

RAC/TRAC 24 Sessions

RAC Sessions

>>> 1

Britannia et Germania: a comparative and collaborative approach (RAC)

Isabel Annal (UCL, isabel.annal.13@ucl.ac.uk)

Despite the obvious similarities between the Roman provinces of Britannia and Germania – most notably their complex frontier systems, and regular and ongoing imperial interactions with *Barbaricum* – surprisingly few collaborative and comparative archaeological studies have been published. There is evidence showing that movement between Britannia and Germania, both of objects and people, was commonplace, but today few scholars appear to be working on material from both provinces.

This session welcomes papers covering a range of data sets from Britannia, Germania Superior and Germania Inferior, as well as papers comparing approaches to the archaeology of these provinces. Papers may stand alone, in which case they should cover data from both Britannia and Germania, or they may be presented in a pair, linking the work of scholars on comparable data from either side of the English Channel.

The aim of the session is to investigate the similarities and differences between the Roman provinces of Britannia and Germania, to encourage greater connectivity in our research, and to highlight how archaeological approaches to one province may inform investigation of another.

>>> 2

Urban Structures, Inscriptions and Interaction in Imperial Rome: new approaches (RAC)

Barbara Borg (Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, barbara.borg@sns.it), Francesca D'Andrea (Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, francesca.dandrea@sns.it)

Note that this is a project-based session which is not seeking additional speakers

Rome as the first-ever mega-city possibly reaching c.1 million inhabitants in the early empire, still remains an enigma regarding the way it organised itself and maintained that size for over three centuries despite intensive research on many relevant aspects. Having long outgrown the 4th-cent. BCE city walls, the urbanistic structures that developed outside of these, and especially outside the later Aurelian Wall, have never been studied holistically and topographical patterns have rarely been translated into patterns of social interaction. The Project 'The Inscribed city: urban structures and interaction in imperial ROME' (IN-ROME, ERC-Adv-101054143, PI B.E. Borg), aims to fill that gap using both traditional sources of information (esp. literary, archaeological and archival) and new digital resources. Linking the Epigraphic Database Roma to the Catasto Gregoriano and other maps allows us to automatically map c.35,000 inscriptions from CIL VI onto the (archaeological) map of Rome, thus covering the suburbium to about the 9th milestone. The panel we propose will introduce the project, its sub-projects dedicated to specific under-researched aspects of the Roman topography, new methodologies developed to automatise the vectorisation of the Catasto Gregoriano and other maps, as well as first results.

>>> 3

Roman Frontiers and Borderlands: theory and practice (RAC)

David Breeze (davidbreeze@hotmail.co.uk), and Andrew Gardner (UCL, andrew.gardner@ucl.ac.uk)

Interpretations of Roman frontiers and borderlands, and their connections to the wider Empire, have been changing in recent years, with much new data and new insights from diverse disciplinary traditions. Meanwhile, the contemporary significance of the character of borders and frontiers has become ever clearer in a world with many new conflicts, divisions, and barriers, alongside new connections and mobilities. In this context, understanding and theorising the details of the interactions on Roman frontiers, across the great diversity of these in time and space, is an urgent challenge. Papers are invited to this session which consider both broad and particular questions to advance our interpretations of Roman frontiers. How can comparative studies within the Roman world, and to other historical contexts, enhance our comprehension of the workings of frontier operations? What was everyday life in different parts of the frontiers like? How did people move along, around, and

through the frontiers? What was the relative balance of licit and illicit activity? Were geography, ecology and climate major determinants of frontier processes? How did militarization and defence co-exist with interaction and communication? And how can advances in Roman frontier studies be better communicated to diverse public and scholarly audiences?

>>> 4

Challenges in the Archaeology of Roman Thessaly (RAC)

Gino Canlas (University of British Columbia, canlas.gino@ubc.ca), Adam Wiznura (University of Groningen, a.j.r.wiznura@rug.nl)

The Romans had a presence in the region of Thessaly since before the incorporation of mainland Greece into the senatorial provinces of Macedonia and Achaëa. Thessaly would identify either as politically or culturally Roman until after the Fall of Constantinople. Despite this longstanding presence, the combined marginalisation of the region in both Greek and Roman archaeology has led to a lack of systematic studies of Thessaly's periods of Roman rule, in comparison to other regions of Greece, although scholarly interest has been increasing in recent years.

This session considers the unique challenges in archaeological approaches to the study of Roman Thessaly from the Mid-Republic to Late Antiquity, and invites contributors to address topics including but not restricted to:

- Challenges in the archaeology of Roman phases in Thessalian sites
- Digital/technological approaches
- Studies on settlement patterns, occupation, and land use
- Power dynamics, identity formation processes, cultural exchange

We intend for this session to be a call for more systematic archaeological approaches to Roman Thessaly, to establish a discourse on directions for future research, and to contribute to the decentering of Roman archaeology.

>>> 5

Riddles of the Sands: Untangling the Roman Glass Industry (RAC)

The Association for the History of Glass

Sally Cottam (sallycottam@hotmail.com), David Marsh (marshdl@hotmail.com), Ian Freestone (i.freestone@ucl.ac.uk)

The Romans used more glass than any previous society, introducing glass vessels and windows to parts of the world where these had previously been scarce or absent. The Roman glass industry depended upon a complex, multi-stage production chain, from the sourcing of raw materials through to final vessel creation and decoration. Innovations in scientific compositional analysis, information from recent excavations and assemblage research have transformed our understanding of these connections. Raw and recycled glass as well as finished vessels were often transported over long distances, whilst emerging local production centres reveal a simultaneous de-centralisation of the industry. The intricacies of glass production are a fruitful resource in understanding the relationships between the various elements of the Roman economy with potential insights relevant to other material groups. This session will feature new and established researchers from the UK and overseas.

Proposed themes :-

1. Roman glass production as a 'global' system, across the Mediterranean world and beyond.
2. Interconnectivity and de-centralisation within the Roman glass industry.
3. The social and economic implications of the supply of vessels (both domestic and luxury) and glass construction materials.
4. The development and adoption of new production techniques and their impact on the industry.

>>> 6

Port Cities in the Roman Provinces: places and peoples (RAC)

Michael J. Curtis (mjc100@le.ac.uk), Lena Larsson Lovén (lena.larsson@class.gu.se), Madelaine Miller (madelaine.miller@gu.se)

In Antiquity, port settlements of different sizes were located along rivers and the Mediterranean coast lines, where the port and its connection to water(ways) was the base for the city, its economy and civic life. Port cities worked as local, regional and/or international hubs for maritime trade and cultural connections of which some have left us a rich archaeological record which mirrors aspects of urban structures, trade, economy, daily life and more. Research and investigation into provincial ports and harbours of the Roman world continues to broaden our knowledge and understanding of maritime activities, the development of trading networks and cultural influences throughout the Empire.

This panel aims to look more closely into the daily operation of provincial ports/harbours, and we especially welcome contributions on

- what we can learn from port/harbour layouts and the surviving structural evidence around, and in the vicinity of the quaysides/waterfrontage,
- examining how goods may have been stored ready for shipment and imported goods processed within the port/harbour complexes ready for dispatching onwards to their next stage destinations,
- evidence of people and occupational groups involved in the work related to the harbour and maritime trade,
- aspects of similarities and dissimilarities between the materiality of Roman provincial port cities.

>>> 7

Roman Britain (RAC)

Peter Guest (Vianova Archaeology & Heritage Services, peter@vianovaarchaeology.com)

Since its inception, the Roman Archaeology Conference has included a open session dedicated to the archaeology Roman Britain. RAC2024 is no exception, but this time the session will focus on the contribution of commercial and independent organisations to the study of Roman Britain.

Speakers will be invited to present the results of archaeological projects, including excavations, initiated or led by commercial contractors, independent archaeological

organisations, and local societies or communities (including multi-partner collaborative projects). Presentations can be on any project, large or small, but proposals will be encouraged to explore how their results have contributed, or could contribute, to the study of Roman Britain, including RAC2024's main research themes such as new scientific applications in Roman archaeology, decentering and decolonizing Roman archaeology, globalization and materiality, and archaeological ethics.

>>> 8

Contextualising 50 years of the Vindolanda Writing Tablets - the ultimate small finds from Roman Britain? (RAC)

Richard Hobbs (The British Museum, rhobbs@britishmuseum.org), Andrew Birley (The Vindolanda Trust, andrewbirley@vindolanda.com)

Since their discovery on a cold March morning in 1973, the Vindolanda writing tablets have illuminated Roman Britain's lighter and darker sides and provided a very visceral insight into life, particularly the army's, in Rome's most northerly province. From the tablets discovered in 1973 to those still being discovered in 2023, each tablet has the potential to challenge or re-shape our appreciation of life on the frontier of the Roman Empire. To introduce us to a character who would otherwise be forever forgotten or reacquaint us with another who we would like to know more about. Although the texts are individually impressive, what is less understood is that each is an artefact in its own right, one which is far better contextualised by the spaces and surrounding materials in which it was found. This session will welcome contributions from a broad range of researchers who are currently working on materials or artefacts and spaces which are connected to the archaeology of the Vindolanda Writing tablets, as well as the tablet texts themselves. The session will also explore the state of the preservation environments in which these discoveries have been made and assess the impact of climate change on the potential for future discoveries or writing tablets at sites like Vindolanda.

>>> 9

Women of Roman archaeology: In search for equity in the Roman archaeology scholarship (RAC)

Tatiana Ivleva (tatiana.ivleva@ncl.ac.uk), Rebecca Jones (becjones@sky.com), Anna Walas (anna.walas@nottingham.ac.uk)

Female scholars have played a key role in the fields of Roman archaeology and heritage, but their contributions have often not been given due recognition. Inspired by EAA 2023 session on (In)visible women in history of archaeology and 2021 TRAJ paper by Zena Kamash, this session wishes to look at the roles of women in shaping the archaeological and heritage discourses of the Roman world through discussing following questions:

- Why are some early and 20th century female archaeologists recognised today, while others forgotten? What roles did they play in the early days of Roman archaeology as well as more recently?
- What methods, sources and archives can be used to illuminate the works of female scholars and what can Digital Humanities do to help to intensify the visibility of female archaeologists' research and interpretations of the past without falling in the loophole of 'tokenism'?
- Why is it relevant to study the history of female archaeologists in the 21 st century?

We invite papers on individual biographies and overviews and comparisons of women and their work in Roman archaeology. We are also interested in discussing methods and approaches to research the history of women in Roman archaeology and heritage, and best-practice examples of communicating women's work to the public.

>>> 10

Urban Archaeology in Central Italy: from survey to stratigraphic excavation (RAC)

Stephen Kay (British School at Rome, s.kay@bsrome.it), Emlyn Dodd (University of London, emlyn.dodd@sas.ac.uk), Margaret Andrews (Harvard University, margaretandrews@fas.harvard.edu), Seth Bernard (University of Toronto, seth.bernard@utoronto.ca)

There is a strong tradition of applying landscape archaeology methods to urban space in Italy, with a large number of surveys at urban sites covering a wide temporal and spatial range. A diverse set of methodologies has been used, from traditional fieldwalking with surface collection to advanced multi-technique geophysical prospection, LiDAR, multispectral imaging, aerial mapping and more. More recently, several projects have transitioned from a non-invasive phase to targeted stratigraphic excavation with the aim of clarifying

chronological developments and adding greater granularity to our understanding of urban histories. Key questions remain about how to transition from site-scale survey to focused excavation, and how best to integrate approaches. Responding to these questions, recent projects have cast new light on urban life in Italy at different spatiotemporal scales. This panel hopes to take stock of this work with an eye towards both empirical and methodological questions prompted by integrated approaches. We invite proposals from those that are considering how to marry different approaches at urban sites in Italy.

>>> 11

Tracking the hunt in the Roman world (RAC)

Julia Koch (Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen, Julia.Koch@archaeologie.uni-giessen.de), John Pearce (King's College London, john.pearce@kcl.ac.uk)

Diverse evidence, including isotopic traces of game introduction, testamentary listings of gear for the chase, animal offerings, hunting lodges, hints at a sophisticated and resource-intensive Roman hunting culture. Yet hunting of wild animals in the Roman world has been a marginal subject. It tends to be viewed as a representational strategy, an artistic shorthand for the 'good life', rather than as a practice in an ecological and socio-cultural context. In this session we seek to restore hunting to Roman landscapes. Our focus lies more on hunting for game than on arena animals, but we are open to exploring connections between the two. We invite contributions on the following areas:

- How far can we reconstruct hunting practice, its tools and techniques, participants and victims, calendar and scale, using archaeological, scientific, epigraphic and visual evidence?
- How should we situate engagement in the hunt in relation to status, gender, culture and so on?
- What are the economic and environmental implications of hunting, within the wider context of Roman human-animal interaction?

We explicitly invite a comparative approach, in particular exploiting characterisations of the hunt in other imperial settings, especially the expanding literature on European colonial hunting, to illuminate Roman practice.

>>> 12

Identity, Integration, and Roman Colonial Coinages in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries CE (RAC)

Robyn Le Blanc (The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, rlleblan@uncg.edu), Szymon Jellonek (University of Warsaw, sjellonek@gmail.com)

This panel considers Roman colonial coinages from the second to third centuries CE, focusing on how coins functioned as indicators of colonial identity and cultural and political integration. Many studies (e.g., papers in Howgego, Heuchert, and Burnett 2005) consider how coinages reflected civic identities, but this panel aims to focus on the numismatic manifestation of colonial identities and on local approaches to negotiating them. In particular, we ask: how did these coinages present their relationship with Rome and assert a colonial identity while simultaneously promoting local cults, myths, and priorities? What numismatic transformations coincided with colonial status, and what regional or chronological patterns can we trace? Aulus Gellius asserted that colonies were miniatures or copies of Rome, an assessment often invoked to understand the significance of colonial motifs; to what extent is this framing helpful in elucidating the messaging on these coins, and their reception? Are colonial coins proof of spontaneous integration with autochthonous culture? Or were they used to manifest Roman domination? Or can both approaches be traced? The ultimate goal of this panel is to challenge and deconstruct how Roman colonies used coins to negotiate a colonial identity, and to make connections to Rome, other peoples, and communities.

References:

Howgego, C.J., V. Heuchert, and A.M. Burnett. 2005. *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

>>> 13

Approaching the archaeology of urbanism in Roman Britain (RAC)

Michael Marshall (mmarshall@mola.org.uk), Sadie Watson (swatson@mola.org.uk)

Romano-British urban centres have been extensively studied over several centuries. Some, such as London, are principally known from rescue/development-led excavation, while others have been investigated through antiquarian/academic fieldwork. This session will consider the state of urban archaeological practice and understanding in relation to these sites and will explore potential directions for future work.

How should urban archaeologists across different sectors contribute and collaborate? How can we deal with huge volumes of material and data, while still creating space for nuance? How might development-led contractors adapt research aims and methods to tell new stories and contribute to new debates? How can we mine archives and publications effectively to re-investigate and compare towns? What topics remain understudied or neglected? How can work on Romano-British towns be made more impactful and relevant to the modern world, or reach different audiences? What can work on Romano-British urban centres learn from and offer to other studies of urbanism?

We want to present a broad variety of content, so if there are sufficient submissions we may reduce the time for speakers to 15 minutes. Papers from early career colleagues are particularly welcomed, we are happy to provide support with the scope and content of papers.

>>> 14

Sacred Landscapes in the Roman World: Concepts and Approaches (RAC)

Francesca Mazzilli (Münster; Royal Holloway, francesca.mazzilli@uni-muenster.de; francesca.mazzilli@rhul.ac.uk), Eleri Cousins (Lancaster, e.cousins@lancaster.ac.uk)

Sacred landscapes are becoming a near-ubiquitous archaeological framework for understanding ritual and religious behaviour in the Roman world. That ubiquity, however, conceals a variety of conceptions and usage, ranging from casual shorthand for distributions of religious material, to highly technical GIS analyses of viewsheds and least-cost paths, to heavily theory-driven phenomenological explorations of natural environments (to name but a few). This diversity of approach is welcome, but it does also invite critical reflection on what we can and do mean by sacred landscapes in the Roman world, and the methodologies by

which we investigate them. To this end, this session will invite paper proposals that seek to explore these varied conceptions of sacred landscapes and ignite conversations on their nature and meaning, both in antiquity and in archaeological discourse.

Potential topics might include, but are certainly not limited to:

- Contextual definitions of sacred landscapes (e.g. urban vs rural, macro vs micro)
- Micro-, meso-, and macro-approaches to sacred landscapes
- Exploration of particular sacred landscapes in the Roman world
- Dynamics of multi-period sacred landscapes
- Quantitative and qualitative methods for defining and understanding sacred landscapes
- Phenomenological approaches to ritual activity in landscape settings
- Relationships between sacred landscapes, human activity, and the environment

>>> 15

Ritual in War and Peace: Implements, Objects, Practices (RAC)

Marsha McCoy (mmccoy8598@gmail.com)

In his ground-breaking work, *Peace and War in Rome. A Religious Construction of Warfare* (1990; English 2019), Jörg Rüpke explored a little-studied area, the intersection of the Roman army with religion. He discussed the rituals of martial life, in Rome, on the march, in battle, in victory, and in death. He studied the objects and practices of war, the cult of the standards and other implements, that became themselves quasi-religious objects, even as they remained tools of war. In Rüpke's view, earlier studies of war that focused on legal constructions of battle, separating sacred from profane, and secular from holy, miss a crucial, essential, and wide-ranging element of Roman warfare. While political and sociological theorists (e.g. Kerzer. 1988; Sperber. 1975) have studied more general aspects of these social phenomena, Rüpke's granular focus on Roman military objects, rituals, practices, and beliefs provide an essential underpinning for work on religion and war in the Classical world.

This session seeks abstracts for papers that consider objects used in both religion and war, not only in Rome but also in the provincial cultures and societies that Rome interacted with, since

the Roman Empire and its armies came to encompass not only the religion of the Romans but also those of other peoples. Archaeological, epigraphic, numismatic and other evidence from material culture is welcomed, as well as literary and other sources.

>>> 16

New Perspectives on Roman York (RAC)

Session organisers: Martin Millett (Cambridge, mjm62@cam.ac.uk); Thomas Matthews Boehmer (Cambridge, tjm69@cam.ac.uk)

Note that this is a project-based session which is not seeking additional speakers

In the last few years there has been a new wave of research on Roman York, including an AHRC-funded project (“Beneath the Streets of Roman York”) which has sought to provide a new synthesis based on the extensive past excavations and antiquarian studies combined with new GPR surveys within the City. As this project draws to an end, the results will be shared here for the first time. Other research has included major new excavations by York Archaeology and studies of finds assemblages from past excavations and museum collections. Amongst the latter, impressive results have been provided by digital scanning of plaster burials excavated in the 19th century. This session will discuss results of this innovative and novel work and contribute to a re-thinking of the place of York within the Roman Empire. It will also contextualise Roman York as an important frontier zone fortress-city whilst thinking about the issue of urbanism in such spaces.

>>> 17

You cannot decolonise a syllabus: Decolonial Roman archaeology from disruption to transformation (RAC)

Eva Mol (University of York), Zena Kamash (Royal Holloway), Miko Flohr (Leiden University), Andrew Gardner (UCL), David Mattingly (University of Leicester)

Contact: Eva (eva.mol@york.ac.uk)

This session wants to discuss decoloniality and the decolonization movement in Roman archaeology. The urge to more structurally eliminate the reproduction of epistemic and intellectual colonialism in the field has been growing recently. Decoloniality has brought a

critical lens able to create awareness of issues of colonial language, power inequalities, and better ways to discuss diversity in the past. Likewise, it has been able to address some fundamental issues relating to current ethics of research and a renewed attention to the lack of diversity in the field (Kamash 2021). However, this attention has been partial and slow in its movement, and we want to discuss how we can make decoloniality from a disruption into a transformation of the field. It is our conviction that Roman archaeology will not only become more inclusive, but way more exciting if we work to include traditionally marginalized voices, works, and ideas in a structural way, if we give more space to non-canonical subjects, and grow more diverse in practice and people. This cannot be done of course, without also discussing responsibility and labour involved.

This labour includes a critical take on the concept itself, and the worrying developments we see happening in academia concerning decolonisation. The term 'decolonisation' has increasingly become hijacked by people and institutions for neoliberal gain. More worryingly, decolonisation has increasingly come to denote a primarily academic and cultural movement (Táiwò 2022), used as a metaphor rather than drawing to the direct action of repatriation of Indigenous land and life (Tuck and Yang 2012). In other words: the term implies action and can never be used lightly.

We welcome scholars, museum practitioners, field archaeologists; anyone who wants to reflect on these issues or has in any way been working on inclusive practices and positionality, social justice, or ways to disrupt Eurocentric knowledge hierarchies. We welcome contributions on recentring marginalised and subaltern voices (either in Roman history or the discipline itself) or in any way involved in using creative means to disrupt and deroot colonial thought from Roman archaeology.

References

Ahmed, Sarah. 2012. *On Being Included, Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, Duke University Press.

Kamash, Zena. 2021. Rebalancing Roman Archaeology: From Disciplinary Inertia to Decolonial and Inclusive Action. *Theoretical Roman Archaeology Journal*, 4(1): 4, pp. 1–41. DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.16995/traj.4330>

Táíwò, Olúfẹmi O. 2022. *Against Decolonisation: Taking African Agency Seriously*, Hurst Publishers. Tuck, Eve and K. Wayne Yang 2012, *Decolonization is not a metaphor*, *Decolonization:Indigeneity,Education&Society* Vol.1, No. 1, pp. 1-40.

>>> 18

From the Desert to the Sea - Pottery, Connectivity, and the Economy of Roman Southern Egypt (RAC)

Jerzy M. Oleksiak (University of Warsaw, jerzy.oleksiak96@gmail.com), Roderick C.A. Geerts (Leiden University, r.c.a.geerts@arch.leidenuniv.nl)

This session aims to bring together researchers who focus on pottery, connectivity, and the economy of sites located in southern Egypt dating between the 1st century BCE and 7th century CE. This area was one of the crucial hubs of the Roman Empire's long-distance trade with the Indian Ocean basin as well as a well-integrated zone for regional exchange and ceramic production. While maritime trade has been one of the primary interests for researchers, understanding the interactions between coastal and inland sites is pivotal for contextualizing the broader economic landscape and southern Egypt's relationship with the heart of the Empire.

Ceramics are crucial for this wider perspective on the region. They are widely available and valuable tools for both dating and reconstructing trade networks. The goals of this session are to initiate a discussion on the changing character of the regional movement of people and commodities between coastal sites and the hinterland from the Early Roman to Late Antique period, to enhance the scholarly discussion of ceramic and economic studies in the region, and, in a broader sense, to interrogate the consumption and trade patterns at one edge of the Empire, where many worlds and influences met.

>>> 19

Looking back, looking forward: reflections and recent research on the Romans in Sussex (RAC)

Louise Rayner (UCL/ASE, louise.rayner@ucl.ac.uk), Rob Symmons (Fishbourne Roman Palace/Sussex Past, RobSymmons@sussexpast.co.uk)

In April 2024, the IoA Sussex Archaeological Field Unit (now known as Archaeology South-East) celebrates 50 years since its establishment in 1974. Of course, excavation and research into Roman Sussex goes much further back, but with the huge increase in rescue and then planning-led excavations over the last 50 years how has our understanding of Roman Sussex developed? Has knowledge advancement been consistent across the three main geological zones of Sussex: the Weald, the Downs and the Coastal Plain or is the evidence variable across these different locations? Sussex has Roman palaces, many known villa sites, road network and associated roadside settlements, temples, industrial sites and rural farmsteads – many key sites excavated decades ago. What have recent excavations added to this picture? Or is the most significant knowledge increase coming from older archives and re-examining their potential?

Other extensively studied regions are now considering whether ‘theoretical knowledge plateaus’ have been reached (Aldred et al 2023; Evans et al 2023). How far away or close to this ‘data mountain’ is Roman Sussex? What do we understand well and where are the gaps? How should this influence the focus of future research?

This session will invite contributions from across the diverse community of archaeologists active in Sussex to reflect and review past and current research in the Roman archaeology of Sussex, in its widest sense and consider how best to approach understanding the Romans in Sussex over the next 50 years.

>>> 20

Invasive Species – the impact of the Roman military on local agricultural and ecological systems (RAC)

Tanja Romankiewicz (University of Edinburgh, t.romankiewicz@ed.ac.uk), Gillian Taylor (Teesside University, g.taylor@tees.ac.uk), Richard Madgwick (Cardiff University, madgwickrd3@cardiff.ac.uk)

The impact of the advancing Roman army on local systems remains a hotly debated topic. Social and political impacts have been traced through changes in settlement patterns or by

investigating strategies of control over conquered communities. Studies on production, consumption and exchange consider Rome's economic impact, including goods but also agricultural resources. All this leaves not only an imprint on the conquered people, but also the conquered environment.

This session would like to hear of new research analysing this impact on local agricultural and ecological systems. We particularly welcome presentations on new scientific methods to answer how, for example, the need of feeding a field army and stationed garrisons with grain, meat and dairy changed local agricultural practices and ultimately landscape use and exploitation? How have the building projects using stone, timber and turf to create the military infrastructure affected woodland cover, pastures and quarry sites? Has increased metalworking and other industries not only consumed raw materials but also polluted local environments, including soils and watercourses? Was this impact simply exploitative or actively managed, and by whom? To what extent did local agency come to play in this? And can we see changes in Rome's invasive impact over time?

>>> 21

The Material Culture of Childhood (RAC)

Juliet Samson-Conlon (Birkbeck College, Jsamso01@student.bbk.ac.uk)

Objects of childhood are culturally significant (Aries, 1962). They are part of how cultural norms are created and reinforced and are a valuable source for illuminating the lived experiences and social identities of children. It is possible to trace the courses of Roman childhood through material culture: for example, there is evidence for terracotta bottles being used to feed infants; dolls and a variety of toys would have been used in play and socialisation; and the protective *bullā* or *lunula* would be worn throughout childhood and removed to mark adolescence, as a rite of passage into adulthood.

It is only in recent years that the lacunae in scholarship on children and childhood in the Roman world has been addressed with a view to understanding how childhood was both perceived socially and experienced individually. Age, *per se*, was not important; indeed, the Latin vocabulary did not contain words for 'baby', 'infant', or 'toddler' (Laes, 2011). Rather,

childhood was viewed as a social category rather than a biological or developmental one, with the social roles that children could fulfil being defined by status and not by chronological age. Archaeology has enabled a fuller understanding of childhood in antiquity, demonstrating for example that jointed bone dolls are not simply passive artefacts that prepared their owner for the roles of being a wife and a mother but had a broader cultural significance, and are complex facets of identity formation and gender construction (Dolansky, 2012).

This session will bring together contributions from recent and on-going research into the material culture of childhood in the Roman world and will address how we can archaeologically understand childhood in the past. Papers are particularly welcome on specific object identifications, comparative analysis, or studies of individual sites which cover settlement and/or burial data in relation to childhood.

>>> 22

Winners and Losers? Failure in the Roman World (RAC)

Astrid Van Oyen (Radboud University Nijmegen, astrid.vanoyen@ru.nl), Emlyn Dodd (Institute of Classical Studies, emlyn.dodd@sas.ac.uk)

The Roman world was a high-risk environment, but this risk was not equally distributed. Different regions, periods, and socio-economic strata experienced risk, and thus success and failure, in different ways and to varying extents. Whereas macro-scale models assess the gross distribution of income or wealth, the topic of failure provides a lens to examine the lived experiences and consequences of such inequalities. Micro-histories of failure focussed on one site, structure or enterprise can show how the narratives of growth that characterize the macro-economic study of the Late Republican and Early Imperial period smoothen out local histories. But failure can also be scaled up, to analyse communities, networks, or regions. Through failure, we can foreground a more nuanced understanding of social and economic dynamics, often revealing sequences of boom and bust, to put oscillations, turns, and frictions at the centre of the nascent Roman empire.

Possible questions include:

- how to identify failure archaeologically;
- different analytical scales for the study of failure;

- the unequal conditions and consequences of failure, between different groups, sites, or communities (e.g. rural and urban);
- the relation between failure and growth;
- empirical and conceptual intersections between failure, resilience, and innovation.

>>> 23

Peopling Rural Architecture Studies: a cross-Channel perspective (RAC)

Lacey Wallace (University of Lincoln, LWallace@lincoln.ac.uk) and Sadi Maréchal (Ghent University, Sadi.Marechal@ugent.be)

This session brings together archaeologists studying regions on either side of the Channel/La Manche to discuss people-centred questions in rural domestic architectural studies. Too often, treatments of architecture and elaboration are heavily focussed on material, technologies, typologies, and style, with a regrettable lack of using these data to address how we understand past people and their lives. Equally, such studies often suffer from a lack of contextualization of the architecture of nearby regions, a gap that is especially notable across the Channel. Architectural data can be used to explore common activities, shared values, and the exchange and movement of people and ideas between regions now within modern Belgium, the Netherlands, France, and Britain. This session invites papers that address these challenges. Papers are particularly welcome that present a thematic and question-driven approach to studying rural communities and identities, using architecture and elaboration. Exploring intersections with studies of landscape, material culture, labour, foodways, etc. are encouraged. Each paper will engage with evidence from one or more regions on either side of the Channel, to understand how it served as both a physical barrier, as well as a conduit and catalyst for the exchange of ideas.

>>> 24

Caveat emptor! Exploring the application of scientific dating in an historical period (RAC)

Roger White (University of Birmingham), Alex Bayliss (Historic England), Peter Marshall (Historic England).

Contact: r.h.white@bham.ac.uk

Thirty years ago, at the conclusion of the post-excavation project on the excavation of the baths basilica, Wroxeter, those involved were lamenting that scientific dating was unable to secure what was, in effect, a floating chronology, despite an abundance of material culture. Now, three decades of advances in radiocarbon dating have enabled a collaborative project to apply a comprehensive programme of AMS dating to the complex Roman urban stratigraphy at Wroxeter. The results will be explored in the session, alongside the wider implications of the potential for scientific dating to refine our understanding of conventional dating of Roman sites. It will also address the significant issues thrown up by calibration of ¹⁴C dates, and the broader questions relating to the reliability of scientific dating in contrast to conventional approaches to dating using the abundance of material culture on Roman sites. While radiocarbon is an obvious component in the session, we seek to broaden the session to consider other scientific approaches, including OSL, remnant magnetic dating, and dendrochronology.

>>> 25

Hilltop Settlements in their Landscape-topographical Context: Diachronic development of the settlement landscape of the long Late Antiquity (3rd – 9th century AD) (RAC)

Annina Wyss Schildknecht (annina.wyss@unibe.ch), Andy Seaman (Seamana@cardiff.ac.uk), Marcus Zagermann (marcus.zagermann@roemkomm.badw.de)

The Long Late Antiquity, i.e. the end of the imperium romanum and the emergence of new forms of rule in the Middle Ages (ca. 300–800 AD), is characterised by profound transformation processes. An important aspect are the numerous hilltop settlements, which were regularly (re)settled in the 3rd/4th century and subsequently became the most important feature of the settlement landscape and dominated it in the following centuries. These sites are encountered across much of Europe, and investigating not only the hilltop settlements themselves but also their surrounding landscape and its diachronic development is key to understanding processes of transformation. Therefore vision, visibility, accessibility, control of the surrounding territory, position/dominance in the landscape and the interdependence with other settlements over time are important aspects for understanding this settlement type and the landscape as a whole. This session seeks to bring together new research on hilltop sites including diachronic landscape analyses in the Long Late Antiquity.

>>> 26

Large mausoleum tombs of the 1st century AD — reflecting social change on a pan-Mediterranean scale? (RAC)

Iwona Zych, (Warsaw, i.zych@uw.edu.pl), Mariusz Gwiazda (Warsaw, m.gwiazda@uw.edu.pl)

With the swift and massive spread of Roman rule over large swathes of the Mediterranean in the era of Augustus came an observable change in funerary architecture which can be seen all around the Eastern Mediterranean. A new form of family or collective tomb was introduced, building on a tradition of underground rock-cut hypogea known in the Hellenistic East (i.a., Alexandria in Egypt, Paphian Tombs of the Kings in Cyprus), but adding an aboveground built mausoleum connected via a stepped dromos. Large cemeteries of this kind appear in Marina el-Alamein on the Egyptian coast, Alexandria in Egypt, Cyprus, the Syro-Palestinian coast. The trend is so strong that it cannot be considered a local phenomenon or a local evolution. Setting this new trend in the various regions within the sweeping political and cultural changes of the era and considering the factors behind such widespread and fairly uniform development may open new vistas onto social change, which is undoubtedly a driving factor behind any transformations in burial forms. The workshop will examine Roman mausoleum burials from the 1st-century AD in different regions in an effort to identify the factors behind this phenomenon.

TRAC Sessions

>>> 27

Investigating Public Spaces with Digital Tools (TRAC)

Alexander Braun (University of Cologne, alexanderbraun6@freenet.de), Kamil Kopij (Jagiellonian University, Kraków, k.kopij@uj.edu.pl)

Public spaces played a pivotal role in the operation of ancient Roman society, functioning as vital hubs for commerce, administration, and religious activities. They served as central meeting places and were integral to the social fabric of daily life, acting as primary avenues of communication both within and without. Moreover, these spaces, in tandem with their built environment, served as the primary venues for representation.

Examining the design of these spaces and considering the desired experiences they sought to create allows for a deeper comprehension of the Roman society itself. The rapid progress in digital tools and computational methods provides exciting prospects to explore and analyze these spaces, along with their functions and interactions with both individuals and their surroundings. These advancements enable the development of new synergies and methodologies for conducting comprehensive investigations into these spaces. The purpose of this session is to discuss and assess various approaches to studying open public spaces and their societal significance through the utilization of digital tools and computational methods. The subjects encompass methods for examining visibility and audibility, reconstruction techniques, network analysis, social interactions, representative culture, environmental studies, as well as the opportunities, challenges, and limitations associated with these approaches.

>>> 28

Theoretical Approaches to Big data in Roman archaeology (TRAC)

Penny Coombe (Getty Research Institute/University of Reading, pclcoombe@gmail.com),
Nicky Garland (Archaeology Data Service, nicky.garland@york.ac.uk)

Roman archaeology has long produced large and complex data. Creating, managing, and sharing 'big' datasets has been of perennial interest for many archaeologists. The potential and limits of 'big data' have been recently highlighted and discussed and a light shone on how digital heritage relates to recent research in Roman Archaeology (e.g. Garland TRAC webinar 2023; TRAC 2023 Digital Archaeology workshop; TRAC 2022 session 4). Technological advances and increased application of data principles in Roman archaeology provide the urgent impetus and opportunity for critical reflection on the theoretical approaches that underpin these analyses. By identifying the theoretical frameworks that drive the production, use and reuse of big data in Roman archaeology we can better understand the potentials and pitfalls of these approaches.

This session provides space for theoretical analysis. In particular, we welcome papers and discussion on, but not limited to:

- What assumptions have been made in constructing datasets and ontologies?

- Can the theoretical discussion of data and big data (e.g. Morgan 2022) elucidate more aware and humanised interpretations?
- What common principles for compiling, combining and sharing data are needed?
- How can we combat the 'siloesation' of data within archaeological subfields (Lawrence 2022)?

References:

- Lawrence, A. (2022) 'Harder – Better – Faster – Stronger? Roman Archaeology and the challenge of 'big data'', *Theoretical Roman Archaeology Journal* 5(1): 1-29.
<https://doi.org/10.16995/traj.8881>
- Morgan, C. (2022) 'Current Digital Archaeology', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 51: 213-231.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-041320-114101>

>>> 29

Going theoretical: Roman archaeology in South-eastern Europe (TRAC)

Ewan Coopey (Macquarie University, ewan.coopey@hdr.mq.edu.au), Thomas J. Derrick (Macquarie University, tjderrick@gmail.com), Jere Drpić (Institute of Archaeology, Zagreb, drpic.jere@gmail.com), Kaja Stemberger Flegar (PJP d.o.o., kaja.stemberger@gmail.com)

The traditionally well-trodden geographical contexts for novel approaches and theoretical Roman archaeologies of the provinces usually centre around North-western Europe (particularly Britain) and a few other areas of the Mediterranean littoral like Egypt, Syria, North Africa, and Iberia. Roman South-eastern Europe is somewhat understudied in comparison, and rarely a region of interest to non-local archaeologists. The Roman scholarship of this region has generally been more concerned with the traditional foundation elements of archaeology, like typologies and other supposedly atheoretical approaches, accompanying a heavy focus on epigraphy, military movements, and Imperial activities. Our understanding of this region in Antiquity has accordingly suffered, despite its great archaeological potential.

A new wave of local and internationally produced research (often in collaboration) is embracing theory and applying frameworks. Building theoretical and archaeological capacities in the next generations of scholars in this region is crucial to future success. We invite papers with the aim of furthering this trend in areas of research including (but not limited to):

- Local languages and interaction with theory
- Application of new methodologies and theoretical approaches to the region
- Nationalism and politics between modern and ancient identities

>>> 30

Inclusion and Exclusion: Ritual Practice in the Roman World and Beyond (TRAC)

Alessandra Esposito (King's Digital Lab, alessandra.g.esposito@kcl.ac.uk), Jason Lundock (Full Sail University, jlundock@fullsail.edu), Kaja Stemberger Flegar (PJP d.o.o., kaja.stemberger@pjpgdoo.com), David Walsh (Newcastle University, david.walsh@newcastle.ac.uk)

This session is interested in looking at ritual practices attested in and around the border regions of the Roman Empire meant as lived experiences of individuals and groups characterised by inclusive and exclusive behaviours. Particular attention will be paid to studies involving the *limes*, both as an area of physical space where ritual behaviour was practised and as a social phenomenon within which peoples were grouped and their identities constructed.

It welcomes theoretical approaches that highlight the experience of 'others' within the same ritual spaces, seen either as different/antagonist or as aspirational of representing cultural affiliations through the materiality of ritual practices. The aim is to collect innovative perspectives which would allow us to appreciate a greater degree of variation between codified centralised ritual practices and glocalised ones.

For this purpose, we welcome papers based on, but not limited to, network analysis (particularly through the consideration of the 'web of associations'), gender and queer theory, and inter-disciplinary culture studies applied to ritual behaviours and practices.

>>> 31

Ethical Challenges in Roman Archaeology II: Communication, Commercialisation, and Silenced Voices (TRAC)

Francesca Mazzilli – (WWU Münster, fmazzill@uni-muenster.de), Lacey Giles (laceygiles@gmail.com), Zena Kamash (Royal Holloway, Zena.Kamash@rhul.ac.uk), Dies van der Linde (Transect b.v., diesvanderlinde@gmail.com)

In June 2022, the TRAC workshop ‘Ethical Challenges in Roman Archaeology’ initiated a discussion on ethics and Roman archaeology. It has triggered the need to focus the discussion on three topics that this second workshop will revolve around. This session aims to explore as a community how to move Roman archaeology forward as a more comprehensive and inclusive discipline in recognising extant problems and biases.

1. Communication.

What are the limits and strategies of communication in Roman archaeology? How can Roman archaeologists reach a larger audience? How to deal with misleading or simply false narratives about Roman archaeology and history?

2. Commercialisation.

What is the role of Roman Archaeology in 21 st century capitalist societies? How can we stimulate an increase in funds dedicated to Roman archaeology? Which sources of funding are desired, and which ones are not?

3. Silenced Voices.

How are Roman archaeologies and archaeologists silenced at different stages in the production of knowledge: from the creation of sources, catalogues, and databases to the making of narratives, publications, and Roman archaeology? How can we give voice to them? These are only exploratory research questions to begin the session’s discussion.

>>> 32

‘There is friction in the space between...’: Tsing’s concept of friction and sociocultural change in the Roman world (TRAC)

Ljubica Perinić (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, bperinic@gmail.com), Anton Baryshnikov (Russian State University for the Humanities, baryshnikov85@gmail.com)

For decades the phenomenon of social and cultural transformation under Roman power has been a theoretical battle with many concepts involved. Some theories have been all but

abandoned (bricolage, creolization), but they all had a part in building the foundation for a renewed academic consensus or they opened new discussions. As recent publications show (e.g., Belvedere et Bergemann 2021) the reworking of the romanization theory is far from being over and several promising approaches seem to appear. One of them is based on 'friction'-a metaphor that was introduced and developed on the evidence from modern Indonesia by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (Tsing 2005; Versluys 2021). In Tsing's words, cultures are continually co-produced in the interactions called friction: the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across differences. These zones of cultural friction are transient; they arise out of encounters and interactions. Friction is not a synonym for resistance. The aim of this session is to open new questions through the general idea of friction. This idea also resonates with a micro- historical agenda, well-established and rapidly developing today. The organizers welcome all papers that discuss multiple subjects or themes within the idea of friction, examples of social, cultural and religious change on all levels (micro and macro), and its usefulness for studying and reconstructing the past of the objects, people and the world they lived in.

>>> 33

For a fistful of Daleks: scholarship, popular culture, Roman world (TRAC)

Ljubica Perinić (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts; bperinic@gmail.com), Anton Baryshnikov (Russian State University for the Humanities, baryshnikov85@gmail.com), Andrew Gardner (UCL, andrew.gardner@ucl.ac.uk)

June of 2023 is the month when Queens of the Stone Age release their new album, 'In Times New Roman'. This is not just a good news for all Josh Homme's or Dean Fertita fans but also a reminder how images of Rome and her imperial past still matter today. But the same can be said about the popular culture itself; it matters more than it seems, it continues to impact scholars who study the realm of Rome, and the realm of Rome is still impacting society and popular culture.

Some manifestations of such impact were discussed during TRAC 2023. But that debate is far from being over and not because we failed to agree on what Doctor is the best. There is a lot of sources of influence and inspirations to be talked about. How may Conan and the snake

cult help those who study ancient religion? How may professional wrestling contribute to social archaeology and history? What can modern music and improvisation tell us about religion and hegemony in ancient polities? Many things, from strips to movie trips, contributing to the popular and academic image of Rome and her Empire remain unseen and unnoticed. So this session aims to make them visible and enhance our understanding of the antiquity (let alone creating popular images of better quality).

>>> 34

For a Feminist, Postcolonial, Roman Archaeology (TRAC)

Mauro Puddu (Venice, mauro.puddu@unive.it)

To what extent have feminist theories been integrated as a fundamental component of Roman archaeology? While the question of gender studies within the field has been discussed since TRAC's inception by Eleanor Scott in 1993, and its aims reinforced by Louise Revell in 2010 and Amy Russell in 2016, feminist theories are still only sporadically applied to the broader understanding of the Roman world, often limited to specific contexts.

Our objective is to bring feminist inquiries to the forefront of our understanding of the past. In this session, we seek to reflect on the extent to which postcolonial archaeologies have effectively interacted with, incorporated - or embodied - feminist theories, thus shedding new light on the Roman world.

We intend to challenge the assumption that the histories of women in antiquity are burdened by three layers of subalternity. These layers include 1) the subordination of women to men; 2) the marginalisation of women from subaltern communities (such as farmers) whose stories have been (and continue to be) silenced by the dominant narratives of elites; 3) the disproportionate focus on elite women (such as emperors' mothers and wives, noblewomen) while neglecting the experiences of the majority of women.

Our speakers are encouraged to engage particularly - but not exclusively - with the matter of data biases (e.g. the exclusive representation of white men in a simple web search for Roman Empire images). Additionally, we invite engagement with body theory (i.e. Judith Butler's body

in assemblage), postcolonialism (i.e. the role of women in Antonio Gramsci's 25th prison notebook, on subalterns), and posthumanism in order to further enrich the discussions.

By critically examining the integration of feminist theories and exploring alternative perspectives, this session aims to challenge existing biases, uncover silenced narratives, and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the Roman world.

>>> 35

The Body of the (Roman) Archaeologist (Or, against 'Fast-Archaeology') (TRAC)

Mauro Puddu (Venice, mauro.puddu@unive.it)

Absent. Silenced. Or, if present, striking an artificial pose on a tidy archaeological site. The body of the archaeologist is often overlooked or presented in the popular press in a superficial manner, either completely static or highly cosmeticised. However, those who work daily on archaeological sites are aware of the physical labour required to prepare the site for study and documentation. This embellished portrayal creates a distorted image, a 'fast-archaeology' that neglects the vital aspects of physical and intellectual labour in archaeological research. Surveying, excavating, studying, and interpreting archaeological evidence are engaging yet demanding tasks that deserve recognition. Understanding the conditions under which the past is explored, shaped, interpreted, and politicised requires acknowledging the efforts involved.

This session aims to survey the presence and role of the archaeologist's body in Roman archaeology worldwide, spanning from Britain to the Mediterranean. It raises the following questions: Who contributes to data retrieval in Roman archaeology? What are the working conditions experienced by archaeologists on Roman-age sites? How is the body of archaeologists, especially women, considered and accounted for on these sites? Are the long-term effects of excavation on the archaeologists' bodies being studied?

By focussing on the archaeologist's body, this session emphasises the importance of both physical and intellectual labour at the heart of the relationship between archaeology and

modern society. It promotes a sustainable and present-centred understanding of the materiality of the past.

>>> 36

Theorising arts and crafts (TRAC)

Kaja Stemberger Flegar (PJP d.o.o., kaja.stemberger@pjpdoo.com), Jason Lundock (Full Sail University, lundock.jason@gmail.com)

As in any social environment, craft production was essential both inside the Roman Empire and on its borders. There is a great diversity of these goods from the Roman period, ranging from mass produced items that were manufactured on an industrial level and intended for wide distribution, all the way to the handiwork of local workshops and households. End products of crafts and the material means of production can be preserved in the archaeological record and the archaeological remains sometimes provide insight into the production process and use life of the materials involved.

This panel seeks to open the discussion on how crafts influenced identities and how artistic expressions affected life in the Roman world. We will welcome papers exploring how crafts and craftspeople could be interpreted as conveying aspects of identity, communicated on micro and macro levels, as well as how these processes affected the lived experiences of those involved. The papers shall cover many aspects of crafting that are observed through processes such as space utilisation, procuring and storing ingredients, and manufacturing tools. Other topics related to crafts, such as the spreading of production techniques and the adoption of knowledge from inside and outside the Empire, will also be warmly welcomed.

>>> 37

Sexuality, Gender, and Roman Imperialism (TRAC)

Sanja Vucetic (University of Sheffield, s.vucetic@sheffield.ac.uk) and Kelsey Madden (University of Sheffield, ksmadden1@sheffield.ac.uk)

Sexuality and gender are critical to understanding how Roman dominance affected social change in communities subject to imperial, social, and sexual hierarchies. Recently, the

traditional Romanisation paradigm has been replaced by critical approaches that anchor sexuality dynamics at the centre of conquest and the experience of the Roman empire (Ivleva and Collins 2020; Madden 2022; Vucetic 2022). Roman imperialism also continues to be positively investigated from a gendered perspective, though the focus remains on the elite (Cornwell and Woolf 2023). These conversations nonetheless remain on the fringes of archaeological discourse. The longstanding critiques, many directed at TRAC/RAC participants, attest to this (Baker 2003; Pitts 2007; Revell 2010). This session integrates the issues of gender and sexuality into traditional questions of Roman archaeology while engaging with the conceptual agenda of interconnectivity, ethnicities, and social inequalities. It invites papers about the effects of Roman imperial regimes on sexual and gender relations, practices, and identities of the conquered communities and colonists, the relationship between Roman imperialism and sexual violence, and the implications of gender and sexuality intersections with race, age, etc. across the empire. Discussions on the materiality of sexuality and gender using post-humanist, materialist feminist, globalisation, and queer perspectives are particularly encouraged.

Bibliography

- Baker, P. 2003. A Brief Comment on the TRAC Session Dedicated to the Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Study of Roman Women. *TRAJ* 2002: 140-146.
- Cornwell, H. and G. Woolf. (eds) 2023. *Gendering Roman Imperialism*. Leiden: Brill.
- Madden, K. 2022. „barbaren“-kinder in der römischen bilderwelt, *Der Limes* 16 Jahrgang, Heft 2, 30-35.
- Ivleva, T. and R. Collins. 2020. *Un-Roman Sex: Gender, Sexuality, and Lovemaking in the Roman Provinces and Frontiers*. London: Routledge.
- Pitts, M. 2007. The Emperor's New Clothes? The Utility of Identity in Roman Archaeology, *AJA* 111/4: 693-713.
- Revell, L. 2010. Romanization: A Feminist Critique. *TRAJ* 2009: 1-10.
- Vucetic, S. 2022. Roman provincial sexualities. Constructing the body, sexuality, and gender through erotic lamp art. *JSA* 22 (3), 277–295.