

## 4.3 SOCIETY – RELIGIOUS IDENTITY



Type: Mosaic  
Chronology: 4<sup>th</sup> century AD  
Findspot: Great Basilica of Tipasa (Algeria)  
Actual location: Archaeological Museum of Tipasa

Roman mosaic representing a *mensa* (Roman funerary table for the display of food) decorated with fishes and an inscription saying: *In deo/pax et concordia sit/convivio nostro* (In god, may your banquet be in peace and concord).

It comes from the Roman colony of Tipasa, in Algeria. As for the example of the funerary stele from Timgad, the mosaic of Tipasa reflects a type of funerary practice common in the Roman period, when banquets honouring the deceased were organized during the funeral and every year on their birthday. This practice was adopted by Christians, who commonly celebrated a banquet on the day of the death rather than on the deceased's birthday and scenes of banquets are commonly represented in paintings found in several Christian catacombs in Rome.

The mosaic offers an excellent example of the complex relationship existing between Roman visual culture, funerary practice and religious identity.

### MY RESEARCH

How far does material culture reflect religious identity in the Roman world?