



Integrated Archaeological and Geophysical Surveys in the Historical Center of Augusta (Eastern Sicily, Italy).

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Syracuse (Eastern Sicily, Italy) and its vast hinterland played a crucial role in the economy of ancient Sicily, largely because of the management, exploitation and trade of agricultural supply. Nevertheless, the socio-economic aspects of its territorial management and the relation between the countryside and coastal centres in the complex system of the Mediterranean markets have not yet been analysed in depth by scholars. Despite the historical, monumental and economic importance of the surrounding area of Syracuse in the Antiquity, the knowledge of the roman and medieval landscape and archaeological sites are still limited.

The research undertaken by Istituto per i Beni Archeologici e Monumentali – CNR of Catania (Sicily, Italy) attempted to remedy this omission by outlining a preliminary picture of the rich historical and archaeological heritage of Syracuse and its surrounding territory, which will be analysed using a multidisciplinary approach.

Augusta, a town near Syracuse (Sicily), was founded by emperor Frederick of Suavia between 1232 and 1239. In medieval period, the area of Giardini Pubblici was the downtown and until the XVII Cent. AD it was occupied by two urban blocks of buildings. In 1670 they were demolished to allow free area firing line from the near castle.

Integrated archaeological and geophysical investigations allowed a wide range knowledge of the roman and medieval landscapes, archaeological sites and monumental remains. Particularly the geophysical surveys undertaken in the historical center of Augusta, by means Ground-penetrating Radar (GPR), allowed a 3D reconstruction of archaeological structures in the subsoil until the depth of about 4m. The geophysical survey has identified the building of medieval and modern urban settlement of Augusta and has allowed to recreate the urban plan and its transformation.