

Session abstracts:

1A – Projecting Roman Power? Monumentality in Roman Frontier Installations

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This session will consider whether Roman military installations were built to project a specific image of Roman superiority. The session will embrace monument expression in fort gateways, whether these were for grandeur or were just gates, and why portals were blocked; fort orientation in frontier systems; platforms of power: governors' palaces on the Rhine and Danube; monumentality in artificial frontiers including Hadrian's Wall, the Antonine Wall distance slabs, and a consideration of the audience.

1B – Shopping and the Roman City

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The study of consumption and production are fundamental features of Roman archaeology, often undertaken with a view to understanding the relationship between these two elements. However, the actions of choice, of purchase and of transportation to the place of consumption are often omitted from most studies. What today we call 'shopping', can be understood both as a process of distribution and, via more post-processual conception, of identity formation. Consumers, of course, needed to purchase goods. There is a wealth of evidence to inform us of ancient conceptions of trust and for the governance or regulation of sale – whether at auction, at markets or from shops/homes. The session will build on earlier work on the subject of shopping in antiquity and, in addition, break new ground by engaging this work with the vast range of material culture associated with Roman archaeology.

As organisers, we are very conscious that shopping in the Roman Empire was a cultural practice that needs further definition – for example, most Roman towns had a forum, but did the presence of this space create the conditions for a form of shopping that was as universal, or were fora associated with very different forms of shopping. One of the key, but often not articulated, preoccupations for those who study the Roman Empire is: to what extent is our evidence and our understanding of shopping unique? To help the panel investigate this matter, we will invite a commentator specialising in the study of shopping in later temporal periods to comment on the papers given. This will enable us to see the contrasts and the similarities of shopping as a cultural practice and to comprehend what Roman archaeology can bring to the *longue durée* of a key aspect of popular culture as well as its regulation by elites across the Empire.

1C – Reuse and Transformation of Space in the Late Antique ‘Latin West’

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From the late 3rd century onwards, the Roman world, and the western provinces in particular, underwent fundamental transformations which became ever more pronounced with the advent of new economic, social, political and religious circumstances stemming from emerging early medieval power spheres and networks. Traditionally, Roman archaeology has seen Late Antiquity as a period of transition, during which Roman objects, structures and concepts were gradually lost or purposefully eroded. Patterns of reuse were studied primarily at the level of individual objects, artworks or architectural elements (e.g. *spolia*). Consequently, interpretations have often been artificially charged with contemporary ideological agency – in the case of *spolia*, to stress either the self-conscious connection of Late Antique populations with the past, or to overemphasise Christian triumphalism over pragmatic reuse of materials.

This session builds on recent methodological approaches to move beyond existing traditions which view reuse primarily in ideological terms. It seeks to investigate patterns of Late Antique reuse and transformation by focussing on changing interrelationships between space and structures within wider socio-economic and political contexts. Papers are invited to focus on different spatial environments (e.g. rural settlements, domestic environments, public spaces, necropoleis, palaces, frontier zones). Contributions should assess, beyond ideological explanations, the extent to which these spaces experienced continuity, abandonment and/or different forms of reuse from the end of the 3rd century until the early medieval period. In order to provide contrast to the Session 4a on Asia Minor, the principal focus will be on the ‘Latin West’.

Through this approach, the session will provide a better understanding of spatial transformations – and therefore more general patterns of reuse in Late Antiquity. This will enable a more balanced view of the driving forces behind these processes than that provided by ideologically- charged studies which have dominated debates surrounding reuse and transformation to date.

2A – A Clash of Cultures? Encounters between Rome, its Inhabitants and its Neighbours through Material Evidence

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The session aims to examine how material culture is transformed at the interfaces between different cultures either as a result of elite exchange and interactions or more prosaic factors

such as geographical proximity (e.g. frontier zones). Recent scholarship (see Eckhardt, Swift) has improved our understanding of life in the frontiers and borders of the Roman Empire and how these edges of empire were places of contact between religions, societies, and material cultures as a result of the migration and movement of people to and through these regions. Frontiers were spaces where cultures met and blended, creating new societies. These areas allow us to examine the creation and display of identities during periods of unprecedented mobility and interaction, as shown in the development of distinct forms of material culture in these regions.

Thus this session will invite contributors to ask questions such as: why were such different approaches chosen and what do they tell us about the different ideologies of these contemporaneous societies? How did the Roman conquest of frontier zones affect the material cultures of these regions? How did people express global and local identities in their material culture?

2B – Plants, Animals and Identity

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In recent decades, identity has become an important theme in Roman archaeology. Identity is often studied through material culture and epigraphy. The potential of organic remains of plants and animals has not been utilised fully. This is surprising, since the consumption of food and rearing of particular plants and animals – for which organic remains provide direct evidence – is an important way of claiming and expressing identity, and differentiating from others. When we do find statements about identity that are related to food, these are often simplified and not always correct. For instance, it is widely claimed that the ‘Romans’ prefer to eat pork. The evidence behind the supposed Roman preference for pork seems to be based on King’s regional study of animal bones, which shows a dominance of pig for Central Italy. So it depends on what the term ‘Romans’ refers to - people from Central Italy, legionary soldiers or everyone living in the Roman Empire - whether the statement is valid or not.

Another example concerns the spread of Roman herbs, fish sauce, wine and olive oil throughout the Roman Empire. What does this say about the identity of the people who incorporated these new elements into their diet? Animals that were not exploited for food are also indicative of changing identity. Several Roman provinces show the introduction of new varieties of dog, particularly very small ‘toy’ varieties. The choice to keep new types of dog, particularly in rural areas, likely indicate changes in the identity of their inhabitants. They are also ideal case studies for investigating changes in the treatment of animals during their life - another potential marker of identity.

Studies of organic remains can also reveal differences in growing food and ornamental plants between different regions of the Empire. Of course, these differences are at least in part due

to differences in environment and climate. Nevertheless, identity can also have played a role in how people farmed, for instance what methods and technology were used, what crops were cultivated and what animals were raised (e.g. Kreuz 2005).

King, A, 1999: Meat diet in the Roman world: a regional inter-site comparison of the mammal bones, *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12, 168-202.

Kreuz, A., 2005: 'Landwirtschaft im Umbruch? Archäobotanische Untersuchungen zu den Jahrhunderten um Christi Geburt', in Hessen und Mainfranken, *Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission* 85, 97-292.

2C – Water and Urbanism: The Evolving Infrastructure of Rome's Eternal Cities

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Extensive water supply systems such as aqueducts and water lifting machines and associated fountains and baths were a defining characteristic of Roman civilization and represented a considerable expansion in scope and expertise on previous civilizations. Many remained in use for centuries, and were not bettered until the modern period. Such systems underpinned the growth in urbanization during the Roman period and were often an enduring legacy of Roman civilization. A further development was the widespread dissemination of water power including water mills: a proto "industrial revolution". Increasing awareness of environmental change throughout antiquity and the early medieval periods can also inform and create new insights about evolving patterns of water management and usage.

This session aims to consider water management and networks as part of the wider infrastructure of Roman urbanism. One of the theme aims to highlight those scholars working in new innovative technical approaches for understanding water flow, construction processes, and water management involving trans-disciplinary research programmes with engineers, archaeologists, historians, geologists and hydrologists. Another theme will be to recognize the long-term contribution of Roman infrastructures for later societies in Europe and the Mediterranean and how this legacy was sustained and advanced.

3A – Recent Work and the Challenging of Perceptions of Roman Britain: The Archaeology of Occupation and Collaboration

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For many years Romanists interested in the military occupation of the province tended to concentrate on the minutiae of fort plans and changes to military dispositions. While such information is fundamental to developing robust models relating to those areas subject to

Roman military occupation of Britain and attempts by the Empire to extend its dominion further north they often failed to adequately integrate Roman military archaeology into wider understandings of the Roman period in the country. Over the last 10-20 years new understandings have started to emerge on the role and impact of the Roman military occupation army in moulding what we refer to as 'Roman Britain', including the development of the concept of 'military communities'. This session seeks papers that not only present new discoveries relating to the Roman army and its impact, or lack of it, but also offer new or emerging understandings derived the synthesis of that data.

3B – Isotopic Studies in Roman Archaeology: Patterns of Commonality and Eccentricities

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Isotopic proxies (e.g. $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, $\delta^{15}\text{N}$, $\delta^{18}\text{O}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}$, $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$, ^{14}C) are increasingly applied in Roman archaeology to provide additional valuable information on a wide range of past human activities. Examples include, among others, the reconstruction of past human subsistence or mobility and animal or crop management practices. As isotopic data for the Roman world is accumulated, it becomes possible to enlarge the interpretative scale of research into social structures, rural and urban differentiations, networks of connectivity and mobility, agricultural economy, etc. Through inter-regional and/or diachronic comparisons and syntheses, patterns of commonality and eccentricities for the different activities under study can be identified. This is of particular importance for research of the Roman world given its temporal and spatial extent which certainly accommodated considerable variability. In several instances, isotopic data can provide unique information on relevant issues which is simply not available from historical records. Furthermore, it can be fruitfully combined with other sources of historical and archaeological data under integrated research approaches. This session welcomes contributions from isotopic studies towards Roman archaeology. Of particular interest are multi-isotopic contributions that adopt integrated approaches by combining multiple lines of evidence. There should be an effort to contrast or place novel case studies within the established general context, highlight uniqueness and new foci of interest, and improve on synthesis efforts. Topics of interest, include, but are not limited to:

- Exploring isotopic dichotomies, for instance: rural vs. urban, core vs. periphery, Republican vs. Imperial, Pagan vs. Christian
 - Dynamics in social and economic organisation across the Roman world as suggested by isotopic indicators of diet, nutrition, and mobility
 - Regional and temporal comparisons in animal and crop management practices
 - Identifying individuality or singularities within generic isotopic patterns
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3C – Ancient Consciousness of Connectivity in the Roman World

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The acquisition of imported goods was a common and often vital part of life in the Roman Empire: the government in Rome imported grain from Egypt, legionaries at Cologne consumed olive oil from Spain, and individuals in Herculaneum covered their floors with marble from Greece and Asia Minor. Recent research on globalization and material exchange has shown the Roman period to be a time of intense connectivity, whereby people at all levels of society, in both urban and rural communities, were exposed to an array of non-locally produced items. While tracing patterns of connectivity remains important, it is equally important to begin questioning the extent to which the participants in such processes – not just the receivers, but the intermediaries, and the producers – were aware of the biographical pathways of goods.

This session therefore proposes to explore the ways in which people across the Roman Empire conceptualized and were conscious of the distant origins of the objects that surrounded them. By selecting papers that cover different forms of material culture and regions of the Empire, the session will examine the degree to which ‘foreignness’ remained, or ever was, a factor in people’s relationships and interactions with particular products. In other words, at what point did an object lose or gain its non-local associations? The session aims to advance our understanding of human-object relationships and to consider the impact such relationships might have on our interpretations of connectivity in the Roman world. Asking such questions of material culture can pose particular difficulties (how do we tell if a person in *Londinium* thought of Pentelic marble as Athenian, Greek, Mediterranean, Roman, or just non-local?), and one of the further intended outcomes of the session is to develop working methodologies for demonstrating the awareness of these itinerant object pathways.

4A – Cities in Transition: Urban Space in Asia Minor in the 3rd and 4th Centuries AD

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The cities of Asia Minor have received extensive archaeological attention over the last century. We now have a vast amount of information about the Roman imperial phases of many of the largest urban centres, as well as many smaller ones, across Asia Minor. More recently, the late antique phases of these cities have also been intensively investigated. Key studies, like Ine Jacob’s *Aesthetic Maintenance of Civic Space: The ‘Classical’ City from the 4th to the 7th c. AD*, have drawn attention to the wide and varied attempts by individuals and communities to maintain urban landscapes in this region. Some of the developments visible in this late period, however, can be traced earlier, notably in the 3rd century AD. Beginning with the Severan boom in construction the era ends with widespread building of civic fortification and a range of cities acquiring new statuses. In the archaeological record, while monumental building is scarcer from the second quarter of the 3rd century AD onwards, intense investment in funerary monuments is visible. This session, therefore, aims to explore changing patterns of investment in urban centres across this transitional period, from the 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

4B – Studying *instrumenta scriptoria*: The Social Value of Writing Equipment

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When thinking about literacy in the Roman world, we still turn to Harris' *Ancient Literacy*, a book which has avoided any fatal blows from a barrage of nit-picking attacks for nearly thirty years. Important research has consistently eroded its pessimistic view on levels of literacy, but without producing any single work which was broad enough in geographical scope and content to wrest power from the authoritative text. In order to advance understanding of the spread of literacy, Latinization, the fate of local languages and attendant attitudes in the Roman world, we must promote and integrate consideration of the non-textual sources, and especially the ways in which various types of *instrumenta scriptoria* (ink pots, pens, wax spatulas etc., see Božič and Feugère 2004) can be used (Derks and Roymans 2002), or not (Andrews 2012), as proxies for literacy in Latin and Latinization. Recent work has demonstrated that careful contextual analysis can illuminate the relationship between the material culture of writing equipment and socio-cultural practices, attitudes and identities in the Roman period (Eckardt forthcoming; Swift 2017). Papers in this panel might explore: 1) the scope for analysis of the distribution and interpretation of the equipment of writing within various geographical and chronological parameters, using a range of databases including the PAS; 2) the correlation of the distributions of *instrumenta scriptoria* with other social phenomena; 3) the social value of writing and its *instrumenta* through a range of sources, for example deposition in burial contexts, domestic iconography and the miniaturization of equipment.

Andrews, C. 2012 *Roman Seal-boxes in Britain* (Oxford).

Božič, D. and Feugère, M. 2004 'Les instruments de l'écriture' in Lambert, P.-Y. (ed.) *L'écriture dans la société gallo-romaine. Éléments d'une réflexion collective* (Paris) 21–41.

Derks, T. and Roymans, N. 2002 'Seal-boxes and the spread of Latin literacy in the Rhine delta' in A. E. Cooley (ed.) *Becoming Roman, writing Latin? Literacy and Epigraphy in the Roman West* (Portsmouth, RI) 87–134.

Eckardt, H. (forthcoming) *Writing and Power in the Roman World: Literacies and Material Culture* (Cambridge).

Harris, W. V. 1989 *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge MA/London).

Swift, E. 2017 *Roman Artefacts and Society. Design, Behaviour, and Experience* (Oxford).

4C – 'War and Peace'! Roman Coin Hoards in Archaeological Context – From Daily Life Episodes to Group Tragedies

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The development of archaeological techniques combined with an increase of IT facilities have made possible the research of Roman archaeology and history at the scale of the whole

Empire and beyond. In the last decades, this opportunity led to the identification of general and specific patterns on various aspects of the Roman daily life.

The main aim of this session is to demonstrate at the scale of the Roman Empire how the analysis of archaeological context together with the numismatic and epigraphic sources, and the IT support, can establish - and solve a long-term debated aspect. When a coin hoard represents, as it is largely accepted, a proof of wealth as saving money, or there are other meanings for coin deposits: votive/construction offerings, daily accidental loss of money, individual/local tragedies (e.g. fire, earthquake).

Considering a long-perspective of this approach, once we have separated the hoards in various categories according to their purposes, we can easily re-think through the archaeological, numismatic and epigraphic evidences on the general and specific patterns of hoards'/coin-deposits discovery.

The case-studies which will be presented if this session will be approved will fully demonstrate the importance of archaeological context in explaining historical and numismatic facts upon coin hoards while the numismatics, while numismatics will help the understanding and the dating of archaeological context.

The archaeology, numismatics, epigraphy and IT can all point out when and where we can discuss now about the moments of turmoil at different levels, from episodes of daily life to individual and group tragedies.

5A – From Plans to Processes: A New Look at the Cities of Roman North Africa

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The intensely urbanized landscape of North Africa in the Roman period makes the region an obvious choice for interrogating life in the ancient city. These cities — like the North African populations that created them — are a juxtaposition of many layers of history and ethnicity that are too-often flattened into a single, culturally 'Roman' urban expression. Furthermore, the static, poorly-phased urban plans that are the primary focus of archaeological study make it difficult to answer the types of social questions that are at the heart of urban studies in later periods.

Yet the large-scale excavation and excellent preservation at many North African cities, as well as information coming from new fieldwork approaches and non-invasive survey, provides an enticing body of data for a more nuanced research agenda. How were varied local interests expressed during building and renewal, and is it possible to recognize elements of cultural interaction in the construction and life of ancient cities? At what stage, if at all, did functional or community zones emerge in the cityscape? How did town layouts change over the period

of Roman rule? And can we use the simple urban plan to make larger statements about the daily social life of urban populations?

This session explores new methodological and theoretical approaches that hold the potential to answer these types of queries in greater detail, through a specific focus on tracing ongoing changes to the urban layout. Papers will include innovative fieldwork techniques for understanding the extent of urban areas and their chronological development, and in particular conceptual ideas for the reinterpretation of well-known settlements such as Timgad, Leptis Magna, or Thugga. Overall, a shift from static plans to dynamic processes will breathe fresh life into the study of the North African city and the capacity of the urban layout to speak to wider social histories.

5B – The Comparative Archaeology of the Roman Conquest: New Research in Gaul, Germania and Iberia

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Written sources offer us a crucial dataset for the study of Roman military expansion in the West during the late republican and Augustan period. There is an extensive historical literature on the social, economic and ideological aspects of the Roman conquests and their impact on local societies, mainly written from a Roman perspective. Until recently, archaeology has hardly been able to contribute to this debate for various reasons, including difficulties with identifying the material manifestations of the Roman conquest. This situation, however, has started to change in the last decades for various reasons. The influence of post-colonial theory and the corresponding critical view of imperialism and militarism has enhanced interest in the more negative sides of imperial expansion. Most important, however, is the availability of a large amount of new and better dated archaeological evidence that enables us to develop a more accurate picture of the Roman conquests and their direct impact on the subjected societies. Some regions with high-quality data on rural settlements allow us to discuss the effects of the conquest on local habitation patterns and demography. The newly collected archaeological data may also trigger new research towards ideological aspects of imperialist expansion, like attitudes towards mass violence and genocide, and the role of ethnic stereotyping of enemy groups.

In this session we aim to focus attention on the following themes:

- Regional studies on the Roman conquest and its short-term impact on local societies in Iberia, Gaul and Germania;
- Studies on various military strategies including different forms of violence practised by the Roman military;
- The role of ethnic stereotyping and racism in Roman military expansion in the barbarian frontier;
- Recent archaeological discoveries of military camps, battlefields or massacre sites that shed new light on the conquest period.

We hope this session can shed new light on the both the ideology and practice of Roman militarism and imperialism.

5C – The Mediterranean Countryside in Late Antiquity (AD 300-600)

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In recent years, research on the late antique countryside has burgeoned considerably. One notable feature under analysis has been that of ‘non-linear dynamics’ in settlement, economic and cultural patterns. In some regions, but also within micro-regions themselves, we can observe the co-existence of apparently opposing phenomena, such as on one hand the exploitation of luxury and wealth and the continuity of the imperial tradition and on the other the emergence (or re-emergence) of particular settlement types (*vici*/secondary settlements or fortified sites), according to a changed political/economic context and/or to the emergence of the Church as a new actor/power in the landscapes of Late Antiquity.

The aim of this session is to discuss and re-think the framework of the Mediterranean countryside during Late Antiquity analyzing and comparing the heterogeneity and complexity of the following issues across different regions of the Mediterranean basin:

- Growth of elite wealth and the emergence of luxury in rural *villae*
- Increase in agricultural production and long-distance trade
- New roles of secondary settlements (e.g. ‘villages’ and *stationes/mansiones*, dispersed and polynuclear settlements)
- Crisis and breakdowns in specific regional contexts
- Insecurity and militarization of the landscape
- Christianization of rural areas

Contributions regarding specific geographical areas focusing on the key themes of the sessions will be strongly encouraged (single excavations contextualised in a wider territorial context; regional and micro-regional data from survey and landscape archaeology projects) as well as broader overviews.

6A – Rome and the Partho-Sasanian East: 700 Years of Neighbourhood and Rivalry

Eberhard Sauer (Edinburgh), eberhard.sauer@ed.ac.uk

From the first century BC to the seventh century AD, the Roman Empire (and its eastern and western successors in Late Antiquity) faced no neighbour in Africa or Europe controlling territories of even remotely comparable size – with the possible exception of late antique realms in the thinly settled steppe zone. In the east, by contrast, the Partho-Sasanian Empire was in control of much more fertile land and large cities than any of Rome’s neighbours elsewhere. Always of formidable size, in Late Antiquity the Sasanian Empire expanded further

– eventually even exceeding the shrinking Roman world in geographic extent. The session will explore relations between the Roman/ Eastern Roman Empire and its Near Eastern neighbour, from commercial contacts to military confrontation. We also welcome comparative studies of urbanisation, engineering, agriculture and the exploitation of natural resources. Defensive and offensive strategies the two empires employed, where they faced each other, and military infrastructure in the frontier zone will also be central to our session. We hope to move away from isolationist perspectives, examining the Roman Empire or small parts thereof at the exclusion of neighbouring cultures. The broad focus, with an emphasis on Rome's largest and most organised imperial rival, will help to contextualise the empire's economic standing and military might in a global arena.

6B – Words and Pictures: Reading Verbal and Visual Messages from Sanctuaries in the Roman West

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The focus of the session will be on the relationship between text and image. This is a theme that indeed has a topical dimension following the replacement since the 1980s of the logocentrism prevalent from Luther's times by Baudrillard's 'visual turn', and subsequently a 'pictorial turn' with the 'increasing mediatisation of reality in postmodernism' (Mitchell 1994, 106; Squire 2009). Geographically we will concentrate on the Roman Atlantic provinces of the Roman Empire from Britannia to western Hispania, as they present a range of commonalities relevant to the topic: on the one hand the lack of writing, on the other a pictorial world that was not particularly pronounced. In this context pictorial monuments that include writing are in all respects a ground-breaking development.

While literature on the relationship between text and image in the Graeco-Roman world is now extensive, and the subject has even become a research field in its own right, no more than marginal attention, if any, has been paid to peripheral areas of the ancient world such as Britain or the Iberian peninsula, and then has been restricted to funerary monuments (e.g. Beltrán Lloris 1999, Hope 1997). Besides presenting a review of the more general development across the Empire, in the session individual case studies will consider regional peculiarities.

By restricting the topic to sanctuaries, the phenomenon is given a spatial context that is *a priori* suited like no other to providing a graphic illustration of the relationship between Roman verbal culture on the one hand, and native pictorial tradition on the other, as well as combining it with religious historical questions where applicable.

The session welcomes case studies with a strong interdisciplinary approach focusing on the interplay between verbal and visual messages of Roman material culture. By bringing together scholars using different interpretive frameworks, it hopes to foster discussion and to contribute to a better understanding of material objects from sanctuaries.

Beltrán Lloris, F. 1999: Inscripciones sobre bronce. ¿Un rasgo característico de la cultura epigráfica de las ciudades hispanas?, in *Atti del XI Congresso Internazionale di Epigrafia Greca e Latina*, Roma, 1997, Rome, 2.21–37.

Hope, V.M., 1997: Words and pictures. The interpretation of Romano-British tombstones, *Britannia* 28, 245-258.

Mitchell, W.J.T. 1994. *Picture Theory*, Chicago.

Squire, M.J., 2009: *Image and Text in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*, Cambridge.

6C – New Archaeological Perspectives on Imperial Properties in Roman Italy

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There is a significant diversity in the nature and types of imperial properties, ranging from landholdings whose sole purpose was to generate revenues for the emperor, to villages, and luxury villas and palaces. Marco Maiuro's monograph *Res Caesaris* (2012) presented a detailed examination of the economic significance of imperial properties in Italy, largely on the basis of historical and legal documentation. Moving on from this, the proposed session has, as its primary focus, more recent archaeological evidence for the diversity of imperial properties in various locations in Roman Italy. In taking this approach, we may be able to offer some fresh insight into avenues of enquiry such as: what makes a villa or an agricultural estate in possession of the emperor or the imperial family different from a villa or an estate owned by other elites?; what function did complexes of buildings on an imperial property have and what do the remains tell us about their design and appointment?; how does an imperial *vicus* physically distinguish itself from any other small town?; what new archaeological evidence exists for the economic basis and exchange network of an imperial property?; and what do we know through the excavation of human remains and material culture about the people who lived and worked on an imperial property? The session aims to explore these issues by presenting specific case studies in Italy, with speakers from the UK, Italy, and abroad who work on these sites.