



Contribution ID: 65

Type: **not specified**

Sacred Alignments of Early Christian Churches and Baptisteries in Ravenna, Italy

Wednesday 18 September 2024 15:00 (20 minutes)

In this transdisciplinary archaeoastronomical project, the researcher examined the hypothesis put forward by the historian Giuseppe Gerola (1877-1938) who postulated at the beginning of the 20th century that the early Christian sacred buildings in Ravenna, Italy, were oriented towards the sunrise on a specific day. His methodology, however, did not allow him to determine the orientation with accuracy so his hypothesis had to remain speculation.

The researcher analysed the early Christian sacred buildings in Ravenna (mentioned by Gerola) and that are still extant today in their (partial) original form (about 18), by conducting georeferenced surveys with astronomical, trigonometric calculations combined with the study of primary and secondary sources. The author's methodology allowed her to obtain with high precision azimuths and declinations of these sacred architectures and in combination with written evidence realistic hypothesis can be expressed.

She aimed to verify or falsify Gerola's hypothesis concerning the existence of an ancient building tradition regarding the alignments of early sacred buildings toward sunrise on a specific day.

Her study confirms Gerola's early theory: some sacred architectures in Ravenna were indeed aligned toward the sunrise on a significant day, but some also with the sunset and few of them with the moon.

Primary author: SPINAZZÈ, Eva (Università di Friburgo)

Presenter: SPINAZZÈ, Eva (Università di Friburgo)

Session Classification: Strumentaria

Track Classification: SISFA 2024