

**The City of a Thousand Gods:
Religious Diversity in Constantine through Roman
Archaeological Remains**

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Summary :

In *Cirta* city, a wide variety of cults coexisted, creating a mosaic of religious beliefs. Through the study of Roman archaeological remains, we delve into a world where numerous cults and beliefs thrived, creating a true "city of a thousand gods."

Through the examination of archaeological discoveries such as temples, mosaics, statues, lamps, and stelae, we reveal concrete evidence of this religious diversity. From local deities to imported cults, we uncover how the city served as a crossroads where different religious traditions intertwined, influencing the daily life and culture of its residents. We also explore the significance of archaeological remains in understanding this religious diversity. Architectural structures, symbols, and artistic representations provide valuable insights into beliefs, practices, and interactions among the various religious communities in *Cirta*.

Keywords: Cirta; Deities; Belief; Roman; Worship.

ملخص:

تعايشت مجموعة كبيرة من العبادات في مدينة سيرتا، مما أدى إلى خلق فسيفساء من المعتقدات الدينية. من خلال دراسة البقايا الأثرية الرومانية، نتعمق في عالم ازدهرت فيه العديد من العبادات والمعتقدات، مما أدى إلى إنشاء "مدينة الألف إله".

من خلال فحص المكتشفات الأثرية مثل المعابد والفسيفساء والتماثيل والمصابيح والأنصاب، نكشف عن أدلة ملموسة على هذا التنوع الديني. من الآلهة المحلية إلى العبادات الوافدة، نكتشف كيف كانت المدينة بمثابة مفترق طرق حيث تتشابك التقاليد الدينية المختلفة مع بعضها، مما يؤثر على الحياة اليومية وثقافة سكانها. ونستكشف أيضًا أهمية البقايا الأثرية في فهم هذا التنوع الديني. توفر الهياكل المعمارية والرموز والتمثيلات الفنية رؤى قيمة حول المعتقدات والممارسات والتفاعلات بين المجتمعات الدينية المختلفة في سيرتا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: سيرتا؛ الآلهة؛ المعتقد؛ الرومان؛ العبادة.

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1. INTRODUCTION :

Constantine, located at the crossroads of historical and cultural influences, is a city that has been changed over time by numerous civilizations throughout the centuries. From its prehistorical origins to the modern period, *Constantine* has witnessed the evolution of different cultures and traditions. Today, we turn our focus to the religious aspect of this city, exploring the diversity and richness of religious beliefs that developed across various eras, with a particular emphasis on the Roman period. *Constantine* has been influenced by various civilizations, with the Numidians being the original inhabitants, followed by the Carthaginians, Romans, and many others. Each of these influences has contributed to shaping the city's identity and religious environment. Ancient local traditions coexisted with imported beliefs, creating a unique blend of cults and religious beliefs.

During the Roman period, *Cirta*, ancient *Constantine*, underwent a significant transformation, the Romans brought their own religious system and cults, adding a new layer to the already diverse religious environment of the region. This religious diversity was a reflection of Roman society, which often absorbed local beliefs while introducing new deities and practices. The coexistence of different religions and the interaction between cults created a unique dynamic in the city, impacting rituals, traditions, and the daily lives of its inhabitants.

The central issue that guides our research focuses on exploring this religious diversity in *Cirta* during the Roman period. How did the influences of previous civilizations shape *Cirta's* religious environment? And which deities were worshiped and what religious beliefs were predominant during this time?

To address these questions, our research will unfold in several stages. We'll explore some sanctuaries, stelae, statues, mosaics and oil lamps. First, we begin with delving into the world of sanctuaries. Our focus will encompass two remarkable sites; *El-Hofra* will be our starting point, as we unravel the enigma it presents and endeavor to understand its significance

within the religious environment of the city. Moving forward, we will talk about the *Mithraeum* of *Tiddis*. Then, we will shift our attention to the stelae that have stood the test of time. Among them, our journey will lead us to *Saturnus*, a central figure in the ancient pantheon. After that, we will talk about statues found in the city. Then we'll examine some representations on mosaics. Finally we will see some oil lamps. These humble yet essential artifacts offer a unique window into the daily rituals of worship.

By examining sanctuaries, stelae, statues, mosaics and oil lamps, we try to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse cultural and religious tapestry that contributed to the identity of this city.

2-SANCTUARIES:

A sacred space of primary importance in a community, constituting a fundamental and central structure of the city. These places are dedicated to religious or spiritual activities, which frequently include rituals and offerings to honor and come closer to deities. Sanctuaries are characterized by their sacred nature and are surrounded by walls made of durable materials, safeguarding sacred objects, statues, and religious equipment¹.

2.1-El-Hofra

Excavations on the hill of *El-Hofra*, 1 km west of *Constantine* and overlooking the road to *Setif*, uncovered a treasure trove of nearly 130 Punic stelae in 1875. These stelae, inscribed with carvings and Punic letters, provide important insights into the religious rituals and beliefs of the ancient people. Further explorations proceeded over time, resulting in the discovery of more artifacts. It was in 1950 that a fortuitous discovery attracted the archaeological community's attention. This discovery, meticulously explored by Mr. *A. Berthier*, not only revealed over 700 new stelae but also showed a complex of religious significance that had an important place in the Punic and Roman cultures².

The construction technique with pebble walls and the quality of concrete covering the floor of the *Porticus* and courtyard, provide strong evidence for dating the remains to the pre-roman period, specifically from the 3rd to the 2nd century BC. The materials provide a detailed picture of the temple's historical context. Coins from Carthage and that of *Massinissa* were discovered, indicating historical

relations with other ancient cities. Additionally, *Claviform Unguentaria*, Campanian pottery, and polychrome stuccos attest to the region's diverse cultural influences during this period. The discovered stelae include Punic, Neo-Punic, and those with Greek and Latin inscriptions. The inscriptions and the scenes on the stelae represented deities, attesting to the city's cosmopolitanism and the syncretism that occurred between the various belief systems. Notably, the worship of *Saturnus* and *Caelestis*, among other gods, seems to be prevalent in the ancient people's religious life. However, the discovery of Roman lamps, and numerous fragments of various pottery types, as well as a variety of coins dating from the Roman Republic to the Late Roman Empire, provide valuable evidence of daily life and commercial practices that once flourished in *Cirta* during the roman period³. The abundance of artifacts adds historical layers to our understanding of *Constantine's* religious and cultural legacy.

This complex is dedicated to *Baal-Kronos-Saturnus* and goddess *Tanit-Caelestis* worship, it began as a simple Tophet, according to Punic tradition, and during the 2nd century BC, specifically under the reign of *Massinissa* and his successors, the sanctuary experienced unprecedented prosperity, its influence extending beyond *Cirta* reaching the entire Numidian region. In 121 BC, there was a significant change in the character of the stelae found at the site. The previously plentiful and beautifully carved stelae became less common and indicated a decrease in quality, with many lacking inscriptions.

With the advent of the Roman era, the sanctuary entered a new phase. The continuous veneration of *Saturnus* and the persistence of the sacred space for worship are suggested by evidence of the temple's reconstruction during this period. Various "ministers" of *Saturnus* pledged to provide offerings and sacrifices, possibly including a statue, to their deity⁴. Additionally, faithful followers continued to express their adoration by offering votive stelae, a practice that endured throughout the reign of the Severian dynasty. The continuous devotion to *Saturnus*, as indicated by the donations and dedications made by both religious authorities and ordinary followers, illustrates the region's religious beliefs and practices 'persistence in the face of the ever-changing socio-political environment of the region. Despite transitions in power and cultural influences, the sanctuary's importance remained embedded in the hearts and minds of the people,

attesting to its continuing impact on the spiritual and cultural fabric of *Cirta*⁵.

The discovery of the religious complex is significant for reasons other than the accumulation of artifacts; the existence of a Punic-Roman religious complex provided a fascinating view into *Cirta*'s fusion of cultural traditions, indicating the coexistence and interaction of the Punic and the Roman populations.

2.2-Mithraeum

Mithra, the deity of Mithraism or Mithraic Mysteries, was an important figure in *Cirta*'s religion during the Roman era, defined as the "*Sol Invictus*", materialized as a symbol of veneration⁶. Mithraism, one of the most intriguing and hidden mystery cults, enthralled the Roman military population stationed in *Cirta*. Initiation rituals, which frequently took place in underground crypts known as *Mithraea*, were distinctive characteristic of Mithraism. These subterranean temples were constructed to represent life cycle of *Mithra*, the sun and light god, from his conception to ascension. Different levels of spiritual enlightenment were required for initiation into the cult, creating a feeling of exclusivity among its members.

In *Tiddis*, one of the most important *Castella* of *Cirta*, at the city's entrance, a first temple dedicated to the god *Mithra*, the Mithraic sanctuary was carefully hidden and kept out of sight. Its location in a natural cave, with a hidden entrance and interior modifications, reflects the secretive nature and clandestine character of Mithraic devotion [fig.1 (1)]. The sanctuary's entrance was adorned with figurative decorations with deep symbolic significance for its followers. The representation of a *Phallus* with wings and legs symbolized the regenerative powers associated with *Mithra*'s solar characteristics [fig.1 (3)]. Additionally, the frontal representation of a bull's head, a key element in Mithraic iconography, signified the god's connection to cosmic forces and fertility [fig.1 (2)]. Some authors seem to interpret the representation of the bull as a symbol of *Cybele* because the blood baptism, the "*Taurobole*" in the specific and ritual sense of the word, was never part of the Mithraic practices but rather a ritual symbol of the cult of *Cybele*. They also suggest that there may have been a dual sanctuary in *Tiddis* for *Mithra* and *Cybele* side by side, where women participated in the *Magna Mater* mysteries despite being forbidden access to *Mithra*'s mysteries⁷.

A small additional cave located above the main cave and accessible through a staircase served a specific purpose. Animals

intended for sacrifice were placed in this cave, and as their blood flowed through holes in the floor, it landed on the priests in the lower chamber. This ritual was likely associated with notions of purification and spiritual transformation, further reinforcing the mysticism of the Mithraic cult⁸. This fusion of solar and fertility motifs in the Mithraic context reflects the intricate interplay between cosmic symbolism and ritualistic practices, defining its place in the larger structure of Roman religious and cultural paradigms.

3- SCULPTURES:

A type of artwork created on solid materials, either in the form of a sculpture in the round, high relief, or low relief, using specialized tools designed for sculpting on limestone, marble, and other similar materials⁹. This artistic technique involves shaping and manipulating the material to produce many shapes and textures. Sculptors meticulously carve, chisel, and shape the material, gradually revealing their creative vision.

3.1-Stelae

Stelae are a valuable source of information, representing archaeological and historical documents that reflect religious life. Stele is a stone with a round, rectangular, or triangular top, varying in size and made from different solid materials, carrying sculptures (individuals, symbols, objects, animals, plants...) and texts. These stelae have the shape of a temple facade, positioned vertically with a thin thickness, and distinguished by their increasing height during the Roman period¹⁰. Several of these stelae have been unearthed in the region of *Cirta*, dedicated to *Saturnus*.

Saturnus, a venerated deity in Roman mythology, is considered as the Punic fertility god “*Ba'al Hammon*” successor, adopted by local communities under the Roman name “*Saturnus*”. This god received attributes associated with “*Jupiter*” and “*Pluto*”, boosting his status among the pantheon of gods. He easily incorporated some Oriental characteristics, such as symbols and attributes related to rural life, manifesting in his preference for offerings like the bull, ram, and rooster¹¹. The African god’s identity is further enriched by additional Italian Roman characteristics, such as the architectural design of the stelae dedicated to him¹². *Saturnus* has an important position in the divine assembly, symbolizing not only fertility but also the convergence of many cultural elements, making him a remarkable figure in the Roman pantheon.

The abundance of votive stelae dedicated to *Saturnus* attests to the extent and intensity of religious life in Roman *Africa*. Some are embellished with symbols and engraved texts, offerings from donors, while others are simple stones, barely testimonies of humble people's piety. Much greater importance should be attached to the *ex-votos* that emanate from modest people; the religious attitude of people is evaluated by these intimate testimonies, the humble stelae offered by the humble population of towns and countryside as realization of a vow, a vision, or in gratitude¹³.

Numerous stelae from the second century have been found in the archaeological site of *Tiddis*. The decoration of these stelae generally consists of three elements: an architectural framework; figures, often accompanied by animals; and finally, symbols¹⁴. A particular structure dominates in the global collection of these monuments, with the god generally positioned at the top of the stele, dominating the monument [fig. 4]. This arrangement placed the dedicators and animals in the lower compartments, establishing a visual hierarchy that highlights the divine presence. *Tiddis'*stelae possess their own individuality: the god, *Saturnus*, is frequently represented as a symbol and stelae are mostly rectangular in shape, roughly carved, adorned with original symbols such as the ladder [fig. 2], these stelae bear the mark of foreign influences outside of *Africa*¹⁵.

Among the peculiarities of the Tidditean monuments is the persistence of the *Tanit's* symbol during the Roman era, after occupying the position of the dedicator on the neo-Punic stelae, becomes the symbol of the main deity on the Roman monuments, often replacing him in the upper zone, accompanied by the *Sun* and the *Moon*, his dedicated attendants [fig. 3]. Furthermore, it should be noted that the sun and the moon are never combined in human form; the *Sun* has the place of honor among the divine attributes and plays an important role in the Tidditeans beliefs [fig. 5]¹⁶.

3.2-Statues

Statues, as three-dimensional artworks, reflect the creativity of humanity's artistic expression and have played a significant role in the history of art. The allure of statues lies not only in their size but also in their shapes and positions. Some statues take the shape of busts, capturing the face and personality of their subjects. Others find a place on pedestals, elevating their value and inviting visitors to look at them from an elevated perspective¹⁷.

The collection of round sculptures, though less abundant than that of low reliefs, includes notable pieces such as the statue of *Bacchus*, which was unearthed in *Constantine* in 1871 during the excavation of National Street. *Bacchus*, an important god born from a human “*Semele*” and the god of the sky “*Zeus*”¹⁸. Raised by nymphs in the caves of *Nysa*, he grew up among plains and forests¹⁹. Made of white marble, the statue had been fragmented into several pieces. The statue was generously donated to the museum by the owner of the land where it was discovered, today it is fully displayed at the museum of *Cirta* [fig. 6].

The specific information we have regarding the sculpture is its origin, dating, and the individuals involved. A few years after its discovery, the remains of a pedestal with an inscription were found about forty meters away at the corner of “*Vieux and Rouaud*” streets, near to the “*Abd-Errahman el Menakki*” Mosque²⁰: « *To Liber Pater Augustus. Q_ Quadratus Quintulus, son of Quintus, Quirina tribe, serving as an aedile, has given and dedicated the statue with pedestal and columns as he had promised willingly while managing the prefecture for the Triumvirs, in addition to the payment he has made of the prescribed sum of twenty thousand sesterces for Decurion position. The location has been granted by decree of the Decurion* »²¹.

Another statue, discovered simultaneously with the *Bacchus* in *Constantine*, represents naked male, possibly *Mercurius*, with his coat casually draped over the left shoulder and ending at knee level. The deity is raised on a semi-circular pedestal. The figure is slightly inclined against a vertical surface [fig. 7]²².

4- MOSAIC:

Mosaic art is an ancient craft devised by humans to enhance the appearance of their homes and public landmarks in their cities. It can be found in residences, bathhouses, basilicas, temples, and various other architectural spaces. Beyond its role in embellishing surfaces, the art of mosaic contributes significantly to the preservation of floors and walls, shielding them from moisture as it serves as an effective insulator²³. Several Roman mosaics have been discovered in region of *Cirta*, depicting various themes. We will present four panels on mythological theme: the kidnapping of *Europe*, the *Scylla* mosaic, the *Bacchic panther* and the *swimmers* mosaic.

The mosaic illustrating the kidnapping of *Europe* was discovered in *Mrikeb Thala*, 74 kilometers southeast of *Cirta*, near *Ain Beida*. The artwork is currently on display in *Algiers* Museum of

Antiquities [fig. 8]. To approach the beautiful goddess while she strolls on a beach, the king of gods disguises himself as a white bull. When *Europe* goes to touch the bull, it lies down, inviting her to ride on its back. *Zeus* kidnaps *Europe* and escapes across the sea to *Crete*. The mosaic represent a bull swimming in a stylized image of the sea. Two dolphins emerge from the water, imitating the bull's movement. The goddess is shown on the bull, with a flowing scarf behind her. The scene is completed with a winged *Eros* and trees. The sea is represented in horizontal lines interlaced with curved strokes²⁴.

The mosaic depicting *Scylla* (nymph transformed into a sea monster by *Circe*), discovered at *Bordj el Ksar* in baths (*Frigidarium*) in *Constantine*, is kept in *Algiers* Museum of Antiquities [fig. 9]. The mosaic's composition includes an assemblage of marine deities, three *Nereids* in rest and recumbent upon sea monsters represented in the maritime realm, the sea indicated by small dashes. Two of them are perched hippocampi, while the third is atop a creature with a swan or dragon appearance. Two of these *Nereids* are holding a scarf. In the foreground of these divine figures, an *Eros* stands erect atop a dolphin, another wields a lash, and another holds the bridle of the *Nereid's* monster. *Scylla* is portrayed as a young woman with unkempt tresses holding a rudder, her body ends with fish tails and wolf heads²⁵.

Another mosaic was discovered in *Cirta*, depicting a captivating scene [fig. 10]: a panther planning to drink wine from a large crater, with an unseen figure on its back, except for his whip that he holds. To the right of the panther stands a figure, which could be a *Satyr* or *Pan*, holding a syrinx in one hand, a stick and a coat in the other. The small figure seated on the panther's back might represent the child *Bacchus*. This mosaic shows the importance of the *Bacchus* worship in the region²⁶.

As we continue our research of *Cirta's* rich archaeological legacy, our attention is drawn to an amazing discovery: a black and white mosaic from the 1st century BC²⁷[fig. 11]. This mosaic adorned the private baths of a magnificent residence discovered during *Berthier's* excavations in the *Sidi M'cid* district. It depicts black swimmers on one side and ships on the other, with an eagle at the center, symbolizing the god *Jupiter*²⁸.

5- OIL LAMPS:

Oil lamp is a type of antique illumination equipment that operates by burning oil; it is made of diverse materials such as bronze

and terracotta, and gives a good insight into Roman culture. These lamps are often embellished with a variety of representations that reflect daily life, such as popular activities, local customs, and scenes from mythology and other cultural themes. We will examine four examples of lamps: *Sol* and *Luna*, the goddess *Africa*, the god *Serapis* and the God *Apollo* with griffins.

The worship of the *Sun* and *Moon* finds its origins in Sabine society and deeply ingrained in the early phases of the genesis of Roman urban communities. It manifests as a central system of beliefs among the rural inhabitants of *Italy*, characterized by veneration for these celestial entities. Perceived as regulators of the cosmos, the *Sun* and *Moon* hold vital significance for agriculture, influencing the periodicity of seasons and the cyclic rhythm that regulates the year²⁹. This worship integrates into the socio-religious fabric as a representation of time, linking agricultural cycles to the passage of time, while marking distinct seasonal milestones within the earthly world. A collection of lamps has been discovered, some bearing the image of *Sol*, while others depict *Luna*. Some lamps portray both *Sol* and *Luna* at the same time. Among these artifacts, a remarkable lamp was unearthed in *Cirta* and is currently preserved in the museum. This lamp features the bust of *Sol*, crowned with multiple rays within a moon and surrounded by two stars[fig. 12].

The goddess *Africa*, known as *Ifru* in ancient texts, emerges as a divine entity in Libyan mythology. *Ifru* is distinctly associated with caves goddess, implying a possible connection to subterranean aspects or rock structures. Her role in regional cosmology appears to have captivated the attention of the Romans, who subsequently adopted her as *Dea Africa*³⁰. The head of the goddess *Africa* can be observed on a variety of antique lamps. A lamp piece was discovered in *Tiddis*, which portrays the goddess's bust seen frontally, adorned with ears and an elephant trunk on her head[fig. 13]. This piece is currently on display in National Museum of *Cirta*.

The Greco-Egyptian god *Serapis* is an important figure in the pantheon of ancient Hellenistic *Egypt*. His cult, established in the 3rd century BC, is a remarkable example of cultural and religious syncretism between Egyptian and Greek traditions. *Serapis* derives his name from the combination of two preexisting divine figures; *Osiris*, a major Egyptian deity associated with fertility, regeneration, and the afterlife, and the sacred bull *Apis*. The worship of *Serapis* spread throughout the Roman Empire as Hellenistic and Egyptian influences

expanded. In the imperial *Rome*, *Serapis* was worshiped as a god of agricultural prosperity, healing, and was also seen as a protector of sailors and travelers³¹. A lamp dating between 2nd and 3rd century, was unearthed in *Cirta* and bears the left profile of the god *Serapis*, characterized by the *Modius* atop his head[fig. 14]. This artifact stands as a testament to the fusion of art and religion during its era. Presently, the lamp is on display at the National Museum of *Cirta*.

Two other pieces of lamp, on display at *Cirta* Museum, depicting the god *Apollo* on a carriage drawn by griffins, was unearthed in the city. This discovery sheds light on the locals' intense connection with the deity of light and music.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Before to the arrival of the romans, Africa's religious landscape demonstrated incredible complexity. Instead of simplifying things, the Romans' influence contributed to the development of regional diversity. The process of Romanizing local deities occurred diversely, depending on the politico-religious circumstances of each place. Moreover, another important impact occurred during this period, that of Eastern cults, which gained popularity throughout the Mediterranean region. These cults left a lasting mark on African deities, resulting in the assimilation of various elements³².

The results of this study shed light on the importance of each deity venerated during that era and the crucial role of religious syncretism in shaping the spiritual landscape of *Cirta*:

Among the deities that found a special place in the affection of *Cirta*'s inhabitants, *Saturnus* held a central position. Revered as the god presiding the agriculture, prosperity, and time, *Saturnus* was an important figure in their daily life. Archaeological remains attest to god's importance, with temples and stelae dedicated to his worship and abundant offerings made in his honor. Religious syncretism was evident in the association of *Saturnus* with local deity (*Baal-Hammon*), creating "*Saturnus of Africa*".

Religious syncretism manifested notably through the influence of Eastern cults, particularly those centered on *Mithra* and *Cybele*, as evidenced by temples dedicated in their honor. These foreign deities, with their mysterious and appealing rituals, fused with local beliefs to create a distinct combination of rituals and symbols. *Mithra*, the Persian sun god, was especially popular among the military, frequently conducting his worship in mysterious crypts. This deity brought distinct elements of Eastern spirituality with him. At the same

time, *Cybele*, a goddess honored by men and women, assumed also the position of protector of the state and the emperors in Africa. Likewise, *Serapis*, the Egyptian god of fertility and healing, also played a significant role with *Isis*. Several lamps depicting these deities attest to their importance in local belief. His cult added a mystical dimension to the city, serving as a bridge connecting different cultures.

Additional categories of deities left their mark in the city. *Bacchus*, the god symbolizing merriment, celebration, and abundance, garnered a dedicated following. His worship was often linked with festive celebrations, and the god's statue with the mosaic serve as testament to enthusiasm with which he was honored. We should also mention *Mercurius*, the messenger of the gods, who held a prominent role in the city as the protector of travelers and traders.

The studied lamps reveal solar and lunar deities, represented by *Sol* and *Luna*. The Sun was revered as a source of light and warmth, while the Moon was connected with the night and feminine characteristics. These deities represented essential aspects of human existence, and their worship contributed to maintain the cosmic order. Furthermore, the goddess *Africa*, who represented the African region, reflected the deep connection between a local deity and an imported one. Moreover, the god *Apollo* was honored for his healing powers and for his way to represent light, music, and poetry.

The mosaic showing the kidnapping of *Europe* illustrates the myth of *Europe* being kidnapped by *Zeus* disguised as a bull, this mosaic shows how the Romans used art to celebrate and immortalize myths. The god of the sky, whose presence in the city during the first century BC is attested by the mosaic of the swimmers, is respected by the city's inhabitants. The mosaic portraying *Scylla*, distinguished by its meticulously executed artistic arrangement, tells us the story of *Scylla*, a terrifying sea creature from Greek mythology. This nymph, transformed into a sea monster, was depicted, as a multi-headed creature with deformed limbs. These mosaics highlight the Romans' interest in Greek mythology, which they adapted to their own culture and interpreted through the prism of their spirituality.

The studied remains testify to the close connection between art, mythology, and religion in Numid society during the Roman era. They also remind us that every deity, whether local, Roman, Greek, or Eastern, had a place in this rich spiritual world, contributing to the diversity and depth of the city's religious life.

7. CONCLUSION:

By looking into the archaeological remains of Constantine, we have embarked on a rich and captivating journey through the deities revered not only during the Roman period but also in the time preceding it. Through the study of sanctuaries, such as *El-Hofra* and the *Mithraeum* of *Tiddis*, we glimpsed the sacred and mystical dimensions of Roman life. The sculptures, from Saturnian stelae to the statue of *Bacchus* and *Mercurius*, offered vivid examples of both divine devotion and human aspirations. The mosaics, presenting scenes of the *Europe's* kidnaping, *Scylla*, Bacchic panther, and the swimmers revealed art's ability to immortalize timeless myths. Finally, the lamps, bearing the combined imagery of *Sol* and *Luna*, the goddess *Africa*, *Serapis* and *Apollo*, served as reminders of the diverse deities worshipped and the nature of spirituality in Roman daily life.

The influences of previous civilizations, including Punic, and local cultures, converged to create a mosaic of religious practices. The presence of the *Mithraeum* and its enigmatic rituals alludes to the syncretism between Roman and Eastern beliefs. The worship of deities like *Saturnus*, *Caelestis*, *Bacchus*, *Africa*, *Serapis* and others displays the assimilation of different cultural pantheons.

The coexistence of different religious communities is suggested by the presence of diverse deities, possibly reflecting a harmonious blending of faiths. The combination of practices and the usage of shared spaces, attested by religious remains, reveal a cosmopolitan spiritual atmosphere. Studying these treasures allowed us to immerse ourselves in the religious universe of the time, uncovering significant layers of beliefs and rituals that have shaped *Constantine's* cultural environment throughout the ages. The city's function is that of a cultural crossroads, where historical legacies converge and intertwine.

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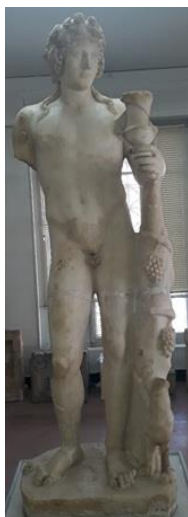
9. APPENDICES:



Fig. 1: (1) Mithraeum. (2) Bull. (3) Phallus.
Ghouas Zahra



Fig. 2: Saturnus stele **Fig. 3:** Saturnus stele **Fig. 4:** Saturnus stele

Ghouas Zahra**Fig. 5:** Saturnus stele
*Ghouas Zahra**Ghouas Zahra***Fig. 6:** Bacchus statue
*Ghouas Zahra**Ghouas Zahra***Fig. 7:** Mercurius statue
Ghouas Zahra**Fig. 8:** kidnapping of Europe
Ghouas Zahra**Fig. 9:** Scylla mosaic
Ferdi. Mosaiques des eaux en Algérie**Fig. 10:** Bacchus the child**Fig. 11:**Black swimmers mosaic

Ghouas Zahra



Fig. 12: Sol and Luna
Cirta Museum

Cirta Museum



Fig. 13: Africa
Cirta Museum



Fig. 14: Serapis

غواس، سراج-رميلي.
الآلهة المصرية في الجزائر خلال الفترة الرومانية



Fig. 15: Apollo

Cirta Museum

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