

## Theory and Interpretation in Egyptian Archaeology

### Minds at Work in the Pharaoh's Land: A Journey Across the History of Archaeological, Epigraphic, and Papyrological Research in Egypt

Leah Mascia

This course intends to provide an introduction to the history of archaeological research in Egypt. It aims to trace key points in the evolution of the theoretical and methodological approach to studying archaeological artefacts and their context of discovery.

The seminar aims to provide the participants with a thorough knowledge of the steps that have transformed and shaped our contemporary perspective on archaeological research. It will examine how our understanding of the concept of “archaeological team” has progressively changed and which specialists played a key role across different stages of the history of archaeological research in Egypt. Participants will have an overview of the transformation of the scientific profile of experts in various research fields that, in the past and/or today, formed an archaeological team with a particular focus on the role played by epigraphists and papyrologists. From the first pioneering attempts of recording graffiti in temple contexts to applying the most advanced technologies for recovering lost writing on tomb walls, this course is meant to introduce the participants to the milestones reached in over one century of archaeological investigation.

It also intends to tackle the essential importance played by various specialists, such as physical anthropologists and conservators, to ensure the application of an ethical approach to archaeological research and their key role in ensuring the conservation of our cultural heritage. Participants will be introduced to various approaches to studying and preserving archaeological testimonies, from monumental buildings to human remains.

The discussed case studies will focus on the archaeology of Late Period, Greco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt.

The students will be actively involved in the course by participating in activities meant to provide them with the necessary tools for applying a critical and ethical approach to archaeological research.