

The aim of this thesis is to define and to summarize the manner, the context and the meaning of depictions of marine fauna in the Ancient Art from 8th century BC to 5th century AD in the Mediterranean region. Based on remarks of ancient authors and on current secondary literature it compiles and comments on some pieces of Ancient Art. Artistic motives with marine fauna were very popular in the ancient times and they can join a wide range of situations and contexts: from attributes of divinities and symbols of marine location to filling ornaments. Their significance was economic, social, as well as mythological and symbolical. The peak of their popularity is represented by black-figure vases, south Italian fish-plates and Hellenistic mosaics. Realistic and ornamental tendencies of style coexisted. While drawing and painting suited better to fish and cephalopods, sculpture flattered dolphins.