



Framing the Sebasta: IvO 56 and the Structure of the Isolympic Games of Neapolis

Lecture by Dr. **Francesco Maniglia** (Doctoral Research Fellow, Department of Archaeology, Conservation, and History, University of Oslo)



Regulations for the Sebasta games of Neapolis (IvO 56) (source: Dittenberger, W. and K. Purgold. 1896. Die Inschriften von Olympia, Olympia 56, Berlin)

The lecture will take place on **Tuesday, 27 May 2025, at 7:00 p.m. (EEST)** at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, Tsami Karatasou 5, 11742 (the lecture will also be streamed online via Zoom)

Registration is required for both in-person and virtual attendance.

To attend **in-person**, please register at norwinst@uib.no

To attend **via Zoom**, please register via the following link:

<https://uib.zoom.us/meeting/register/sXMTdpYpSgeGuPgzlfpkw>



Abstract

In 2 BCE, the city of Neapolis established a quinquennial athletic competition in honour of Augustus, commonly known as the *Sebasta*. Recent archaeological excavations in Naples have uncovered the monumental area of the Games, along with lists of winners from some first-century CE editions. Additionally, a fragmentary copy of the *Sebasta* regulations is preserved in Olympia, allowing modern scholars to partially reconstruct the course of the festival.

Using the data obtained from documents concerning the *Sebasta*, particularly the regulations, this lecture investigates the structure of these Panhellenic competitions. At the same time, the study focuses on how Neapolis, which enjoyed full Roman citizenship at the time, defined its relations with the Greek East through the Games. It explores Neapolitan interactions through Greek channels of communication, while also examining the preservation of local traditions and the adoption of new cultural forms and practices.

Biographical Information

[Francesco Maniglia](#) is a PhD completion grant candidate in Ancient History at the University of Oslo. His dissertation, titled *Remoulding Cultures: Issues of Continuity and Change in the Italiote Cities of Roman Italy*, explores cultural transformations in the Greek cities of Italy following the Roman conquest, covering the period from the 3rd century BCE to the 2nd century CE. Drawing on a wide range of literary, epigraphic, and archaeological sources, his research highlights how Italiote cities adapted to new forms of governance and how these shifts affected local cultural practices.

Francesco is currently spending three months at the Norwegian Institute through the Erik Østby Archaeology Stipend, focusing on inscriptions related to Italiote individuals and cities located outside of Italy. In today's lecture, he will present on the *Sebasta* of Neapolis—the Panhellenic games established in Naples under Augustus. A fragmentary copy of the games' rules is preserved in Olympia, housed at the Museum of the Olympic Games of Antiquity.