

## ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to study the commercial mechanism of Ravenna in the Late Antiquity from the point of view of the amount, type and provenance of the imported stone artefacts (fragments of architectural decoration, revetments slabs, *opus sectile*, sarcophagi), based on the study of archaeological material from the site of the basilica and the monastery of San Severo in Classe (Ravenna). Ravenna represented an important administrative and cultural center in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century, connecting western and eastern artistic influences and focusing herself on trade and production. Determination of the stone artefacts from the San Severo locality was principally based on the archaeometric methods and on the combination of archaeological and geologic approach as well. Specific archaeometric methods (macroscopic, geochemical and mineralogical–petrographic analyses) together with a quantitative evaluation were applied.

Many scientific works, dedicated till this time to the art history of late antique Ravenna and dealing also the argument of ravennate „marbles“ presumed the prevailing provenance from Proconnesos and usual commercial relations between Ravenna and Constantinople as well. Constantinople played a role of a mediator of oriental localities and Ravenna. The hypothesis concerning the provenance of the ravennate marbles from Proconnesos is commonly supported by a widespread diffusion of proconnesian products and marbles throughout the Mediterranean. Geochemical analyses were applied on the selected samples of white marbles to determine their provenance. The principle localities of stone artefacts origins have been individuated on the basis of macroscopic and geochemical parameters and analyses results. The map of principle localities was made.

The commercial development of Ravenna in the Late Antiquity, in the light of the quantity of stone artefacts and architectural decoration, was confronted with a volume and provenance of ceramics, imported to Classe and found in the portual area of Podere Chiavichetta: the maps of provenance of stone artefacts and of ceramics have been compared. The commercial development of Ravenna has been evaluated in the context of the general political and cultural situation of late antique and early medieval Ravenna and the changes, that occurred in the 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> century. This thesis approached also a question of the presence of lithotypes, quarried during Antiquity, in medieval and modern stratigraphy on the San Severo

site. The hypothesis of a secondary use of this material or of worked artefacts have been presented, together with other examples of reutilization in Ravenna and its vicinity.

**Keywords:** Marble, Stone, Lithotype, Architectural Decoration, *Opus sectile*, Sarcophagi, Funeral stelae, Provenance, Trade, Quantitative and qualitative analyses, Archaeometry, Late Antiquity, Ravenna, Classe