁹. Admittedly, the documentation for the first one and a half centuries only on occasion supersedes evidence for other cults¹⁰. The situation changes from the mid-2nd century CE onward with a successively increasing amount of material. Tapping into this corpus not only expands the available data but also mitigates the elite bias, as the majority of Christ followers demonstrably belonged to the lower social strata¹¹. Thus, exploring the mobility patterns of Christ followers has the potential to increase the visibility of migrants in general and underprivileged migrants belonging to a minority religion in particular.

⁶ L. E. Tacoma, *Bones, Stones, and Monica: Isola Sacra Revisited*, in *The impact of mobility and migration in the Roman empire: proceedings of the twelfth workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Rome, June 17–19, 2015)*, cur. E. Lo Cascio et al., Leiden – Boston 2017, 132–154.

⁷ Representative examples are C. Auffarth, *Religio migrans: Die «Orientalischen Religionen» im Kontext antiker Religionen: Ein theoretisches Modell*, in *Religioni in contatto nel Mediterraneo antico: modalità di diffusione e processi di interferenza*, cur. B. Corinne et al., Pisa 2008, 333–363; C. Bonnet – L. Bricault, *Divinità in viaggio: Culti e miti in movimento nel Mediterraneo antico*, Bologna 2021; E. M. Orlin, *Foreign cults in Rome: creating a Roman Empire*, Oxford – New York 2010; S. Price, *Religious Mobility in the Roman Empire*, «The Journal of Roman Studies», 102 (2012), 1–19. Also the Jewish diaspora at Rome and in Italy is relatively well mapped. See e. g. A. Collar, *Religious networks in the Roman Empire: The spread of new ideas*, Cambridge 2013; S. Rocca, *In the Shadow of the Caesars: Jewish Life in Roman Italy*, Leiden – Boston 2022; L. V. Rutgers, *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome: Evidence of Cultural Interaction in the Roman Diaspora*, Leiden – Boston 1995; C. Vismara, “Where were the Jews of the Diaspora buried?” *Riflessioni a più di vent’anni dal lavoro di David Noy*, in *LRBT. Dall’archeologia all’epigrafia / De l’archéologie à l’épigraphie*, cur. N. Chiarenza et al., Turnhout 2021, 343–355.

⁸ A good example is A. Collar, *Religious networks in the Roman Empire*, cit., but the study of D. Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, cit. or C. Ricci, *Orbis in urbe: fenomeni migratori nella Roma imperiale*, Roma 2005 engage predominantly with epigraphic evidence.

⁹ Well studied is the apostolic and post-apostolic age. See e. g. V. H. Förster, *Religion und Mobilität bei den frühen Christen nach dem Zeugnis der Apostelgeschichte*, in *Minderheiten und Migration in der griechisch-römischen Welt*, Leiden – Boston 2015, 165–184; T. Luckritz Marquis, *Transient apostle: Paul, travel, and the rhetoric of empire*, New Haven 2013; T. A. Robinson, *Friends, Romans, Countrymen: Reflections on the Membership of the Church in Rome*, in *The First Urban Churches 6: Rome and Ostia*, cur. L. L. Welborn – H. James R., Atlanta 2021, 201–240; K. Waldner, *Ignatius’ Reise von Antiochia nach Rom: Zentralität und lokale Vernetzung im christlichen Diskurs des 2. Jahrhunderts.*, in *Zentralität und Religion*, cur. H. Cancik et al., Tübingen 2006, 95–121. The pre-Constantinian era, however, remains in general understudied. Important studies are A. Handl, *All Roads Lead to Conflict? Christian Migration to Rome circa 200*, «Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum», 63 (2020), 118–138; and G. La Piana, *Foreign Groups in Rome during the First Centuries of the Empire*, «The Harvard Theological Review», 20 (1927), 183–403. For an overview see A. Handl, «Christian» migration flows, in *Early Christian Centres: Rome*, Tübingen forthcoming.

¹⁰ This observation remains valid despite the large number of studies exploring the early spread of the Christ cult during the apostolic and post-apostolic era. See note 9 for references.

¹¹ See e. g. P. F. Esler (ed.), *The early Christian world*, London – New York 2017 generally to early Christ followers and P. Lampe, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten: Untersuchungen zur Sozialgeschichte*, Tübingen 1989 to Rome in special.

Whether Isis or Christ followers, understanding migration, mobility, and their religious implications necessitates a comprehensive knowledge of the individuals who moved. Prosopography, the collective study of the lives of actors sharing common background characteristics, is a well-established method for examining both individuals and their movement patterns¹². The aim of this paper is to lay out a conceptual framework for exploring religious migration and mobility of Christ followers by harnessing recent achievements in digital prosopography.

Letter Collections and Mobility

An optimal point of departure for such an endeavour is the largest extant 'homogenous' collection of writings of the pre-Constantinian period: the epistolary corpus of Cyprian († 258 CE), bishop of Carthage. Exploring letters for the reconstruction of movement offers numerous advantages. First, it accesses a relatively coherent corpus of writings especially in contrast to circumstantial and scattered testimonies such as inscriptions. Second, actors can participate in various events across different contexts, times, and locations, and thus they can be mentioned in various letters. This enables us to track the movements of individuals who might otherwise appear static in other source types. Third, the act of sending letters inherently presupposes both physical movements—a person had to travel to carry the letter—and the existence of a network through which the letter was transmitted. The network of letters delineates a complex web of relationships between the sender(s) and recipients, and, on an additional level, a broader network of individuals mentioned within the correspondence. Fourth, letters permit the drawing of conclusions regarding the relationships between individuals and the nature of those relationships. This applies not only to the correspondents but also to those they mention¹³. Lastly, letters contain personal information and offer substantial metadata, including the sender, addressee, place, date, and sometimes even the methods of sending, as noted in the *incipit* and conclusion¹⁴.

In short, letter collections are particularly well suited for exploring religious mobility and its implications. They allow us to go beyond identifying common patterns among moving individuals at the biographical level—the primary aim of prosopographic research—and also illuminate their interpersonal connections. In other words, this facilitates the reconstruction of individual actors' movements and the exploration of the role religious networks played for Christ followers. This latter aspect should not be underestimated, as recent migration studies have demonstrated that interconnectedness is a key resource for organizing and facilitating mobility¹⁵.

¹² Instructive are the essays in the volume K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (ed.), *Prosopography approaches and applications: a handbook*, Oxford 2007. For conventional approaches to explore migration and mobility see A. Handl, *All Roads Lead to Conflict?*, cit.; D. Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, cit.; C. Ricci, *Orbis in urbe*, cit.; L. V. Rutgers, *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome*, cit. Digital implementations are for example E. Gritti, *HUMOT: A Prosopographical Online Resource for Ancient and Late Antique History*, in *The Ancient World Goes Digital*, Leiden – Boston 2023, 386–411; C. Holleran, *Mapping Roman Migration*, cit.

¹³ A good example for using this kind of information is the CONNEC database. <https://discover-connect.openatlas.eu/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

¹⁴ Several projects harvested and used metadata of letters to compile or compliment existing prosopographic databases. See for instance 'Mapping the Republic of Letters' at Stanford (<http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/>) and R. Ahnert – S. Ahnert, *Tudor networks of power*, New York 2023. The dataset and tools can be accessed at <https://github.com/tudor-networks-of-power>. Both accessed 21 January 2025.

¹⁵ Recent studies in social sciences have demonstrated that explorations of networks are crucial for understanding migration. Studying the dynamics of migrant networks shed light on personal and institutional aspects, key players, geographic dimensions and the role of religion within them. B. Bilecen

Cyprian of Carthage, his Age and his Correspondence

Prior to establishing a conceptual framework for digital prosopography, it is essential to outline the historical context of Cyprian's letters. The aforementioned letter connection is tied to Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus, who was a bishop of Carthage in North Africa active in the mid-third century CE¹⁶. He was well-educated, likely a teacher of rhetoric rather than a jurist, and, as a property owner, he was part of the carthagian social elite. Exceptionally soon after his conversion, he was catapulted to the top of the ecclesial hierarchy and became bishop either 248 or 249 CE. Whether he served as a presbyter (priest) before his election is contested¹⁷.

Parallel to Cyprian's rapid rise, troops proclaimed Decius emperor (249-251 CE) after his victory over Philip the Arab (244-249 CE) near Verona¹⁸. Barely in office, the emperor issued an edict directed to the people of the Empire. In order to restore traditional religion and public morals, he obliged all falling under the *Constitutio Antoniniana* to publicly offer (*supplicatio*) to the gods in front of the image of the emperor. With the public offerings, the emperor hoped to reintroduce the *novum saeculum*, the new golden age. As *augur* and *pontifex maximus*, Decius apparently felt responsible for securing the *pax deorum* and preventing the collapse of this and that of the metaphysical world¹⁹. Indeed, his concerns were not unjustified. The ongoing economic struggle and the repeated threat of usurpers vying for the throne destabilized the Empire internally, while Gothic invaders raiding the Danube provinces in the Balkans increased external pressure.

Scholars tend to agree that Decius' edict was not per se directed against Christians²⁰. Instead, it had an unintended and unexpected side effect, especially among citizens with strong monotheistic convictions and a high sense of belonging. While it is unclear whether Jews were exempt from the offerings²¹, Christ followers were confronted with a choice that could easily prove existential. Some did obey and offer (*sacrificati*), others bribed officials to receive a certificate (*libellatici*), others like Cyprian fled, while others

et al., *The missing link: Social network analysis in migration and transnationalism*, «Social Networks», 53 (2018), 1-3; B. Bilecen, *Network analysis*, in *Research handbook on the sociology of migration*, cur. G. Sciortino *et al.*, Cheltenham, UK 2024, 272-284; E. Keskiner *et al.* (ed.), *Revisiting Migrant Networks: Migrants and their Descendants in Labour Markets*, Cham 2022; L. Ryan, *Social networks and migration: relocations, relationships and resources*, Bristol, UK 2024.

¹⁶ A study of Cyprians *Vorleben* offers A. Brent, *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*, Cambridge 2010, 2-74. J. P. Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, New York 2002 analyses the theology of Cyprian by using the lens of the controversies he was involved in. An recent synthesis of his life, theology and literature review of the most important titles provides G. D. Dunn, *Cyprian of Carthage*, in *Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity Online*, 2018.

¹⁷ Both the estimates and refusal are based on *Vita Cyp.*, III and V. For literature supporting the thesis that Cyprian held the office of a presbyter, see G. W. Clarke, *The letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage, 1-27*, New York, NY 1984, 16 and especially n. 78. M. Bévenot, *Sacerdos as understood by Cyprian*, «Journal of Theological Studies», 30 (1979), 413-429; C. A. Bobertz, *Cyprian of Carthage: priest and patron*, Leuven 2023; G. D. Dunn, *Cyprian of Carthage*, cit. has argued extensively against this position.

¹⁸ Zosimus, *Hist.*, I 2-3.

¹⁹ As A. Brent, *Cyprian*, cit., 177-188 argues. For the interpretation of Decius' edict is still fundamental J. B. Rives, *The Decree of Decius and the Religion of Empire*, «The Journal of Roman Studies», 89 (1999), 135-154.

²⁰ The argument goes mainly against the narrative of Eusebius of Caesarea, who stressed that the edict intentionally targeted Christians. G. W. Clarke, *The letters*, cit.; J. B. Rives, *The Decree of Decius*, cit. and cf. Eusebius Caesariensis, *Eccl. Hist.*, VI. 39.

²¹ J. B. Rives, *The Decree of Decius*, cit., 138, n. 16.

publicly refused to offer. The price paid for the refusal was high, ranging from fines, banishment, incarceration to execution²².

When Decius died during a military campaign against the *foederati* of the Goths in 251, public offerings were suspended. Subsequently, Christians in North Africa but also elsewhere began to debate how to deal with those who, in one way or another, had fallen (*lapsi*)—that is, those who betrayed Christ either by sacrificing, bribing officials, or fleeing²³. Ironically, those who refused to offer but survived (*confessors*), the heroes of faith, also caused serious headaches. Some of them offered readmission for the fallen by calling upon their spiritual powers directly received from God but without the ordination of a bishop. By doing so, they circumvented ecclesial hierarchy and public penance, which Cyprian—hardly surprisingly—strongly opposed. Others claimed that the true church only consisted of the pure and steadfast. All the others, i.e. the apostates, have to be excluded from the community²⁴. This controversy fractured the landscape of Christian communities across the Mediterranean including the churches of Carthage and Rome. These developments and their evolution into the so called ‘rebaptism controversy’ forced Cyprian not only to engage in local and regional debates of North Africa, but also to be in continuous exchange, and sometimes also in disagreement with Rome and the Roman bishops Cornelius (251-253 CE) and Stephen I (254-257 CE)²⁵. Cyprian used written correspondence to maintain contact and as a strategic tool to persuade his colleagues to speak with a united voice on key issues²⁶. An abrupt end to these debates is marked by a new wave of—now state-organized and systematic—persecution, targeting especially the clergy. This wave first claimed Stephen I in 257 in Rome and eventually also Cyprian in Carthage, where he was executed on 14 September 258 CE.

The epistolary corpus of Cyprian spans the entirety of his episcopate, providing contemporary witness to the aforementioned events. It offers an authentic portrayal of the social, religious, mental, and spiritual world of provincial Roman Christ followers facing an unprecedented crisis. The letters also document the wide network of connections the Christians of Carthage maintained across the Mediterranean ranging from the Hispanic peninsula over Gaul and Rome to Cappadocia in Asia Minor²⁷. Apparently, these networks have also been extensively used to mitigate the impact of the persecutions and to reorganize fragmented communities. Some of these efforts are discussed, or referred to, in the letters providing the unique chance to explore extraordinary movements triggered by the clash between the state and Christians²⁸.

Comprising 82 letters, the corpus constitutes the most extensive collection of pre-Nicene Christian correspondence. The collection is neither complete nor exclusively composed of letters solely authored by Cyprian. Sixty of them were recognized as authentic. Sixteen represent responses prompted by Cyprian’s writings. The remaining six are synodal or collective writings of the churches in North Africa²⁹.

²² J. P. Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, cit., 12–24.

²³ Cyprian extensively deals with this matter in Cyp., *Ep.* XXIV–XXXVII; XLIV–LIV; *De lapsis*; *De ecclesiae catholicae unitate*. Cf. also A. Brent, *Cyprian*, cit., 250–253; J. P. Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, cit., 25–50.

²⁴ A. Brent, *Cyprian*, cit., 253–257.

²⁵ Cf. Cyp., *Ep.* LVI–LVIII; LX–LXI; LXIX–LXXV; *Sententiae episcoporum numero* LXXXVII; and see J. P. Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, cit., 104–114.

²⁶ Cf. E. Baumkamp, *Kommunikation in der Kirche des 3. Jahrhunderts: Bischöfe und Gemeinden zwischen Konflikt und Konsens im Imperium Romanum*, Tübingen 2014, 202–206.

²⁷ *Ep.* XLVII (Hispania); XLVIII (Gaul); IX (Rome); LXXV (Cappadocia).

²⁸ *Ep.* XXI and XXII mention refugees explicitly, XXVII; XXXVI and XXXVII provide context to one of the main actors, Celerinus.

²⁹ G. W. Clarke, *The letters*, 1–27, cit., 7–8.

While it is not unlikely that collections of Cyprian's letters existed as early as the 4th century³⁰, the early circulation is only partially reflected in the manuscript tradition. For instance, some (dissent) groups such as the Donatists were only interested in a selection supporting their positions³¹. The today known corpus was never coherently compiled into a single manuscript. Rather, over 150 collections circulated, each comprising varying numbers of different letters. The letters are not presented in a continuous sequence but represent a rather haphazard compilation of more or less randomly collected pieces from a probably never coherently existed compilation far beyond a carefully curated systematic epistolary collection³².

The corpus has extensively been studied since antiquity. Hennecke Gültow has reconstructed the chronology of the letters some decades ago³³, which was refined and augmented by Graeme W. Clarke. He also translated the letters into English and provided an extensive commentary making this edition invaluable³⁴. Numerous recent studies have focused on thematic analyses. Eva Baumkamp has elaborated their communicative strategies and Benjamin Safranski laid out Cyprian's episcopal network, though in rather metaphoric terms³⁵. Although Jakob Engberg has presented an initial study of Carthaginian refugees in Rome, it has to be consulted alongside Clarke's commentary augmented with Yvette Duval's observations³⁶. All this previous work has significantly enhanced the understanding of the corpus, turning it to an excellent laboratory for testing network-oriented digital prosopography within a safe and well-explored environment.

The Database Model, the Prosopographic Model and the Software

Building a digital prosopography requires a prosopographic model which is implemented in a database model. The database model serves here as the conceptual framework that determines how data is stored on a computer. Both models are eventually implemented in a piece of software which provides the technical backbone of any digital prosopographic endeavour. This simplified description implies that the database model, the digital prosopographic model and any software solution are intrinsically linked. Prosopographic design decisions significantly influence the selection of a suitable database model and software. Likewise, the selected software fundamentally determines whether a certain prosopographic model is adaptable. Consequently, there are two possible approaches. One can either determine which prosopographic model best aligns with the project's objectives and then identify a suitable database model and

³⁰ Whether a note of Rufinus of Aquileia is indicative here is debated. Cf. *ibidem*, 11; 121, n. 45 and Rufinus, *Prologus in apologeticum Pamphili martyris pro Origene*, 41.

³¹ K. Mengis, *Ein donatistisches corpus Cyprianischer Briefe*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1916.

³² G. W. Clarke, *The letters*, cit., 7–11. See further R. W. Mathisen, *The 'Publication' of Latin Letter Collections in Late Antiquity*, in *Zwischen Alltagskommunikation und literarischer Identitätsbildung: Studien zur lateinischen Epistolographie in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter*, cur. G. M. Müller, Stuttgart 2018, 63–84.

³³ H. Gültow, *Cyprian und Novatian: Der Briefwechsel zwischen den Gemeinden in Rom und Karthago zur Zeit der Verfolgung des Kaisers Decius*, Tübingen 1975.

³⁴ G. W. Clarke, *The letters*, 1–27, cit.

³⁵ E. Baumkamp, *Kommunikation in der Kirche des 3. Jahrhunderts*, cit.; B. Safranski, *St. Cyprian of Carthage and the college of bishops*, Lanham 2018.

³⁶ J. Engberg, *Caring for African Confessors in Exile: The Ministry of Numeria and Candida during the Decian Persecution (Cyprian, Epistolae 21–22)*, in *Episcopal Networks in Late Antiquity*, cur. C. A. Cvetković – P. Gemeinhardt, Berlin – New York 2019, 267–294 and cf. with the observations presented in Y. Duval, *Le début de la persécution de Dèce à Rome (Cyprien, Ep. 37)*, «Revue des Études Augustiniennes», 46 (2000), 157–172.

software solution which implements this. Or, alternatively, one might select an appropriate software solution and subsequently determine which prosopographic model can be implemented with the project's objectives in mind.

In an ideal world, a decision would be purely scientifically informed, but the reality is different. Factors such as available funding, resources and know-how play also a significant if not decisive role. While developing software from scratch entirely customized to the project's objectives may appear to be the most scientifically appropriate solution, it is not necessarily the best option. Any software developed anew has to implement current technical standards, adhere to the principles of open science and ensure sustainability also after the project's conclusion. Moreover, it must undergo extensive testing to evaluate the appropriateness of the design choices and ensure technical functionality. If necessary, the model or code must be modified, augmented and retested after adjustments. Finally, operability for the future has to be guaranteed especially considering the rapidly changing technical standards³⁷. Developing a software solution anew tailored to a specific project is thus a highly time-consuming and resource-intensive endeavour, requiring a collaborative team effort that is typically beyond the capabilities of an individual scholar.

In light of these considerations and to ensure feasibility, the analysis of Cyprian's letter corpus must rely on an existing software solution. The ideal platform must not only meet the aforementioned criteria but also demonstrate successful application in prosopographic research. In addition, it must be sufficiently adaptable to accommodate highly complex data, and ideally provide on-board analytic tools and visualizations.

In the past, several database designs have been developed and tested as conceptual frameworks for data storage in historical studies³⁸. Due to the widespread popularity of relational databases in the tech industry, they have also become the standard for digital database platforms in prosopographic projects³⁹. This applies also to *OpenAtlas*, a web-based open-source database platform for complex relations actively developed by the *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften* (ÖAW)⁴⁰. Due to the consequent application of the FAIR principles, that is, Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse⁴¹, it complies with the current open science standards and requirements⁴².

One of the most significant advantages is its adaptable design. The consequent implementation of so-called 'types,' which can be used to add extra information to pre-defined data fields, enables flexible customization to suit the specific needs of a project.

³⁷ The challenge arises from the quick release cycles of software infrastructure such as PHP or SQL, which is continuously developed and where backward compatibility is not always ensured. Consequently, when the software operating the platform becomes obsolete, it terminates the database's operability. For instance, the transition from PHP 7.4 to PHP 8.0 included several backward-incompatible changes. Cf. <https://www.php.net/manual/en/migration80.incompatible.php/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

³⁸ An overview of the most common database types offers T. L. Gil, *How to Make a Database in Historical Studies*, Cham 2021, 28–43.

³⁹ Structured Query Language (SQL) is a programming language used for managing and manipulating relational databases. For instance, one of the largest prosopographic databases of ancient history, Trismegistos, runs on SQL. See <https://www.trismegistos.org/>. Accessed 21 January 2025. For the relational database model see *ibidem*, 32–40.

⁴⁰ <https://openatlas.eu/>. Accessed 21 January 2025. See also S. Eichert *et al.*, *OpenAtlas: An Open-Source Application to Map Historical Data with CIDOC CRM*, in *Medieval Mount Athos between Wealth and Poverty*, cur. Zachary Chitwood, Leiden – Boston 2024, 279–291.

⁴¹ <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>. Accessed 21 January 2025. See also M. D. Wilkinson *et al.*, *The FAIR Guiding Principles for Scientific Data Management and Stewardship*, «Scientific Data», 3 (2016), 160018.

⁴² Not an insignificant aspect is that *OpenAtlas* meets the open data and open access requirements of European and likely most national funding agencies.

The platform includes an interactive map implementation out-of-the-box, which allows the precise geo-localization of places mentioned in the sources. It also supports the use of different map overlays to display data on a variety of maps, be they historical or contemporary. Moreover, *OpenAtlas* can embed additional information from external gazetteers and controlled vocabularies for entities such as *Viaf*⁴³ or *WikiData*⁴⁴ for individuals or *Pleiades* for geographic references of ancient places⁴⁵. Furthermore, the platform is adept at managing geographic and chronological uncertainties, making it a robust tool for sources characterized by significant ambiguities. Additionally, it is equipped with an integrated network visualization tool, enabling relational data to be displayed as a network graph in the form of an ego-network⁴⁶. Last but not least, the institutional background of *OpenAtlas* at the ÖAW, ensures continuous software development and thus future operability. Considering the platform's specific features and flexibility, it is not surprising that several projects harnessed its potential for collecting, structuring, analyzing, and displaying prosopographic data⁴⁷. Given *OpenAtlas*' versatility and flexible design, its compliance with technical and open science standards, continuous development, and implementation in similar projects, it offers an appropriate digital infrastructure solution for exploring migration and mobility in Cyprian's letters.

Digital Prosopographic Model

In the printed world of classical prosopography, a rather generic data structure called a 'reference entry' is entirely sufficient to organize even highly complex biographic information. Its main advantage is its flexibility: only a few pre-defined sequences provide the structure of an entry. Any kind of information derived from a wide range of sources can easily be adopted and inserted in a narrative entry. It could be said: a simple structure fits them all.

By contrast, *OpenAtlas*, like any other digital platform, is developed using programming code and a database model that operates on computers. Consequently, digital platforms are inherently rooted in the binary world of 0 and 1, which fundamentally diverges from the logic of historical sources⁴⁸. Although the advantages of digital prosopography over classical paper-based methods are substantial—linked data, comprehensive search capabilities, predefined category searches, analytic processing, and visualizations to name a few—these benefits come with associated costs. One such cost is intrinsically linked to the binary logic of computers and to the database model the software relies on: the structured classification of data⁴⁹. Consequently, all information, regardless of its layers, complexity, and the diversity of source types, must fit in the structured classification system. This 'digital corset' entails two implications.

⁴³ *Virtual International Authority File* is a joint project of over 50 organisations, often national libraries, to provide trusted authority service. <https://viaf.org/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

⁴⁴ *WikiData* is the central and shared storage platform behind Wikipedia, Wikisource, etc. for structured data. https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Wikidata:Main_Page. Accessed 21 January 2025.

⁴⁵ *Pleiades* is a collaborative platform to map ancient locations. <https://pleiades.stoa.org/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

⁴⁶ See for example the graph visualisation of Augustine's letters in <https://discover-conne.openatlas.eu/network/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

⁴⁷ For a full list of projects see <https://openatlas.eu/projects/>. Accessed 21 January 2025. See also S. Eichert *et al.*, *OpenAtlas*, cit., 268–287.

⁴⁸ Some illustrative examples of the implications arising from the differing mindsets of programmers and historians in the context of relational databases offers T. L. Gil, *How to Make a Database*, cit., 34–35.

⁴⁹ The standardisation of (historical) data is a fundamental prerequisite to harness the benefits of digital analysis and visualisation.

First, a digital prosopographic model has to be tailored to the software, or vice versa, a platform has to be developed or adapted with the prosopographic model in mind. Second, despite all considerations and efforts invested in the software and model development, the structured classification system requires standardization of data. In other words, digital-born prosopography is, and likely always will be, a simplified reproduction of textual and historical realities as reflected in the sources.

To give an example, digitally capturing a relatively simple and common phenomenon like changing religious affiliation, such as Augustine's conversion from polytheism to Manichaeism and finally to Catholic Christianity, presents a serious challenge. Religion is typically represented in databases by a single field with a number of predefined options, often in a drop-down menu. Introducing changes to this requires significant alterations in the data structure of a relational database⁵⁰. Similarly, modeling any identity-related category presents similar challenges due to its inherent fluidity, multiple layers, and temporal changes.

Several digital prosopographic models have been developed in the past to mitigate the limitations of the 'digital corset' posed by various database models⁵¹. Currently, the so-called 'factoid model' is the most widespread method, harnessing the potential and circumventing the major limitations of the popular relational database model. The factoid model permits the construction of records closely related to the sources, while focusing on relationships and social interactions.

The factoid model was developed for the digital edition of the Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire (PBE) in the late 90s⁵². A central element of this approach is a piece of evidence from a source, which provides any information about a person. This information is stored in an individual record, which is eventually linked to the person. This bit of information is called a 'factoid,' though it is not to be confused with 'fact' and especially not with the notion that this fact must be historically accurate⁵³. As noted by

⁵⁰ In this case, three distinct 'religion' fields need to be added, which means incorporating two extra columns into the database. Since the sequence of the conversations and their dates are also significant, additional columns must be inserted for each individual factor. This can quickly lead to an unmanageable complexity in the data structure.

⁵¹ For an overview see J. Akoka *et al.*, *Conceptual modelling of prosopographic databases integrating quality dimensions*, «Journal of Data Mining and Digital Humanities», Special Issue on Data Science and Digital Humanities @ EGC 2018 (2021), 3–4 and for a systematisation attempt see J. Baillie, *Alternative Database Structures for Prosopographical Research*, «International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing», 15 (2021), 117–132. Various attempts have been described in T. Andrews, *The Structured Assertion Record (STAR) Model for Event-based Representation of Historical Information: GraphHNR 2023*, 2023; T. Andrews *et al.*, *Re-Evaluating the Eleventh Century through Linked Events and Entities*, «Historical Studies on Central Europe», 4 (2024), 217–245; E. Gritti, *HUMOT*, cit.; M. Kowaleski, *A New Digital Prosopography: The Medieval Londoners Database*, «Medieval People: Social Bonds, Kinship, and Networks», 36 (2022), 311–332; D. L. Schwartz *et al.*, *Modeling a Born-Digital Factoid Prosopography using the TEI and Linked Data*, «Journal of the Text Encoding Initiative», (2022), 1–35; J. Tuominen *et al.*, *Bio CRM: a data model for representing biographical data for prosopographical research*, in *Proceedings of the second conference on biographical data in a digital world 2017 (BD2017)*, Linz, Austria 2018, vol. 2119, 59–66.

⁵² J. Bradley – H. Short, *Texts into Databases: The Evolving Field of New-style Prosopography*, «Literary and Linguistic Computing», 20 (2005), 8. For the history and development of the factoid model, see: C. Roueche *et al.*, *Prosopography meets the digital: PBW and PASE*, in *On Making in the Digital Humanities*, cur. J. Nyhan *et al.*, London 2023, 51.

⁵³ The confusion likely arises due to the word's root in 'fact'. See e. g. D. L. Schwartz *et al.*, *Modeling a Born-Digital Factoid Prosopography*, cit., 4–5. However, factoid refers to a 'fact' merely in its lexical form, not in the semantic. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, factoid is '1. An item of information accepted or presented as a fact, although not (or not necessarily) true; [...] a simulated or imagined fact. 2. Chiefly in *Journalism* and *Broadcasting*. A brief or trivial piece of information.' Emphasis is in the

Bradley, a 'historical source is treated as a source for *assertions*, made by the source, about persons'⁵⁴.

Since relational databases require structured data, the factoid model uses the core design elements of 'entities,' 'attributes,' and 'relationships' to achieve this. An 'entity' is an object class that can be used for a wide range of objects. Most typically, a person would be an entity, but also places, sources, events, etc. can be represented by this category. A letter from Cyprian's corpus, *Ep. XXI*, penned in the year 250 can be used to illustrate this. It is addressed to Celerinus, a North African confessor who was now residing in Rome and supporting North African refugees. Based on this source, three entities can be defined: Celerinus (person), refugees (group), and *Ep. XXI* (source). The second element is 'attribute,' which provides attributes to entities. For a person, this can be the name, place of origin, date of birth or death, or a specific office held. For a historical source, it can be a letter, a funerary inscription, or a coin, among others. Remaining with the previous example, Celerinus has several attributes: name (Celerinus); gender (male); religious affiliation (Christian, 'orthodox'); place (North Africa; Rome); ecclesial 'position' (confessor); date (250); moving from North Africa to Rome (event); supporting refugees (event). An attribution of the historical source would be in this case 'letter'. The last piece is the 'relationship' between individual entities and attributes. Individuals can relate not only to one another but also to locations, sources, dates, offices, and various other entities or attributes. These relations function primarily, but not exclusively, as integrative elements between entities and their attributes. For instance, the aforementioned attributes can be connected to Celerinus through the following relationship examples: 250 (OccurredAt); supporting refugees (InvolvedIn); moving from North Africa to Rome (InvolvedIn) Rome (isLocated); male and religious affiliation (HasProperty) and the source *Ep. XXI* (EvidenceFor). All attributes result ultimately in a comprehensive collection of factoids associated with individuals, all organized into categories and interconnected through various relationships.

The relational aspect between persons, places, and events makes the factoid model particularly interesting for studying entanglements of migration and religion in Cyprian's letters. As the model allows as many types of relationships as needed, a very fine-grained matrix of different interpersonal relationships can be modeled. Such a matrix can extend far beyond instinctive categories such as kinship, friendship, patronage, office, or occupation-related connections. MacCarron's and Hillner's 'Model of Connections Between Characters' is a good point of departure for the development of a tailored matrix⁵⁵. Additionally, a relationship model can articulate, among other aspects, the extent and direction of acquaintance. Illustrated by the example of Celerinus, this can be expressed in a bi-directional relationship between Celerinus and bishop Cyprian, as they personally know each other (MutuallyKnown). Celerinus is, however, only acquainted with bishop Stephan of Rome (AcquaintedWith) because he had heard of the bishop many times, but they had never met in person. Relationships and interactions are dynamic and change over time, as long-time friends can end up in a quarrel, or

original. *Factoid*, in *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, Oxford 2023, <https://doi-org./10.1093/OED/6446551381/>. Accessed 21 January 2025. This definition reflects precisely the sense in which Pasin and Bradley employed the term factoid. Cf. M. Pasin – J. Bradley, *Factoid-based prosopography and computer ontologies: towards an integrated approach*, «Digital Scholarship in the Humanities», 30 (2015), 89.

⁵⁴ J. Bradley, *Creating Historical Identity with Data: A Digital Prosopography Perspective*, in *Toward Undogmatic Reading*, cur. M. Flüh et al., Hamburg 2021, 103–119, 113, emphasise added.

⁵⁵ See <https://sites.google.com/sheffield.ac.uk/genderednetworks/data-model/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

enemies can become allies. Sometimes sources implicitly provide indications about the quality of the interaction, such as joy, sadness, or hostility. These relational aspects not only increase the complexity of migrant and religious networks but also provide important additional information about the function of such networks and the quality of interactions, for instance, between locals and migrants.

In contrast to traditional printed prosopographies, the factoid approach does not produce an overarching narrative biography. Instead, users face a systematized list of more or less elaborated factoids⁵⁶. Although it serves the research purposes well, it is demanding for potential users. The consultation requires some previous knowledge, experience with, and basic understanding of the data structure, abbreviations, and sigla in order to make sense of records. Moreover, historical accuracy is intentionally *not* a criterion for the inclusion of factoids⁵⁷, which might result in entries displaying contradictory information. The consequences of the latter design choice are significant. First, special knowledge is required to identify and evaluate the historical accuracy of contradictory factoids, making any consultation a matter for experts. Second, reconstructing individuals' lives from ancient sources often marked by ambiguity and uncertainty even without being contradictory, though this circumstance is neither reflected nor recorded in the factoid model. This second aspect is particularly relevant. Historical analysis, and especially network analysis, requires high data quality, i.e. a reliable and as coherent as possible dataset to ensure methodological soundness and meaningful results⁵⁸. To mitigate both design consequences, factoid records should be augmented with a 'factual accuracy' entry entailing source-critical remarks. However, source critique alone is insufficient when addressing data quality. It is equally important to understand, how complete and consistent a dataset is, as well as how reliable its reconstruction and digital representation are. The augmentation of each entity with so-called 'quality records,' including reliability, completeness, and consistency, not only enhances transparency for the research team and for external users, but also provides information on the robustness of individual entities⁵⁹. Given the successful adaptation of the factoid model in *OpenAtlas*⁶⁰, a combination of both approaches is the best *available*⁶¹ solution for exploring migration and mobility in Cyprian's letters.

⁵⁶ See e.g. the 'Digital Prosopography of the Roman Republic' (<https://romanrepublic.ac.uk/>) or the 'Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England' (<https://pase.ac.uk/>), both accessed 21 January 2025.

⁵⁷ J. Bradley - H. Short, *Texts into Databases*, cit., 89. 'If two sources contradict each other, two contradictory factoids will be recorded. For this reason, we call the factoid model "source driven".'

⁵⁸ Cf. B. Hollstein, *Qualitative and Mixed Methods*, in *The Sage handbook of social network analysis*, cur. J. McLevey et al., London 2024, 562–574, 565; R. W. Krause - M. Huisman, *Missing Network Data*, in *Ibid.*, 599–609.

⁵⁹ Instructive is J. Akoka et al., *Conceptual modeling of prosopographic databases*, cit.

⁶⁰ This has recently been demonstrated by the CONNEC project. See <https://discover-connek.openatlas.eu/>. Accessed 21 January 2025.

⁶¹ The RELEVEN ERC project aims to overcome limitations of current digital prosopographic models by developing a so-called 'structured assertion record model' (STAR) based on graph database. T. Andrews, *The STructured Assertion Record (STAR) Model*, cit.; T. Andrews et al., *Re-Evaluating the Eleventh Century*, cit. Both the prosopographic and the database models have several advantages in contrast to relational databases such as more intuitive interface, links (edges) between the entities (nodes) can directly be qualified, change over time can simply be represented and so on. Cf. J. Baillie, *Alternative Database Structures*, cit., 120–123. As the model is still in its early development phase, it has neither been adopted in any software solutions nor tested in a productive environment, making an adaptation at this juncture neither sensible nor feasible.

Conclusions

Researching migration and mobility poses challenges due to the virtual invisibility of migrants in historical sources, which often reflect an elite bias. This issue extends to religious aspects of migration, where the evidence is limited mainly to the epigraphic record occasionally supplemented by anecdotal evidence. The Christ cult is a notable exception, especially from the mid-2nd century onwards. A better-documented period ironically is the first systematic persecution of Christ followers in the 250s CE. Letters and writings of Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, offer rare insights not only into an otherwise rather ill-documented period, but also into the mobility of a minority religion in times of unprecedented crisis.

To map movement patterns in this corpus, identifying and recording mobile individuals is the first step. Digital prosopography is proven tool for this purpose. Given limited resources, an existing, well-tested platform like *OpenAtlas* is ideal. It meets important technical criteria, supports complex data, provides analytic tools and visualizations, adheres to open science principles, and is sustainable on the long run. The factoid prosopographic model is the best available model at this juncture for its closeness to the sources and highly flexible relational design, which permits tracking changes over time. Another advantage is that it can easily be implemented in *OpenAtlas*. However, the low-level interpretation of the information extracted from the sources can lead to contradictions in biographies. To mitigate this issue and increase transparency, additional 'quality records' such as reliability, completeness, and consistency must be supplemented to entities. The augmentation will result in high-quality datasets suitable for historical and network analysis, and facilitate easy consultation even for non-experts. Despite its limitations, factoid prosopography implemented in *OpenAtlas* is the best currently available approach to explore migration and mobility in Cyprian's letters. A digital prosopographic database opens vast possibilities for analyzing Cyprian's letters including the exploration of previously ignored or inaccessible dimensions. Network analysis based on the relational prosopographic data, for instance, permits the evaluation of all actors mentioned or involved in the epistolary communication, regardless of their political, social, or ecclesial position. This not only acknowledges seemingly unimportant or marginal actors as part of a large network, but also has the potential to shed new light on their roles and levels of engagement based on their connections rather than their attributed importance. Moreover, it literally puts lesser-known actors on the map, sketching out a far more sophisticated image of movement and fixity facilitated by interconnected relationships across the Mediterranean. To remain with the example of Celerinus for a last time, such an analysis can illustrate his interconnectedness with his North African group of confessors on the one hand and local Christians in Rome on the other. As a migrant and likely a refugee to Rome, he utilizes his local roman Christian networks to facilitate persecuted North African Christians in finding safe shelter in Rome. In turn, he leverages this support to pull strings in North Africa for the readmission of some local Roman fallen sisters who are deeply involved in sheltering the refugees. Thus, a fine-grained digital prosopographic database permits novel approaches even to well-studied sources such as Cyprian's letters. It facilitates inquiries that have the potential to uncover previously invisible aspects of social and ecclesial dynamics especially those involving migration and mobility. By doing so, they contribute to a more nuanced understanding of early Christian life and community organization and trace changes of patterns in times of unprecedented distress.

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NOTE BIOGRAFICHE DEGLI AUTORI

Alegiani, Silvia è dottoressa di ricerca in Storia, Territorio e Patrimonio culturale presso l'Università degli Studi Roma Tre. Ha collaborato come dottoranda al PRIN 2017 "L'Architettura dell'Imperatore. Residenze ufficiali e private, paesaggi urbani e porti nell'età di Adriano (117-138 AD)". Ha all'attivo numerosi scavi urbani e suburbani come libera professionista e un master interfacoltà di II livello in Architettura per l'Archeologia. Si occupa prevalentemente di epigrafia dell'*instrumentum*, di archeologia dell'architettura e metodologia della ricerca archeologica. Ha recentemente pubblicato una Guida per Edipuglia (2023) per lo studio dei laterizi bollati e alcuni articoli di approfondimento sul tema per "Archeologia dell'Architettura" (2015-2022). Si è occupata dello studio della collezione dei bolli conservati a Villa Maruffi (RomaTre Press 2016) e ha condotto negli ultimi anni una vasta analisi dell'edificato ostiense tramite i laterizi bollati *in situ*, i cui risultati sono attualmente in corso di stampa per L'Erma di Bretschneider.

Armani, Sabine est maîtresse de conférences habilitée à diriger des recherches (2024) à l'Université Sorbonne Paris Nord où elle enseigne depuis 2004. Elle est rattachée au laboratoire pluridisciplinaire Pléiade (UR 7338) dont elle est responsable d'un axe. Elle est spécialiste de la péninsule Ibérique à l'époque romaine, à laquelle elle a consacré sa thèse de doctorat (2002), et de la parenté dans le monde romain, sujet de son mémoire inédit d'habilitation. Depuis 2003, elle est rédactrice à *L'Année épigraphique* où elle a notamment en charge les notices de la péninsule Ibérique.

Assorati, Giovanni è dottore di ricerca in Storia Antica (storia romana) presso l'Università degli studi di Bologna con una tesi prosopografica dal titolo *L'adlectio nell'alto impero tra i Flavi e i Severi*. È stato attivo come collaboratore universitario, in qualità di assegnista di ricerca, presso cattedre di storia romana e di storia delle religioni dell'Università di Bologna, nonché di iniziative di alta divulgazione come esposizioni temporanee (con la Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Rimini e l'associazione Meeting per l'amicizia fra i popoli di Rimini) e progetti europei di valorizzazione storico-culturale (con l'Istituto per i Beni Culturali dell'Emilia-Romagna), è inoltre autore di diversi articoli scientifici e della monografia *I primi cristiani in Emilia-Romagna tra prosopografia e storia* (Bologna, BraDypUS 2014).

Contel, Giovanni è dottore di ricerca in *Storia, Antropologia, Religioni, curriculum* di Storia Moderna presso Sapienza Università di Roma, ed è uno studioso di politica e cultura rinascimentale italiana ed europea fra i secoli XV e XVI, in una prospettiva congiunta tra l'autunno del (o tardo) medioevo e la prima età moderna. Dopo aver concluso il suo dottorato con una tesi dal titolo *Tutti gli uomini dell'imperatore. Alle origini del "partito imperiale" in Italia (1490 ca. – 1520 ca.)*, discussa a Roma il 4 febbraio 2022, è stato ricercatore post-doc e borsista presso l'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici di Napoli (2022-2024). Attualmente è ricercatore post-doc a Roma presso la Giunta Storica Nazionale con un progetto di ricerca di storia intellettuale della cultura storica e della storiografia italiana tra la fine del XIX e la metà del XX secolo, in una prospettiva che unisce i suoi temi di ricerca sull'Impero tra Medioevo, Rinascimento ed età moderna con alcuni profili dei maggiori storici che se ne sono occupati in chiave europea, in primis Federico Chabod. Ha pubblicato alcuni saggi sulla diplomazia ispano-imperiale a Roma nel primo '500, sui membri della cancelleria imperiale reclutati tra le fila dell'umanesimo italiano, una nota interpretativa e storiografica riguardo un recente volume miscelaneo di studi sull'Italia imperiale, inoltre una rassegna sulla violenza e la guerra nel Rinascimento. Sono in preparazione una monografia sui conti palatini e alcuni studi sui vicariati imperiali, di nomina imperiale e papale, sulla nobiltà filoimperiale di Vicenza e Verona, anche da un punto di vista prosopografico, e sugli incontri tra Niccolò Machiavelli e alcuni personaggi dell'entourage imperiale durante le guerre d'Italia.

De Camillis, Daniele è dottorando dal 2022 del dottorato nazionale DREST (*Italian Doctoral School Of Religious Studies*), presso Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia e Università per stranieri di Siena. Il suo Progetto di ricerca è dedicato a *La formazione e la cultura scientifica degli ordini regolari nella Roma di età moderna, fra XVI e XVII secolo* (tutor. Prof. Maurizio Sangalli (Unistrasi), co-tutor prof.ssa Federica Favino (Sapienza)). Dal 2023 collabora presso l'Istituto Sangalli per la storia e le culture religiose di Firenze, gestendo attività seminariali e di promozione delle attività culturali promosse dall'Istituto.

De Longis, Eleonora è Prima Tecnologa presso l'Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici (EPR), dove è responsabile delle infrastrutture di ricerca Archivio storico e Biblioteca. Conseguito il dottorato di ricerca in Scienze documentarie, linguistiche e letterarie presso la Sapienza Università di Roma, si è occupata prevalentemente di riordinamento, inventariazione e valorizzazione di archivi storici presso l'Archivio Apostolico Vaticano, l'Archivio Centrale dello Stato, la Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, il Parco archeologico di Ostia Antica. I suoi attuali interessi di ricerca si concentrano sulla storia degli istituti culturali stranieri a Roma tra Otto e Novecento, sulle *Digital Humanities* e sulle fonti digitali per la ricerca storica e archeologica. Tra le sue recenti pubblicazioni: *Il Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum dall'analogico al digitale* («AIDAinformazioni. Rivista semestrale di scienze dell'informazione», 2023); *Fonti per lo studio della cultura nordeuropea: l'offerta digitale dell'Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici* («Digitalia», 2023); *Il velo trasparente. Politica e letteratura nello specchio della biblioteca dell'Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici* («Nuovi annali della Scuola speciale per archivisti e bibliotecari», 2020).

Di Lenardo, Andrea si laurea nel 2019 in Storia presso l'Università "Ca' Foscari" di Venezia con una tesi in Storia delle religioni dal titolo *Il corpo e il rito della circoncisione. Etnicità, politica e resistenza culturale nello scontro tra ebraismo e cristianesimo di I sec.* Nel 2021 consegue la laurea magistrale in Scienze dell'antichità: archeologia, storia, letterature, curriculum archeologico, all'Università degli Studi di Udine interateneo con l'Università degli Studi di Trieste con una tesi dal titolo *A Cesare quel che è di Cesare. Gesù, gesuani e gruppi politici giudaici di I secolo d.C.* Attualmente è dottorando di ricerca all'Università "Ca' Foscari" di Venezia (interateneo con gli atenei di Udine e Trieste) con un progetto di ricerca dal titolo *I gruppi giudaici all'epoca di Gesù.*

Favalli, Alessandra è stata assegnista di ricerca nell'ambito del Progetto MUR PRIN 2022 "*Italian Lily*" *People and Books from Italy to France in the Sixteenth Century* presso l'Università di Trento. Nel 2015 ha conseguito la laurea magistrale in Scienze storiche presso l'Università degli studi di Milano con una tesi dal titolo *Il ruolo delle vedove di casa Guisa fra ragioni politiche e strategie familiari all'epilogo delle guerre di religione in Francia (1587-1589).* Nel 2017 ha ottenuto il Diploma della Scuola di Archivistica, Paleografia e Diplomatica dell'Archivio di Stato di Milano. Dal 2021 è dottoressa di ricerca in Storia dell'Europa/*Histoire moderne et contemporaine*, con cotutela internazionale tra l'Università degli studi di Teramo e PSL - *École nationale des chartes*; ha scritto una tesi dal titolo *Il rango e la dinastia. Gli Este alla ricerca di un equilibrio politico nello spazio italiano ed europeo all'epoca delle guerre di religione francesi (1559-1580).*

Fuentes-Vélez, Laura è dottoranda presso l'Università degli studi di Torino. Si è laureata nel 2022 presso l'Università di Poitiers, con una tesi intitolata "*Tentative de microhistoire du dème de Thorikos en Attique pendant le IV^e siècle av. n. è.*" Attualmente sviluppa una ricerca che prevede uno studio prosopografico sistematico dei fratelli impegnati nella vita pubblica ateniese. L'obiettivo è di rintracciare e illustrare le modalità d'inserimento delle famiglie nella prassi democratica. Le epigrafi e i rapporti archeologici costituiscono le risorse d'informazione privilegiate, offrendo un approccio interdisciplinare allo studio dell'Antichità greca. Tale approccio è arricchito attraverso l'esperienza sul campo da progetti svolti in Grecia (Scuola Svizzera di Archeologia in Grecia) ed Egitto (Istituto Francese di Archeologia Orientale).

Gasparis, Charalambos è dottore di ricerca in Storia medievale (Dipartimento di Storia e Archeologia, Università di Creta), Direttore di Ricerca presso l'Istituto di Ricerche Storiche, Fondazione Nazionale Ellenica delle Ricerche, Atene. È uno specialista della dominazione veneziana nei territori greci durante il tardo Medioevo. Ha pubblicato libri e articoli sulla società e l'economia rurale, il commercio e la vita cittadina a Creta e nelle altre colonie veneziane dell'Egeo. Ha inoltre curato l'edizione di fonti latine riguardanti la Creta veneziana dal XIII al XV secolo (<http://www.eie.gr/nhrf/institutes/ibr/cvs/cv-gasparis-en.pdf>).

Giannachi, Francesco è professore ordinario di Civiltà bizantina presso il Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici dell'Università del Salento. Si occupa della tradizione dei testi greci con particolare attenzione per la poesia antica, la sua ricezione nel Medioevo e nella Età contemporanea, le vestigia di grecità della Terra d'Otranto (testi, letteratura di tradizione orale, evoluzione linguistica del Greco otrantino) la letteratura in greco del XVII e XVIII secolo. Collabora presso la *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften* al progetto VLACH (*Vanishing Languages and Cultural Heritage*) con il ruolo di *Community Consultant* per il dialetto neogreco del Salento. È tra i vincitori del bando *Marie Curie Doctoral Network 2021*, finanziato dalla Commissione Europea per la realizzazione di due percorsi dottorali dedicati alla minoranza ellenofona del Salento.

Grimm-Stadelmann, Isabel è Docente di Storia della scienza della medicina bizantina all'Università Ludwig Maximilian di Monaco di Baviera, è inoltre ricercatrice associata presso l'Accademia Bavarese di Scienze e Lettere. La sua ricerca si è sempre concentrata sui manoscritti medici bizantini e sulla loro ricezione, nonché sulle tradizioni transculturali all'interno della medicina bizantina. Ha pubblicato moltissimo sulla tematica e ha ricevuto vari riconoscimenti accademici per le sue ricerche.

Handl, András is SNFS Swiss Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Bern and honorary research fellow at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven, Belgium. He currently works on religious aspects of migration and mobility to the city of Rome in Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages. He is co-editor of the special issue of the *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* to 'Migration: Rhetoric and Reality in Late Antiquity.' He is initiator of MigRel.Net, a research network for exploring entanglements of migration and religion in antiquity. He is also PI of a multidisciplinary research project (re)examining the Hippolytos-statue, the earliest known Christian(ized) free-standing sculpture funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO). More broadly, he is interested in the relations between Christians and the City of Rome, history of papacy, the cult of saints, martyrs, and relics, and in material remains of (early) Christianity.

Lampeggi, Jacopo è attualmente assegnista di ricerca nell'ambito del Progetto MUR PRIN 2022 "*Mediterranean Multipolarity and Roman Unipolarity. Power Competition and Collaboration in the Graeco-Roman Geopolitics (3rd-2nd century BCE)*" (P.I. Prof.ssa M. D'Agostini, Università di Bergamo), membro dell'unità dell'Università degli studi di Torino. È esperto di prosopografia, epigrafia e storia dell'amministrazione romana. I suoi interessi si concentrano principalmente sulla composizione delle *élite* dominanti, in particolare di quella equestre, e della loro integrazione nei quadri della burocrazia tardo-repubblicana e alto-imperiale. Nel 2023 ha conseguito il titolo di dottore di ricerca in Scienze Archeologiche, Storiche e Storico-artistiche presso l'Università degli studi di Torino con una tesi dal titolo *Nascita e affermazione di un'aristocrazia equestre da Marco Aurelio a Costantino unico imperatore (169-324 d.C.)*, che ha meritato il Premio Nazionale CUSGR – Consulta Universitaria di Storia Greca e Romana del 2023.

Licini, Stefania è professoressa ordinaria presso il Dipartimento di *Management* dell'Università di studi di Bergamo e membro del Consiglio di dottorato in *Management, Contabilità e Finanza* presso la stessa Istituzione. Insegna storia dell'economia e dell'impresa sia a livello universitario che post-universitario. Ha conseguito un dottorato di ricerca in Storia economica e sociale

presso l'Università Bocconi (1989) e una laurea in Discipline economiche e sociali, sempre presso l'Università Bocconi (1981). La sua ricerca si concentra sullo studio delle disuguaglianze e delle élite, della storia dell'impresa e della storia di genere, con particolare attenzione all'Italia tra la fine del XIX e l'inizio del XX secolo. È autrice di diverse monografie e articoli su riviste accademiche nazionali e internazionali di primo piano, tra cui *Rivista di Storia Economica*, *Società e Storia*, *Imprese e Storia*, *Annali di Storia d'Impresa*, *Quaderni Storici*, *Women's History Review*, *Business History*, *The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought* e *Accounting History*. Ha inoltre contribuito con alcuni capitoli a volumi collettivi pubblicati da case editrici di fama internazionale come Springer e Routledge.

Paradziński, Aleksander (DPhil Oxford, 2019) is a Heinz-Heinen Postdoctoral Fellow at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies at the University of Bonn. His current research focuses on Late Antique elite women, their dependents, and systems of dependencies. He worked previously as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Exeter in the *Connecting Late Antiquities* project, funded by DFG and AHRC and headed by Julia Hillner (Bonn) and Richard Flower (Exeter), and as an Assistant Professor at the University of Warsaw on *The Missing Link. The Lost Latin Historiography of the Later Roman Empire* project, funded by NCN and headed by Paweł Janiszewski. His scholarly interests involve social history, the use of digital tools in humanities and Latin historiography.

Petraccia, Maria Federica ha conseguito il dottorato di ricerca in Storia antica e successivamente, grazie ad una borsa di studio CNR, ha trascorso tre anni presso l'*École Pratique des Hautes Études* con sede a Parigi (La Sorbonne-Paris IV). È attualmente Professoressa associata presso il DISPI (Dipartimento di Scienze politiche e internazionali) dell'Università di Genova dove ricopre gli insegnamenti di Storia romana ed Elementi e Fonti per la storia Romana, anche nella Scuola di Dottorato di ricerca in Culture classiche e moderne. All'interno della neonata laurea triennale di 'Politiche, Governance e Informazione dello Sport', tiene un ciclo di seminari sulla Storia politico-istituzionale e amministrativa dell'età romana. È stata Visiting Professor presso le Università di Paris IV-Sorbonne, Madrid, Malaga e Pamplona. A partire dal dicembre 2020 è Delegato del Rettore dell'Università degli Studi di Genova ai Rapporti con le istituzioni culturali italiane ed estere. È membro dell'*Association Internationale d'Épigraphie Grécque et Latine*. È Codirettore della Collana 'Giano Bifronte' (Genova University Press) e Direttore della collana 'Scheria' (editore De Ferrari-Genova). È stata componente della segreteria scientifica e organizzativa di numerosi Convegni nazionali e internazionali. È autrice di diverse monografie e curatele e di numerosi articoli, saggi e recensioni su riviste italiane e straniere. Sue principali linee di ricerca sono: a) le magistrature municipali dell'Italia antica; b) l'esercito romano; c) i sistemi di spionaggio a Roma; d) l'erudizione e gli studi sulla storiografia antica nell'Italia del Seicento e dell'Ottocento (nello specifico si è occupata dell'illustre fabrianese Camillo Ramelli).

Pomero, Margherita Elena è ricercatrice in Civiltà Bizantina presso l'Università di Bologna dal 2023. I suoi principali ambiti di studio riguardano la storia culturale e l'ideologia politica dell'impero bizantino, con particolare attenzione alle fonti numismatiche e sigillografiche. Su questi temi ha pubblicato la monografia *Propaganda politica, imperatori e iconografia monetale nel mondo bizantino (1204-1328)* (Fondazione CISAM, Spoleto 2022). Attualmente è impegnata nel progetto *L'eredità nascosta. I sigilli di età esarcale nelle collezioni museali italiane*, all'interno del Partenariato CHANGES – *Cultural Heritage Active Innovation for Next-Gen Sustainable Society* (PNRR, Spoke 4), e collabora con il gruppo di ricerca del progetto *Digital Byzantine Studies* (DiBS) dell'Università di Colonia.

Puech, Vincent est maître de conférences habilité à diriger des recherches (HDR) à l'Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, où il est membre de l'UR 2449 (Dynamiques Patrimoniales et Culturelles, UVSQ, Université Paris Saclay) et directeur de l'Institut d'Etudes Culturelles et Internationales (Unité de Formation et de Recherche en Histoire, Lettres et

Langues). Il est aussi membre associé de l'UMR 8167 (Orient & Méditerranée, composante Monde byzantin) et co-directeur de la collection des Monographies du Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance aux éditions Peeters (Louvain, Belgique). Il a notamment publié *Constantin. Le premier empereur chrétien* (Paris 2011, rééd. 2022) et *Les élites de cour de Constantinople (450-610): une approche prosopographique des relations de pouvoir* (Bordeaux, Ausonius, 2021).

Rachello, Giovanni è dottorando dal 2022 del dottorato "Culture d'Europa. Ambiente, spazi, storie, arti, idee" dell'Università degli studi di Trento, con un progetto dal titolo *Subvertire Throni Francorum: memoria, conflitti e protagonisti delle deposizioni regie nel mondo carolingio*. Nel 2021 ha conseguito laurea magistrale in Scienze storiche presso Università degli studi di Verona e Università degli studi di Trento con una tesi dal titolo "*Corda regum in manum Dei: regalità, sovrani e deposizioni nell'Italia longobarda*". I suoi interessi di ricerca si concentrano sulla storia medievale, con particolare attenzione per la storia dei Longobardi, dei Carolingi, la storia militare, l'aristocrazia franca, la regalità, il potere e la legittimità nell'Alto Medioevo, l'identità e il territorio nell'Impero carolingio, le deposizioni regie nell'Europa altomedievale.

Rebottini, Carlo Alberto ha conseguito la Laurea in Storia presso l'*Alma Mater Studiorum* - Università di Bologna con una tesi sulle ambascerie di Liutprando di Cremona a Costantinopoli, per poi laurearsi in Scienze storiche presso il medesimo ateneo con una tesi sullo scontro tra Odoacre e Teoderico. Attualmente è dottorando in Scienze storiche presso la Scuola Superiore di Studi Storici dell'Università degli Studi della Repubblica di San Marino, con un progetto sull'Impero Romano d'Oriente tra Giustiniano ed Eraclio, con un'attenzione particolare agli aspetti politici e militari.

Redaelli, Davide è assegnista di ricerca presso il Dipartimento di studi umanistici e del patrimonio culturale dell'Università degli studi di Udine. Collaboratore del progetto *Lacunae*, volto alla creazione di uno strumento digitale che sfrutti l'AI al fine di elaborare suggerimenti per l'integrazione delle lacune dei documenti epigrafici, responsabile per le iscrizioni latine. Nel 2015 ha conseguito il titolo di dottore di ricerca in Scienze umanistiche (indirizzo antichistico) presso l'Università degli studi di Trieste, con una tesi dal titolo *I veterani delle milizie urbane in Italia e nelle province di lingua latina. Indagine storico-epigrafica*. I suoi interessi vertono sulla storia militare romana, con una particolare attenzione rivolta allo studio dei rapporti tra l'esercito e la società civile in Italia e nelle province di lingua latina e allo studio della storia dei corpi stanziati a Roma in età imperiale. Si è occupato anche di prosopografia e ricostruzione delle carriere dei ceti dirigenti romani (senatori e cavalieri), con una particolare attenzione al principato di Traiano. Applica lo studio delle fonti epigrafiche per l'analisi dell'economia romana.

Ricciardi, Alberto è professore associato di Storia medievale presso l'Università Guglielmo Marconi di Roma. È Laureato in Antichità e Istituzioni Medievali presso l'Università degli Studi di Torino. Ha conseguito il titolo di dottore di ricerca in Storia medievale presso l'Università degli Studi di Bologna (2004) ed è stato borsista di post-dottorato presso lo stesso ateneo (2004-2006). Dal 2006 collabora con il gruppo di ricerca *L'épistolaire antique et ses prolongements européens. Association Interdisciplinaire de Recherches sur l'Epistolaire*. I suoi interessi di ricerca riguardano la figura e l'opera di Gregorio Magno; i rapporti fra istituzioni politiche e religiose nel regno franco; l'epistolografia altomedievale; i miti di origine delle popolazioni barbariche.

Rossi, Leonardo è ricercatore specializzato in studi religiosi, in particolare in storia del cattolicesimo italiano contemporaneo. Durante il suo dottorato – svolto presso l'Università di Anversa all'interno del progetto internazionale '*Between saints and celebrities. The devotion and promotion of stigmatics in Europe, c.1800-1950*' (ERC, P.I. Prof. T. Van Osselaer) – ha indagato la diffusione del fenomeno stigmatico nell'Italia del XIX e XX secolo, focalizzandosi sulle devozioni popolari e sul responso delle autorità religiose (nella fattispecie la Congregazione del Sant'Uffizio) verso gli aspiranti emulanti del Cristo crocifisso. Partecipando come post-doc al

progetto *'Contested Bodies. The religious lives of corpses'* (FWO/SNF, P.I. Prof. T. Van Osselaer-A. Berlis), ha analizzato devozioni, rituali e contestazioni sviluppatesi intorno a corpi di eroi della fede popolarmente percepiti come 'incorrotti' ed esposti alla pubblica venerazione. I suoi interessi di ricerca sono rivolti a devozioni popolari, pratiche e credenze dei fedeli, cultura materiale (corpi e reliquie), affettata santità, fenomeni mistici e la loro ricezione nella società tardo moderna e contemporanea, temi che saranno al centro del suo prossimo progetto MSCA 'Quasi-SANTE' presso l'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore.

Sansone, Alfredo si è formato presso l'Università della Calabria e l'Università degli Studi di Pavia, dove ha conseguito il titolo di Dottore di Ricerca in Storia nel 2019, trascorrendo anche un periodo di perfezionamento presso l'*Institutum Classicum* dell'Università di Helsinki come *PhD Fellow* nel maggio 2018. Nel 2019 è vincitore di una borsa di studio triennale Post-Doc presso la Scuola Superiore di Studi Storici dell'Università degli Studi di San Marino, dove si è occupato dello studio del carteggio epistolare fra Bartolomeo Borghesi e Luigi Nardi, ora pubblicato presso il Centro Sammarinese di Studi Storici con il titolo *Amicizia ed erudizione. Il carteggio scientifico tra Bartolomeo Borghesi e Luigi Nardi* (2024). Dal 2023 al 2024 è borsista di ricerca presso l'Istituto Italiano per la Storia Antica per un progetto sul rapporto tra l'Accademia dei Filopatri di Savignano sul Rubicone e Napoleone Bonaparte. Attualmente è assegnista di ricerca presso l'Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo per il progetto PRIN-PNRR MAP e docente a contratto in Storia romana presso l'Università degli Studi Niccolò Cusano. I suoi interessi di ricerca coinvolgono principalmente temi di storia romana ed epigrafia latina e vertono in particolare sull'analisi della documentazione epigrafica della Lucania antica, cui ha dedicato, oltre a vari articoli, una monografia nel 2021 (*Lucania romana. Ricerche di prosopografia e storia sociale, Roma, Quasar*). Altro suo campo d'indagine privilegiato è la storia degli studi classici fra Settecento e Ottocento, con particolare riguardo alla figura di Bartolomeo Borghesi e al suo ruolo pionieristico nello sviluppo scientifico in senso moderno di discipline come l'epigrafia, la prosopografia e la numismatica.

Sala, Stefano Carlo è dottorando in lettere classiche e storia antica presso l'Università di St. Andrews. In precedenza, ha studiato filologia classica e storia antica presso la Scuola Normale Superiore e l'Università di Pisa. La sua tesi di dottorato affronta il trattamento dei monumenti di Roma arcaica da parte dello storico d'età augustea Dionigi di Alicarnasso. Oltre all'interazione tra memoria storica e monumenti, gli ambiti d'interesse della sua ricerca includono alcuni aspetti dell'elaborazione letteraria della storiografia di Roma arcaica, quali lo sviluppo delle tradizioni gentilizie e i paralleli tra storia greca e storia romana.

Scevola, Roberto è professore ordinario di 'Diritto romano e fondamenti del diritto europeo' nell'Università di Padova dall'aprile 2023, dipartimento di Scienze Politiche Giuridiche e Studi Internazionali. In precedenza, laureatosi in Scienze Politiche e in Giurisprudenza presso l'Università Cattolica di Milano, nonché in Storia presso l'Università di Genova, ha conseguito il dottorato di ricerca in 'Diritto romano delle obbligazioni' presso l'Università 'Magna Graecia' di Catanzaro (2004) ed è stato assegnista presso l'Università 'Insubria' di Como (2004-2007). Ha pubblicato, oltre a varie monografie, numerosi contributi in volume e articoli in rivista inerenti al diritto romano (privato, processuale e pubblico), alla storia del pensiero giuridico romano, ai diritti greci, alla storia costituzionale moderna e contemporanea, nonché alla storia del pensiero politico. Infine, ha trascorso prolungati periodi di ricerca presso il Leopold-Wenger-Institut dell'Università di Monaco di Baviera ed è stato relatore in convegni nazionali o internazionali (specialmente Germania, Spagna e Francia).

Schreiner, Peter è professore emerito di storia e filologia bizantina all'università di Colonia, dove ha cominciato ad insegnare nel 1979 e dove è stato Direttore dell'Istituto di Studi Classici. Dal 1991 è socio corrispondente dell'Accademia Austriaca delle Scienze, dal 1993 membro dell'Accademia delle Scienze di Gottinga, dal 1994 dell'Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici, dal 1998 socio d'onore dell'Associazione dei Medievisti Russi e dal 2018 socio

dell'Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti. Oltre a essere autore di più di 500 pubblicazioni, è responsabile di prestigiosi progetti scientifici; è importante ricordare fra tutti il *Lexicon des Mittelalters*, di cui è stato curatore fra il 1992 e il 1999, e la *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, di cui è stato direttore dal 1992 al 2004.

Svanoni, Roberta è dottoranda del corso di dottorato in Scienze linguistiche presso le Università degli studi di Bergamo e Pavia, con una tesi di ricerca in Storia medievale dal titolo: *(Ri)scrivere, archiviare e trasmettere la memoria: il caso del monastero di Astino (Bergamo, secoli XII – XVI)*. Ha conseguito la laurea magistrale in Scienze storiche curriculum Storia medievale presso l'Università degli studi di Milano, con una tesi dal titolo: *La signoria di Giovanni di Boemia su Bergamo (1331-1332)*.

Turrisi, Elisa è dottoranda dal 2022 presso l'Università degli studi di Palermo in "Patrimonio Culturale", con un progetto di ricerca intitolato: *"Una città alle porte del Rinascimento. Palermo e le sue élites urbane nella seconda metà del XV secolo"*. Nel 2021 ha conseguito la laurea magistrale in "Storia e Civiltà" presso l'Università di Pisa, nel 2023 il diploma di "Archivistica, Paleografia e Diplomatica" presso l'Archivio di Stato di Palermo. È stata borsista del Centro Studi sulla Civiltà Comunale in occasione dell'"*Atelier international de formation doctorale*" di San Gimignano, del Centro Studi per la storia delle campagne e del lavoro contadino di Montalcino, della Fondazione Centro Studi sul Tardo Medioevo di San Miniato e della I Scuola Internazionale di Studi Dottorali "Fonti per la storia economica europea (secoli XIII-XVII)".

Vlachou, Olga is a Byzantinist focusing on the social history of the Komnenoi and Angeloi dynasties. Having a theological background, she acquired her MA diploma in Byzantine History from the University of Athens, writing her thesis on *the prosopography and social networks of Michael Choniates' epistolography (ca. 1176-ca. 1204)* in 2021. Currently, she is working on her PhD project at Central European University in Vienna, aiming to reconstruct the social networks of 12th-century Byzantium through the surviving letters of contemporary *literati*.

van't Westeinde, Jessica (PhD Durham, 2017) is a Research Fellow at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies at the University of Bonn. She currently works on the DFG/AHRC funded project *Connecting Late Antiquities*, directed by Julia Hillner (Bonn) and Richard Flower (Exeter). Previously, she held positions at Bern, Tübingen, Kiel, and Aarhus. Her work mostly concentrates on social dynamics and religious history in the later Roman Empire. Somehow, she harbours a special fondness for Jerome of Stridon.