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## CONTENTS

### **1. Fortifying our frontiers.....23**

- Andreas A. Schafitzl: Crumbled stones and burnt wood – results of the excavation on the Raetian Limes in Laimerstadt (Bavaria).....23
- Daniel Burger, Peter Henrich, Markus Scholz: A new Roman early imperial military camp at the lower Lahn.....23
- Sirma Alexandrova: Early Roman temporary military camp near the village of Polenitsa, Sandanski municipality, SW Bulgaria.....24
- Rebecca H Jones: Our ditches are missing! Camps without defences.....24
- Birgitta Hoffmann: The Roman Gask Project.....24
- David Woolliscroft: How long was the Roman Gask Frontier (and when)?.....25
- W.S. Hanson: Understanding the design of the Antonine Wall: some problems and issues.....25
- Matthew Symonds: Thinking small: the role of fortlets in building frontiers.....25
- Horațiu Cociș: Burgus-type structures from the frontier of Dacia Porolissensis.....26
- Felix Marcu, George Cupcea, Aleksandra Jankowska and Jacek Rakoczy: New LiDAR data on the NW limes of Dacia.....26
- Alexandru Popa: Geomagnetische Prospektionen an römischen Militäranlagen im SO Siebenbürgen / Geomagnetic prospections in the Roman Military sites in south-east Transylvania.....26
- Cristina Mitar, Adriana Rusu Pescaru, Eugen Pescaru: Cigmău – an unusual fort near the imperial border.....27
- Florian Matei-Popescu, Ovidiu Țentea: Moesia Superior and Dacia during Trajan: Army and Frontiers.....27
- Perica Špehar: Non-invasive prospection of the site Egeta.....27
- Snežana Nikolić, Ivan Bogdanović, Goran Stojić, Ljubomir Jevtović: Exploring Viminacium: New excavations on the legionary fortress.....28
- Daniel Burger: New researches of the roman fortress of Mogontiacum/Mainz.....28
- Uwe Xaver Müller: The internal structure of the legionary fortress of Mogontiacum/ Mainz (Germany) – First insights.....29
- Lisa Berger, Steve Bödecker, Friedrich Lüth: Large scale geomagnetic survey: the legionary fortresses of Vetera I (Xanten/Germany).....29
- Steve Bödecker, Friedrich Lüth, Lisa Berger: Large scale geomagnetic survey: the surrounding area of the legionary fortresses of Vetera I (Xanten/Germany).....30
- Friderika Horváth, Mate Szabó, Istvan Viczián: Mud Max – Revealing Roman landscape in the modern industrial environment on the Brigetio – Azaum limes section, Hungary....30
- István Gergő Farkas: New finds from the auxiliary fort Lugio/Florentia (Dunaszekcső, H).....30
- C.-G. Alexandrescu, C. Gugl, G. Grabherr, B. Kainrath: Military and civilian sites in the hinterland of Troesmis.....31
- Mihail Zahariade: Limes Scythicus qui latius diffusiusque porrigitur (CTh. VII 17.1). A commentary on a 4th and 5th century segment of a Danube river frontier.....31
- Stefan Traxler, Gerald Grabherr, Barbara Kainrath, Wolfgang Klimesch: Burgus & Quadriburgium. Two Late Antique fortifications in Northwestern Noricum.....32
- Gerald Grabherr, Stefan Groh, Barbara Kainrath and Stefan Traxler: Before the Legion arrives – The presence of the Roman army on the western ripa Norica.....32
- Julian Bennett: The fort at Çitköy-Sabus reconsidered.....32
- Maciej Czapski: On the edge of the Roman Empire – a defensive system of the south region of Mauretania Tingitana.....33
- Zbigniew T. Fiema: The Roman Fort in Hegra.....33
- John Peter Oleson: Tradition and Innovation in the Trajanic Auxiliary Fort at Haurra (Hu-

mayma), Jordan.....	34
• Mark Driessen: Power Over or Power With? Monumentality in the Desert: the Roman legionary fortress of Udhruh (Jordan).....	34

## 2. The Purpose of Roman Frontiers: A Debate.....35

• Christof Fluegel: Military Architecture as a Symbol and Object of Intimidation.....	35
• Alan Rushworth: To protect communications and movement in the frontier zone.....	35
• Eberhard Sauer: The defensive purpose of Roman frontiers.....	36
• Markus Gschwind: To control transhumance.....	36

## 3. Long Way to Travel.....37

• Francis Tassaux: The road and rivers network within the Illyricum Digital Atlas (IllyrAtlas).....	37
• Vladimir Petrović, Mihai Popescu: De l'Adriatique aux Carpates : voies parallèles, chemins alternatifs, déviations routières.....	38
• Chaim Ben David: Back to the Via Militaris east of the Via Nova Triana in Arabia.....	38
• Florin-Gheorghe Fodorean: The roads of Roman Dacia. New research, new perspectives.....	38
• Željko Miletić, Silvia Bekavac: Octavian's Footprints: Hillforts, camps and roads between Burnum and Synodium.....	39
• Ivo Glavaš: Beneficarii consularis stationes along the Roman road Aquielia–Dyrrachium. State of research.....	39
• Igor Vukmanić: The Limes road in Croatia – Known data, new interpretation.....	40
• Gerda Sommer v. Bülow: Die Bedeutung des Siedlungsplatzes Gamzigrad für das Sicherheitssystem der Provinz Dacia ripensis.....	40
• Ioana Oltean, João Fonte: The road to be taken: a GIS-based analysis of the spatial and networking patterns pertaining to the Roman conquest of Sarmizegetusa Regia, Dacia...40	40
• Sara Zanni, Biljana Lučić, Alessandro De Rosa: Seek and ye shall find. A spatial approach to mapping Roman roads and buried archaeological sites in the Srem region. The case study of Tapavice site.....	41

## 4. Hold the Line!!! .....42

• Andrew Poulter: Roman Tactics and Frontier Defence in the Early Empire ( 1st to 3rd centuries AD).....	42
• Janka Istenič: Traces of Octavian's military campaigns in the north-easternmost part of Roman Italy and western Illyricum.....	43
• Ze'ev Safrai, Ran Ortner: My Home is My Fortress - Combat in built-up areas in the Roman Army.....	43
• Jaime Noguera: Traces of Sertorian's military campaigns in the north-east of Hispania..45	45
• Emzar Kakhidze, Lasha Aslanishvili: Roman garrisons on the edge of the eastern frontier.....	46
• Hans-Peter Schletter: Tropaea in Gelduba? Neue Befunde zur Bataverschlacht in Krefeld - Gellep.....	46
• Viktor Humennyi: Garrisons of Syria and Rome's military strategy during the late second-early third centuries CE Parthian campaigns: the case of Dura-Europos.....	47
• Renate Lafer: Has Septimius Severus ever been in North Africa fighting against the Garamantes? A reconsideration of the campaigns of the emperor.....	47
• Kai Juntunen: The Myth of a Legion Lost – The Incident at Elegeia in Xiphilinus' Epitome of Cassius Dio.....	47
• Lorenzo Boragno: The Frontiers and the Mirror.....	48

• Krzysztof Narloch: The Cavalry of the Roman Army in the IV and V century.....	49
• Andrzej B. Biernacki, Elena Klenina Armamentarium of the I Italian Legion in Novae (Moesia Inferior).....	49
• Andreas Schwarcz: The frontier defence in Noricum before and after the Marcomannic wars.....	50
• José Manuel Costa-García, David González Álvarez, João Fonte, Andrés Menéndez Blanco, Manuel Gago Mariño, Rebeca Blanco-Rotea, Valentín Álvarez Martínez: Not all the enclosures look the same! New archaeological data for the study of the conquest and occupation of NW Iberia in Early Imperial times.....	50
• Ioan Piso: Some Significant Permutations in the Auxiliary Camps of Dacia.....	51
• Karl Strobel: The Lower Danube and the Balkans: Strategy and Tactics from Hellenistic Republican Warfare to the Flavian Defence-System.....	51
• Zsolt Viszy: Recent research activities along the Pannonian Limes in Hungary.....	52
• Christoph Rummel: Fleeting Fleets – Who did control the Rivers and Seas?.....	52
• Nemanja Mrđić: Classis and its Bases - Viminacium and other ports in defense systems of Moesia Prima and Dacia Ripensis.....	53

## 5. A Farewell to Arms .....54

• Liviu Petculescu: The swords in Roman Dacia.....	54
• Boris Rankov: Roman 'cavalry sports' face-mask helmets and the spectacle of pantomime.....	54
• Boris Alexander Burandt: Marble soldiers on Marcus' column: a comparison of its depictions of Roman military equipment and the archaeological finds.....	55
• Martijn A. Wijnhoven: On the origin of mail and the evidence of its early use in the Roman Republic.....	55
• Radu Iustinian Zăgreanu: Weaponry and military equipment from the auxiliary fort of Arcobara.....	55
• Miroslav Vujović: Weapons and Military Equipment from the Roman camp Novae at Čezava (Serbia).....	56
• Frederik-Sebastian Kirch: Weapons in the vicus and the fall of Weißenburg A Comparison between three points of excavations with roman and germanic Weapons at Weißenburg in Bayern (Bavaria).....	56
• Monica Gui: 3rd century cavalry (equites legionis?) equipment illustrated on a few monuments from Dacia Superior.....	57
• Ildar Kayumov: Some thoughts on the construction of the Roman scorpio of the Principate period.....	57
• Maria Novichenkova: Roman military cingulum details of Early Principate from a sanctuary Gurzufskoe Sedlo at Mountain Taurica.....	58
• Fazekas Ferenc: Militaria Lussoniensa. Römische Ausrüstungsgegenstände und Schutz-waffen aus Paks-Dunakömlöd / Roman military equipment and defensive weapons from Paks-Dunakömlöd.....	58
• Jelena Lj. Cvijetić, Ivana D. Kosanović: Inscriptions and stamps on Roman weapons and military equipment from the Serbian part of Limes.....	59

## 6. Production, Industry and Trade .....60

• Erik Timmerman: The impact of Rome on socio-economic life along the Lower Germanic Limes: blessing or curse?.....	60
• Ella Magdalena Hetzel: Craftwork in Roman Cologne.....	60
• Martin Lemke: Supplying Novae. The logistic network for provisioning the legio I Italica...61	61
• Merab Khalvashi: On the relationships between Romans and locals in eastern Black Sea littoral: brown clay amphoras discovered in the fort of Apsarus.....	61
• Damjan Donev: Patterns of urban settlement on and behind the Danube Limes - a geographical perspective.....	61

- Slavtcho Kirov: Patrimonium caesaris in the Danubian provinces I-III century p.C.....62
- Felix Marcu, George Cupcea: Supplying the Roman Army on the limes of Dacia Porolissensis.....62
- Mateusz Żmudziński: Comments on the trade in the Late Roman Period.....63
- Juan Manuel Bermúdez Lorenzo: The praefectura annonae along the limes: A comparison of the administrative structures of the Praefectura annonae along the limes provinces...63
- Ionuț Bocan, Catalina Mihaela Neagu, Mihaela Simion, Decebal Vleja: The Entry Gate of Luxuries in the Province of Dacia; Imports from Lezoux to Micia (Vețel, Hunedoara County, Romania).....63
- Tatiana Ivleva, Matt Phelps: Frontier glass: a recipe and production technology for Romano-British glass bangles in the northern British frontier zone.....63
- Lucretiu Birliba: Les bénéficiaires des gouverneurs et les stations douanières en Mésie Inférieure.....64
- Saša Redžić, Ivana Kosanović, Mladen Jovičić, Ljubomir Jevtović: New evidence of brick production at Viminacium.....64
- Mirjana Vojvoda, Adam Crnobrnja: Circulation of Provincial Coins »Provincia Dacia« at the Territory of Present-Day Serbia.....64
- Silke Lange: Some thoughts about the spread and origin of Wooden artifacts found in Roman contexts in the Netherlands and elsewhere .....65
- Ivana Ožanić Roguljić, Angelina Raičković: Evidence of cheesemaking in lower Pannonia and upper Moesia.....65

## 7. What about us? Exploring the lives of women and children on the Frontiers .....66

- Andrew Birley, Elizabeth Greene: Women and War: The composition of the Vindolanda Severan-period military community.....66
- Claire Millington: At home on the base? Examining the accommodation of auxiliary fort commanders and equestrian legionary tribunes on western frontiers.....67
- Anna Mech: Female religiosity in military settlements in Southeastern European provinces.....68
- Kaja Stemberger: Do expressions of identity draw borders? Case study of female identity in Roman-period Slovenia.....68
- Ilija Danković, Ilija Mikić: Recent discovery of a sarcophagus in Viminacium. Evidence of mors immatura?.....69
- Milica Marjanović: Commemoration of children in the province of Upper Moesia – evidence from limes and its hinterland .....69
- Decebal Vleja, Mihaela Simion, Catalina Mihaela Neagu, Ionuț Bocan: Woman at the Edge of the Empire. Case Study: Domitia from Micia (Dacia) .....70
- Jelena Anđelković Grašar: Women in the visual culture of Late Antiquity in the Central Balkans: The inferior sex got a new exterior?.....70
- Olga Špehar, Branka Vranešević: Mater Castrorum: representation of an ideal Empress or the rebirth of a Republican ideal woman?.....70
- Anne Chen: Digital Technologies and the Possibilities for Gender and Family Research Along the Limes.....71

## 10. Going wild! The roles of wild animals in life and death on the frontier.72

- Sue Stallibrass: Wild animals in the frontier zone: food, fun or fantasy?.....72
- Sonja Vuković – Bogdanović: Venison, spectacles and furs: Remains of wild beasts from Viminacium (Upper Moesia, Serbia).....73
- Monika Mraz: Taking the bear by the tooth!.....73
- Ivan Radman-Livaja, Ozren Domiter: Roman fishing implements from Siscia.....74
- Miroslav Vujović: Elephant in the Room.....74
- Dimitrije Marković, Milan Savić: Case of the wounded beast: Red deer tibia with projectile

- trauma from Viminacium (Serbia).....75
- Teodora Radišić: Hunting on the other side of the Roman frontier: case of the Late La Tène site Židovar.....75
- Mirjana Sanader, Joško Zaninović, Mirna Vukov: A new attempt at interpreting arrowheads from the Roman legionary fortresses Burnum and Tilurium in Dalmatia .....76

## 11. Religion and beliefs on the frontiers .....77

- Nadežda Gavrilović Vitas: The Cult of God Mithras on Roman Danube Limes in Lower Pannonia and Upper Moesia.....77
- Ozren Domiter: Understanding the Cult of the Danube Horseman: New Approaches.....77
- Ljubica Perinić: What are we missing? On the invisibility of Silvanus Orientalis.....78
- Dan Augustin Deac: The Materiality of Religion in the Civilian Settlement of Porolissum (Roman Dacia).....79
- Ivan Radman-Livaja: New evidence for the worship of Epona on the Danubian limes.....79
- Ljubiša Vasiljević: Archaeological monuments of Silvanus and his cult community (Mars, Diana, “woodland deities”) in part of Danube limes in Serbia.....79
- Tatiana Ivleva: Embodied religion: Norico-Pannonian gestural language on funerary monuments .....80
- Nicolay Sharankov: Local cults for Roman use: The sanctuary of Dominus Plester and Diana Plestrensis .....80
- Tomasz Dziurdzik: Expressing regional and professional religious identities in Roman army: the case of female cavalry “sports” helmets .....81
- Carsten Wenzel: Votum solvit! – Sanctifications of military personal and a new sacred area in Roman Nida (Frankfurt am Main-Hedderheim).....81
- Csaba Szabó: Religion in the making in Roman Dacia: space sacralisation and religious appropriation on the frontiers of the Empire.....82
- Catherine Leisser: Ritual Artefacts: Right or Wrong?.....82
- Dănuț Aparaschivei: Pilgrims from the province of Scythia in Ephesus .....83
- Stefanie Hoss: Christian symbols on the weapons and equipment of Roman soldiers.....84
- Erin Darby: Christians in the Late Roman army of Palestine: New evidence from ‘Ayn Gharrandal (Arieldela), Jordan .....84
- Vinka Matijević: Classical heroes and biblical characters. About the Roman belt found in Zmajevac (Ad Novas).....85
- Reinhardt Harreither: Christian soldiers as martyrs at the Danubian frontier.....85

## 14. From East to West my Legions are the Best!!! .....86

- Juergen Trumm: Trajan, legio XI and Caius Iulius Quadratus Bassus - the last legatus legionis of Vindonissa (Windisch/Switzerland).....86
- Domagoj Tončinić: Die Denkmäler der Legio XI in der Provinz Dalmatien.....86
- Ran Ortner: The Cestius Gallus And The XII Roman Legion Campaign to Jerusalem in 66 A.D. and its historical-strategic consequence.....87
- Louisa Campbell: Barbarians on the Edge of Empire – Colouring in the Antonine Wall Distance Stones.....88

## 16. Stand your Ground!.....89

- Lecat Zénaïde: The African Limes during the Byzantine Period: a Networks Stratigraphy..89
- John Steinhoff: The Numidian Limes from Mesarfelta to Thubunae: An Interdisciplinary Approach.....89
- Michal Dyčka: Modus Operandi of the Odenwald Limes .....90
- Elisabeth Krieger: Watch out for Watchtowers! Fakten und Fiktion zu deren Rekonstruktion .....90

- Maciej Marciniak: Reasons for adaptation of troops to the Roman world.....91
- Andrzej B. Biernacki, Elena Klenina: Tuscan and Ionic Order in the Architecture of the Legionary Camp of Novae (Moesia Inferior).....91
- Ivan Gargano: Locating the VIth century Βιμινάκιον .....92

## 17. Limes in fine? Continuity and Discontinuity of Life in the Forts of the Roman Frontiers .....94

- Simone Mayer: Who lies there? Late antique inhumation graves at Augusta Raurica .....94
- Anna Flückiger: Coins, Chronology, Continuity, and the Castrum Rauracense: New research on the Castrum and its 'suburbium' during Late Antiquity .....94
- Dan Matei: The post-Roman life in the former castra of Dacia – an overview .....95
- Alexandru Rațiu, Ioan Caol Opreș: New research concerning the first phase of the Capidava Roman fort (Moesia Inferior) .....95
- Berber Van der Meulen: The Late Roman limes in the Low Countries: (dis)continuity in a frontier zone .....96
- Piotr Jaworski, Radosław Karasiewicz-Szczypiorski, Shota Mamuladze: Rise and Fall of Apsaros (Gonio, Georgia). Latest Findings on the Chronology of a Roman Fort on the Eastern Edge of the Empire.....96

## 18. Transformation of Limes in Late Antiquity .....98

- Vujadin Ivanišević, Ivan Bugarski: Spatial, Military and Economic aspects of Roman Defence on the Upper Moesian Limes .....98
- Agnieszka Tomas: Late Roman annex in Novae (Moesia inferior) .....99
- Conor Whately: Demilitarizing the Southeast Frontier at the End of Antiquity.....99
- Maxime Petitjean: L'évolution du système défensif du Bas-Danube au IVe siècle et la 'grande stratégie' de l'Empire romain tardif .....99
- Sofija Petković: Early Byzantine Horizon in the Fortification of Pontes – Trajan's Bridge.. 100
- Brahim M'Barek: From the imperial court to the field, Πυργοκάστέλλον - Pyrgocastellum. A architectural innovation imagined in Constantinople and implemented by Justinian's men on the border..... 100
- Antoan Tonev: Foederati – beyond or on our side of the limes? How Romans prefer them... ..... 101
- Sebastian Schmid: The Roman fort at Arelape/Pöchlarn and its development in Late Antiquity..... 101
- Dominic Moreau: Le concept de "limes" dans les sources textuelles antiques / The Concept of "limes" in the Ancient Textual Sources ..... 102
- Thomas Becker: Militärisch und/oder zivil ? – Zur spätantiken Nutzung des mittelkaiserzeitlichen Kastells von Dormagen (Rheinkreis Neuss/D) / Military or civilian ? – The late antique use of the auxiliary fort or Dormagen..... 102
- Ignacio Arce: A Tetrarchic Roman fort under the Umayyad palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar (Jericho)? An hypothesis on the location of the missing Roman forts at Ariha-Jericho (Palestina) and the sequence of transformation and reuse of the site..... 103
- Harry van Enckevort, Joep Hendriks: The afterlife of the Dutch part of the limes ad Germaniam Inferiorem..... 103
- Mihailo Milinković: Is there a "hinterland" of the limes in Early Byzantine Illyricum? New observations almost 60 years after the introductory study of Đorđe Stričević..... 104

## 19. Who Were the Limitanei? .....105

- S. Thomas Parker: New Evidence about the limitanei on Rome's Arabian frontier..... 105
- Alan Rushworth: Limitanei: the African perspective ..... 105

## 21. Life and health on the Roman Limes .....107

- Nataša Miladinović-Radmilović, Ilija Mikić, Dragana Vulović, Ksenija Đukić: The appearance of ulcer on one skeleton from Viminacium and the possibility of its' treatment in Antiquity..... 107
- Dragana Vulović, Ilija Mikić, Ksenija Đukić, Nataša Miladinović-Radmilović: Case of myositis ossificans traumatica on one skeleton from Viminacium..... 107
- Ilija Mikić, Nataša Miladinović-Radmilović, Dragana Vulović, Ksenija Đukić: Possible explanations for mass skull burials at Viminacium..... 108
- Aleksandar P. Simić, Gordana Jeremić: Roman Medicine and Healthcare on the Upper Moesian Limes in Serbia – Archaeological Evidences..... 108
- Emilija Nikolić, Snežana Golubović: Burial Structures of Viminacium: Building and Construction..... 109
- C. Scott Speal: Settlement Size, History, and Mortality at Roman Viminacium: Testing the Urban Graveyard Hypothesis..... 109

## 24. Arts and Crafts along Limes .....111

- Ivana Popović: Roman Cameos With Female Busts from the Limes Region: Their Meaning and Role in the Political Propaganda ..... 111
- Iva Kaić: Roman engraved gems from Burgenae in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb ..... 111
- Bojan Đurić: The Sirmium sarcophagus production on the Danube Limes and the Titel sarcophagus in Timișoara..... 112
- Boris Alexander Burandt: Entertaining the Empire – Rome's frontiers and the arena industry ..... 112
- Mihaela Simion, Decebal Vleja, Ionuț Bocan, Catalina Mihaela Neagu: The Entry Gate of Luxuries in the Province of Dacia; Roman Engraved gems from Micia (Vețel, Hunedoara County, Romania) ..... 112
- Ana Cristina Hamat, Georgescu Ștefan Viorel: Roman Jewellery from South-West of Dacia ..... 113
- Ortoľ Harl: Military virtue as depicted on official and personal monuments from the Danubian provinces..... 113
- Biljana Lučić, Miroslav B. Vujović, Jasmina Davidović: The Tomb With Paleochristian Wall Paintings From Sirmium ..... 113

## 25. First Contacts between the Roman Military and the local people ....115

- Nick Hodgson, James Bruhn: Roman frontiers create new societies in the lands beyond: a shift to pastoral farming and social re-structuring caused by the building of Hadrian's Wall ..... 115
- Pete Wilson: Allies, Enemies, Partners or Protagonists? Rome and the Brigantes in the First Century AD..... 116
- Karl Oberhofer: At the back of beyond? Actual perspectives on the lower Alpine Rhine valley regarding the first Roman contacts ..... 116
- Balázs Komoróczy, Marek Vlach, Ján Rajtár, Claus-Michael Hüssen: The latest discoveries and research results of the Roman military presence in Middle Danube barbaricum ..... 117
- Andrew Lawrence: Roman Contact und Impact in the Swiss Plateau (100 BC – 20 AD).. 117
- Fraser Hunter: First contacts in Scotland: a review of old and new evidence..... 117

- Thomas Grane: Roman bronzes as a medium of diplomacy.....117
- Thomas Schierl: JUST TELLING STORIES. Augustus and Central Germany: Illustrating military history or telling another story?.....118
- José Manuel Costa-García: But Gaius, those locals seemed friendlier! The rationale behind the military deployment during the early stages of the Roman military presence in NW Iberia .....118
- Milica Tapavički Ilić: Limes in Serbia - the early days .....119
- Dragana Nikolić: Roman Conquest of the Western and Central Balkans in the Light of Recent Research .....119

## 26. Re-evaluating old excavations: are they worth it?.....120

- Orsolya Láng: Old excavation – new results: examples from the Aquincum Civil Town” – a key-note paper.....120
- Simon James: The Roman military base at Dura-Europos: from archive and field to new synthesis.....120
- Simone Mayer Digging in the archives – The 19th c. excavations of J. J. Schmid in Augusta Raurica .....121
- Malcolm Lyne: A pharos-headed pin from Richborough and its implications .....121
- Veronika Fischer: The barracks of „Ostkastell IIIb” in Straubing/Sorviodurum (Bavaria) and new knowledge about the cohorts I Flavia Canathenorum milliaria sagittariorum.....122
- Eduard Nemeth: Different methods, different terms: understanding old excavations.....123
- Eva Steigberger: Hidden treasures? What you ask is not always what you get .....123
- Hans Jost Mergen Niederbieber and early 19th-century research at the Upper-German Limes .....123
- Nora Lombardini, Elena Fioretto: Archaeological remains along the Danubian Limes: through centuries of travelers to a new instrument for intercultural dialogue .....124
- Philip Smither: Revisiting Richborough: A reassessment of the excavations of J.P. Bushe-Fox (1922-1938) .....125
- Martin Wieland: Bridge over troubled water: The roman bridge in Cologne between old research and new questions .....125

## 27. Saxon Shore .....126

- Sofie Vanhoutte: Cross-Channel Connections. The fort at Oudenburg (Belgium) within its wider context: new insights into the Litus Saxonicum .....126
- Tony Wilmott: Recent excavations on the seaward side of the Saxon shore fort of Richborough .....126
- Nathaniel Durant: A Tale of Two Frontiers?: Hadrian’s Wall and the Saxon Shore Forts in the 3rd to 5th centuries A.D.....127
- Philip Smither: ‘I’m not so (Saxon) shore’: Richborough in the 3rd - 5th centuries AD....127
- Michael Fulford: A Roman coastal fortlet or signal station at Reedham, Norfolk, England..128
- Mark Tucker: A Revaluation of the Western Shore forts.....128
- Malcolm Lyne: Excavations at Pevensey Between 1936 and 1939.....128
- Lloyd Bosworth: Recent Geophysical Survey at Portus Lemanis.....129
- Raymond Brulet: The opposite coastline: problems to be solved about continental Litus Saxonicum.....129

## 29. Mapping the Edge of Empire .....131

- Eugen S. Teodor: Hiding in Woods. Gaps in delineating the Boundary along Limes Transalutanus.....131
- Hannsjörg Ubl: Zur Toponomastik der römischen Limeslager an der österreichischen Donau nach den Listen der Limitantruppen von Noricum ripensis und Pannonia prima in

- der Notitia Dignitatum .....131
- Alexandru Flutur, Adrian-Cristian Ardelean: “Limes Sarmatiae” – Ancient maps, new interpretations.....132
- Carolyn Snively: The Border or its Zone? The Situation in Southeastern Dardania.....133
- Brian Turner: A Soldier’s Map: Velleius Paterculus on the Limits of Empire .....133

## 30. [Continuation of] Building materials: Elements of construction, elements of expression? .....135

- Craig A. Harvey, M. Barbara Reeves: Ceramic Building Materials from the Roman Fort at Hauarra (modern Humayma, Jordan): An Examination of the Manufacturing Processes.135
- Piotr Dyczek, Janusz Reclaw: “House with a peristyle” from Novae. Centurion house of the first cohort of legio I Italica?.....136
- Balázs Komoróczy, Marek Vlach, Lenka Lisá, Claus-Michael Hüssen, Ján Rajtár: On the trail of ephemeral building materials of the Roman military campaigns to the Middle Danube barbarian territories.....136
- Kathleen O’Donnell: The Quarry Inscriptions of Hadrian’s Wall.....137
- Tanja Romankiewicz, Benjamin Russell: Earthen Empire: earth and turf building in the northwest provinces.....137
- Tomáš Janek: Bricks! Bricks everywhere! - Roman legionary production and distribution of building ceramics .....138
- Martin Mosser, Michaela Kronberger: Stone extraction for Vindobona – regional infrastructure and economic relationship by the example of a legionary garrison in Pannonia.....138
- Erik Hrnčiarik, Milan Horňák: Newly discovered Germanic farmyard with Roman-style buildings in Slovakia.....139

## 31. Bath buildings.....140

- Robert Darby, Thibaud Fournet: Military Baths and Local Adaptation: A Case Study of the Auxiliary Baths of the Cohors II Galatarum at ‘Ayn Gharandal (Arieldela), Jordan .....140
- Britta Burkhardt: Baths on the Frontiers of Roman Dacia .....141
- Ioan Carol Opreș, Alexandru Rațiu and Tiberiu Potârniche: Roman military baths from Capidava (2nd – 3rd c. A.D.).....141
- Bebina Milovanović, Emilija Nikolić, Dragana Rogić: Body Function and Life Process of a Roman Building: Viminacium Baths .....141
- Gabriella Fényes: Thermae Maiores – The military bath of the legio II Adiutrix in Aquincum.....142
- Judit Pásztókai-Szeőke: Dishing the dirt on the textile tools found in Roman (military) baths.....143
- René Ployer, Eva Steigberger: My bath is in my fort? Bath buildings in military context in Noricum and Western Pannonia .....143

## 33. Presenting the Roman Frontiers .....144

- Richard Hingley, Kate Sharpe: Roman Frontiers in the UK: assessing what visitors value about the Roman past .....145
- Snežana Golubović: Viminacium: public presentation and visitor research .....146
- Jennifer Morscheiser: Welterbe als Chance – oder wieso die Römer auch in Krefeld waren .....146
- Christof Fluegel: The Mittelfranken-Limes-App: audience research and testing.....147
- Patricia Weeks, Lyn Wilson, Al Rawlinson, Carsten Hermann, Erik Dobat: The Antonine Wall: digital resource development for new audiences .....147
- Boris Alexander Burandt: Between archaeology and cliché – a study on Roman military reconstructions and reenactment .....148



- Mike Bishop: Turma! Hadrian's Cavalry Charge in Carlisle.....148
- Tom Hazenberg: Cement for the limes. Interpretation Framework and Curatorship for the Dutch limes .....149
- Bill Griffiths: The Hadrian's Cavalry Dispersed exhibition .....149
- Balázs Komoróczy, Pavla Růžičková, Marek Vlach: The Romans deep in barbaricum. Conception, current state and perspectives of the Roman military monuments presentation in the Czech Republic .....150
- Andrea Chiricescu: Working with the local community on the Roman Limes. First steps in developing a sustainable site management framework.....150
- Thomas Becker Limes-App Hessen „Explore“ – moderner Weg der Denkmalvermittlung / Limes-App Hesse „Explore“ – a modern way of heritage transfer .....150
- Dániel Kővágó: Visitors in bowler hats and baseball caps – Aquincum then and now....151

#### **34. Roman Egypt .....152**

- Steven E. Sidebotham: Results of Fieldwork at Berenike (a Ptolemaic-Roman Port on Egypt's Red Sea Shore): 2013-2018 .....152
- Rodney Ast: New Greek Inscriptions from the Temple of Isis at Berenike.....152
- Joan Oller Guzmán: Controlling the Mons Smaragdus: The Presence (or Absence) of the Roman Army in a Productive Frontier Region .....152
- Steven E. Sidebotham: Survey of the Berenike-Nile Roads 1987-2015: The Highways, Military Installations, Mines and Quarries.....153
- Julia Lougovaya-Ast: Pleasure and Entertainment on the Roman Frontier .....153
- Iwona Zych: The Blemmyan record in Berenike of the late period (4th–6th centuries AD).153
- Julien Cooper: Trade routes, raiding, and mining: thoughts on the Blemmyean desert state in Late Antiquity .....154
- Peter Sheehan, Dmitry Karelin, Maria Karelina, Tatiana Zhitpeleva: Babylon of Egypt: the Reconstruction of the Diocletianic Fortress.....154

#### **35. Small finds assemblages as a means to understanding social and economic patterns within the settlements close to Roman camps .....155**

- Paul Franzen: What can small finds do for you? .....155
- Weights as an indication for trade and commerce and as a means to determine whether the context is military or civilian.....155
- Hannes Flück: Bling for the fling – a fibulae assemblage from the canabae legionis of Vindonissa and its interpretation .....156
- Birgitta Hoffmann: Glass in the military settlements: between local production and luxury acquisitions .....156
- Anna Walas: Finds distribution analysis and the relationships between fort and annex at Flavian Elginhaugh, Scotland .....156
- Tony Wilmott: Small finds and environmental evidence from the seating ban of the Chester amphitheatre .....157
- Stefanie Hoss, Julia Chorus, Julie Van Kerckhove and Carlijn van Maaren: Vicus on the Rhine: the mini-vici of the Lower Rhine between Utrecht and the sea .....157
- Orsolya Láng, Andrew Wilson: First steps on a long journey: preliminary results of the research on millstones from the settlement complex of Aquincum.....158

#### **36 General session .....159**

- Aránzazu Medina González: Hic non finit Imperium Romanum. The concept of “no-frontier”.....159
- Peti Donevski: Was Durostorum a seat of the governor of Moesia Inferior province?....159

#### **37. Rome and Barbarians .....160**

- Catalina Mihaela Neagu, Mihaela Simion, Decebal Vleja, Ionuț Bocan: Searching life in death. A specific community in Roman Dacia - Alburnus Maior .....160
- Marko Jelusić: In the service of Rome? - Mobility and ethnic interpretation of the shield bosses with a star-shaped flange and faceted / fluted bowls .....160
- Fraser Hunter: What makes a barbarian? Studying barbarian material culture on Roman monuments .....160
- Jonathan Quiery: The Place-Making Effects of Roman Military Tropaea in the Provinces: Roman and Barbarian Identities.....161

**POSTERS .....162**

- Sven Conrad, Lyudmil Vagalinski: The Mouth of Yantra River at the Lower Danube. Fortifications and Settlements from the 1st to the 6th c.....162
- Sophie Hüdepohl: The late Roman fort of Guntia / Günzburg (Raetia secunda) – 4th century grave inventories reflecting evidence of migration and cultural exchange.....162
- Dávid Bartus: Where did Valentinian die? New excavations in the legionary fortress of Brigetio.....163
- Dorel Bondoc: The Roman fortress and the detachment of Legio VII Claudia from Cioroiu Nou, Dolj County, Romania.....163
- Silva Sabkova: The lower Danube Limes in Bulgaria between the rivers Iskar (Oescus) and Yantra (Iatrus) during the first century of Roman occupation (1st c. AD): Relationships between the fortified system and the landscape.....164
- Sabine Deschler-Erb/Regine Fellmann/Andrew Lawrence/Michael Nick/Jürgen Trumm: Offering to the Gods – A Ritual Deposition and Other Forms of Religious Communication in Vindonissa.....164
- Nina Gostinski: Slaves in Teutoburgium?.....164
- Ivana Živaljević, Sonja Vuković – Bogdanović, Ivan Bogdanović: Fishing at the Upper Moesian frontier: Remains of freshwater and migratory fish from Viminacium (Upper Moesia, Serbia).....165
- Brahim M'Barek, Dominic Moreau, Nicolas Beaudry: A Stronghold of the Lower Danube's Hinterland: New Fieldwork on the Fortifications of Zaldapa, Bulgaria.....165
- Adam Pažout: How to trace and date the Roman roads? A case study from the territorium of Antiochia Hippos.....166
- Simona Regep: Stone made projectiles found in the Roman fort of Mehadia (Caraş-Severin County, Romania).....166
- Kira Lappé: The Roman Army in the Lower Danube and Balkan Region .....167
- Kira Lappé, M. Meszar, K. Hornek, M. Wagreich: Layers of Vindobona .....167
- Monica Gui: Scrawl, scribble, doodle – killing time in military tileries of Roman Dacia...167
- Réka Neményi: „Borderland Christianity” – Small finds and their significance on the Hungarian section of the Danube Limes (4th –5th centuries).....168
- Suram Sakaniya: Gagra temple in the system of Pontus limes.....168
- Alik Gabeliya: Fortifications of the Inner-Caucasian Limes in Abkhazia.....169
- Stephen Matthews: Moving Supplies in the Roman Dobrogea .....169
- Joanneke van den Engel-Hees, Herwin van den Engel: Hidden gems: Roman finds in the PUG-collection in Utrecht.....170
- Martin Mosser: Stone extraction for Vindobona – regional infrastructure and economic relationship by the example of a legionary garrison in Pannonia.....170
- Xue Cheng: This is the first time to study the construction technology of the beacon tower in the Han dynasty in xinjiang of China. It is of great significance to understand the construction technology of rammed earth in xinjiang .....171
- Tong Yangyang: Using the objective and plenary data to analyze and demonstrate the relationship between the construction of Ming's Great Wall, the climate changes and wars of the agricultural and nomadic peoples.....171
- Michael Speidel: Aspects of Roman imperial power in Transcaucasia .....171
- Gordana Jeremić, Selena Vitezović: Exploitation of wild animal resources on the Limes in Upper Moesia .....172
- Dragana Nikolić: Digitizing Ancient Epigraphic Heritage: Project EpiDoc XML Encoding of Roman Inscriptions from Serbia .....172
- Marius Streinu, Aurel Stănică, Alina Streinu: The last frontier. The extra muros civil settlement from Noviodunum. The beginning of a new research .....172
- Mátyás Bajusz: Roman quarries on the Northwestern border of Dacia. The sandstone and volcanic stone quarries of Porolissum .....173
- Călin Timoc: The Danube limes fort from Pojejena in a new light of non-invasive inspections .....173

- Jana Kopáčková: Production of Olive Oil and Wine in the Vicinity of Limes Delmaticus...173
- Mariana Balaci Crînguș: La situation des femmes sur le limes danubien de la Dacie entre religion et implication sociale .....174
- Lajos Juhász: Perforated coins from the Aquincum-Graphisoft cemetery .....174
- C. Scott Speal: Sex, Risk Allocation, and Roman Patriarchy: Excess Male Mortality on the Danube Frontier .....175
- C. Scott Speal: Establishing the Health Correlates of Social Status on the Danube Frontier using Grave Construction: The Viminacium Mortuary Complex .....175
- Stanko Trifunović: Archaeological Characteristics of Sarmatians Limigantes Culture ....176
- Judit Pásztkai-Szeőke: A small secret of the sea-silk from Szemplőhegy (HU) .....176
- Agnieszka Tomas: A face padlock from Novae (Lower Moesia). On the distribution and function of Roman puzzle locks.....177
- Tomasz Dziurdzik: Demystifying the Roman fort at Gračine (Bosnia and Herzegovina)..177

**List of Participants .....178**

## **ABSTRACTS**

## 31. BATH BUILDINGS

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Together with amphitheatres, military bath buildings were erected near forts and in legionary camps to enable the soldiers to enjoy their favourite leisure activities. Indeed, bath buildings are vastly more common than amphitheatres in connection with military installations, regardless of whether these are situated on windy and wet Hadrian's Wall or in the hot and dry deserts of Africa. It seems that the pleasures of a visit to the bathhouse - including the nicely decorated and warm rooms, abundance of clean and warm water plus the pleasure of meeting friends for a chat - seem to have been judged to have such an overriding importance that even the smallest forts aspired to them.

Whereas amphitheatres were also used for military parades and show fights of units against each other, bath buildings had no direct military use beyond ensuring the health and happiness of the soldiers. We can thus conclude that the regular occurrence of bath buildings near forts and in legionary camps is a sign of the central position the bathing habit had in Roman society and an indication of the importance of the soldiers as a class within that society. Both were on the rise during the 1st century AD and gained their full importance in the early 2nd century, retaining it for at least two hundred years.

But a number of issues on the social habit of bathing and the resulting buildings are still unanswered in the military sphere and this session will invite contributors to ask questions such as:

- were military baths restricted to soldiers or could all inhabitants of the legionary camp or the fort and vicus bathe there?
- was the bathhouse of a given fort or camp of a size that allowed all the soldiers of the unit to take a bath there every day or every two days? Or was the bathhouse only for a few of them?
- as these buildings are technically challenging to construct, were they built by specialists within the Roman army, a travelling 'bath building corps' or perhaps by civilian contractors?
- can we determine differences between military and civilian bathhouses of the same region – either in the architecture or the decoration?
- which of the countless activities recorded for non-military bath buildings in towns and cities such as eating and drinking, exercising, getting a haircut, consulting a doctor, listening to lectures or poetry readings and satisfying one's sexual desires may have been available in military bathhouses?
- how was the location of the bathhouse determined when it was built outside a fort or inside a legionary camp – were positions chosen for easy access to water or other location advantages specific to bathhouses or were military considerations of a higher importance?

### **Military Baths and Local Adaptation: A Case Study of the Auxiliary Baths of the Cohors II Galatarum at 'Ayn Gharandal (Arieldela), Jordan**

Robert Darby, Thibaud Fournet

Since 2010, archaeological investigations of an exceptionally well-preserved military bathhouse belonging to the Cohors II Galatarum have been underway at the site of 'Ayn Gharandal in southern Jordan under the auspices of the 'Ayn Gharandal Archaeological Project (AGAP). Built as new construction in ca. 300 AD near the mouth of the Wadi Gharandal to serve the nearby castellum, the builders of the bathhouse were forced to consider not only the topographical challenges posed by the surrounding landscape but the broader environmental conditions and extreme aridity in the desert environs of the Wadi Arabah. This paper examines the architecture of the auxiliary bathhouse at 'Ayn Gharandal within its broader regional contexts

and the influence that both local building and bathing traditions had on its design. Further, it seeks to answer who was responsible for constructing the baths and what their association with the Roman army may have been in the hopes of providing new avenues of research regarding military baths in other frontier zones.

### **Baths on the Frontiers of Roman Dacia**

Britta Burkhardt

This paper is a synthesis of the most relevant data regarding the archaeological research of small Roman bathhouses (balnea) situated along the military frontiers of the Roman province of Dacia. In the Roman world, the Latin term *limes* was understood as the summation of a linear fortification system, forts of information about imperial public baths, which represent an institution with an important role both in private and public sectors. Considering that provincial Roman architecture in a military environment is largely based on defensive structures, the topic of baths situated in this environment raises new questions and possibilities. Who used these baths? Soldiers, civilians, soldiers and civilians, in what order? To what extent did women have access to these facilities? Our paper wishes to discuss these questions and more.

### **Roman military baths from Capidava (2nd – 3rd c. A.D.)**

Ioan Carol Opreș, Alexandru Rațiu and Tiberiu Potârniche

Recent research on Capidava military *thermae* (2017) was carried out as part of a restoration and tourist development project for the fort precinct and the extra muros space, in the area where a site/tourist information center was constructed. This area is located eastward from the fort, about 100-200 m from the Main Gate. As early as 2015, preventive research on an area of about 1,800 sqm identified 375 archaeological complexes: 186 inhumation tombs, 133 pits of various forms and functions, 28 parts of stone walls, 5 dwelling structures, 2 combustion structures, 7 outside vents and 11 drainage systems.

The research was resumed in 2017, with the clear aim of gathering all the available information on the ground and exhausting the contexts throughout the area occupied by the baths used by the auxiliary troops stationed here in the 1st and 2nd c. A.D. (about 800 sqm). The unequal information resulted from previous unpublished research (1988-1993) has added to it several categories of archaeological contexts: Medio-Byzantine dwelling elements (6 dwellings or huts, equipped with hearths) and 7 medieval tombs.

By re-excavating and cleaning the debris from all the rooms and installations related to the thermal edifice two construction phases of the baths could be clearly identified. They correspond to two channels of water evacuation, documented with the stamps of Leg(io) XI C(laudia) p(ia) f(idelis) and Leg(io) XI Ant(oniniana). Other stamps were discovered also: Leg(ionis) V Mac(edonicae) and Leg(ionis) XI CL(audiae), which suggests repairs or extensions of the edifice during the 2nd c. A.D., after the initial construction moment. Several *cocciopesto* floors and *praefurnia*, pools and rooms with unclear functionality are unevenly preserved, being affected by late Roman and Romano-Byzantine dwellings and tombs dating from the 10th – 11th centuries.

Noteworthy is the fact that the military baths from Capidava are among the very few military *balnea* known in the final section of the Danube *limes* in Moesia Inferior.

### **Body Function and Life Process of a Roman Building: Viminacium Baths**

Bebina Milovanović, Emilija Nikolić, Dragana Rogić

Viminacium baths, excavated from 1973 to 1974 and from 2004 to 2007, were in use from the second half of the 1st century AD until the end of the 4th century AD. Periods of the building life are confirmed by changes in masonry techniques and the existence of wall paintings with

multiple layers, as well as by dating of pottery and numismatic finds. The aim of this paper is to analyze all these pieces of evidence, trying to find common causes for their occurrence.

During excavations, five apses (pools), a central hypocaust space and peripheral facilities of the building were found. Although the building has not been fully excavated yet, periods of construction can be distinguished, where every subsequent building was built on the previous one. The focus of this paper will be given to specific rooms that were probably in use only until the end of the 3rd century when the life of the baths was interrupted for a while (while other parts of the building were renewed and used until the end of the 4th century). According to the direction of the partially excavated walls of the rooms and geophysical research conducted around them, it can be presumed that the baths were included in the bigger city complex. Excavations in the nearby area conducted in 1902 and 1973 showed the existence of residential quarter where life lasted from the 2nd to the 6th (or 7th) century, but where also the 1st-century layer was found.

Viminacium baths are the oldest Roman baths to have been excavated in Serbia thus far and they are very important for the research of bath culture during Roman times in this territory. They are also, along with the nearby amphitheatre, the only large public building having been excavated to the great extent in Viminacium so far. Considering that the amphitheatre was presumed to be founded as a military one, but later incorporated into the city getting also civic function, we can argue about the function of the 1st-century layer of the baths and its possible use by soldiers of Viminacium legionary fortress. They also offer unique information on the everyday life of Viminacium inhabitants which formed a unique multicultural society. Future excavations will provide us with more information important for the research of its life which was inextricably bound to historical events that caused development and splendor, but also destructions and renewals of Viminacium.

### **Thermae Maiores – The military bath of the legio II Adiutrix in Aquincum**

Gabriella Fényes

In the area of today's Budapest twenty-five Roman baths have been excavated in the explorations of the past 240 years. The monumental bath building of the Aquincum based legio II Adiutrix, according to an inscription the *Thermae Maiores*, was the largest of them. The bath was erected at the intersection of the two main roads of the legionary fortress. Stretching over an area of more than 16,800 square meters the floor plan of these baths is bilaterally symmetrical. According to the archaeological excavations we know about 48 rooms of this bath. It consisted of a porticus, a palaestra, a big natatio, changing rooms, frigidarium with basin, two nymphaeums, another frigidarium with cold water basins, a round sudatorium and another sweat bath with an apse, four tepidaria, and an oblong caldarium with two niches for rectangular basins surrounded with praefurnia.

This bath was built under the reign of Trajan or Hadrian, when the legionary fort was built in stone. It was rebuilt several times in the Roman period. One inscription proved a big reconstruction in 268 A.D. (CIL III 10492). It was rebuilt also in the second half of the fourth century and became the residence of the military leader of the province. In this period a new little private bath was constructed near the former military bath.

Running water was supplied from springs 3.5 km north of the bath. The water was conducted by an aqueduct, which was built by the legio II Adiutrix in the same time as the military fortress and the bath. The sewage of the large pool was led in the drains of a huge latrina. Waste water was drained into the Danube.

The ruins of the bath give information not only about the water supply and the heating system but also the daily life there. The archaeological finds, for example a strigilis, inform us about the Roman bathing habits. The *Thermae Maiores* was not only a hygienic bath, but with the military hospital nearby provided facilities for healing and recreation, which is proved by inscriptions and reliefs.

### **Dishing the dirt on the textile tools found in Roman (military) baths**

Judit Pásztkai-Szeőke

In her publications about the small finds from Roman bathhouses, both public and military, A.M. Whitmore (2013. and 2016.) called our attention to the occurrence of textile tools among them (e.g. whorls, weights, needles and weaving tablets). She also outlined several plausible possibilities for the interpretation of their presence. First, they were not used as cloth working tools at all, but as medical or hairdresser instruments, door-weights etc; according to her other explanation they were used for producing textiles or rather mending garments as a pass-time activity either by the bathers themselves or some slaves or attendants, but she also offered the possibility that this kind of activity could have been part of a commercial service in the baths. A somewhat different approach and interpretation of these textile tools would be offered by this present paper, based on the recent research on the textile tools found in connection to the textile refurbishing workshops of Pannonia (in Savaria and Siscia), and emphasizing both the rather overlooked importance of corporeal and sartorial hygiene in densely populated e.g. military as well as urban contexts and the tragic consequences of their lack for e.g. ancient armies.

### **My bath is in my fort? Bath buildings in military context in Noricum and Western Pannonia**

René Ployer & Eva Steigberger

In this contribution, bath buildings within or close to military installations at the Norican and Western Pannonian Limes will be examined more closely. The question is raised as to whether there are differences in location, size, design and interior fittings of the bath buildings in fortlets, forts and legionary fortresses. We follow the question when were baths built inside and outside the military facilities. Was the size of the baths proportional to the number of soldiers that used them? And who was allowed to use the bathing facilities? Can small finds give information about this? Baths within forts have been built by the soldiers themselves, but who built the baths outside the military installations in the surrounding vici? Furthermore, the question of modifications and changes to the bath buildings during their useful life should be investigated.

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