



Session Proposals Limes Congress 2021

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Military toilets

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Session Abstract: Because of the large concentration of men in military camps, human waste removal must have formed a great challenge for the Roman Army from the earliest beginnings. And while the solutions to this problem may have been quite 'portable' and ad-hoc in those camps that were used only for a short period of time, permanent camps needed permanent solutions. In most cases where Roman military toilets have been excavated and published, these are of the multi-seater, stone-channel kind connected to the military bathhouse. However, there are indications in some legionary camps that not only the houses of the commander and the tribunes had their own 'private' cesspit toilet, but the centurion's quarters as well. And it seems likely that portable toilet bowls were also in use. This session would therefore like to invite papers on toilets within military settlements that are not connected to a bathhouse. We would like to see the evidence of both channel and cesspit toilets as well as portable toilet bowls addressed in an analytical manner, answering as many as possible of the following questions

- where are the toilets situated?
- can we determine a 'private' toilet for higher ranks?
- if we have stone channel toilets not connected to bathhouses, where did the water come from?
- are there enough toilets for all people?
- and if not, do we have finds of toilet bowls and in which amounts?
- could the toilets have been used as a 'secondary means' (person uses toilet bowl, which then is emptied into toilet) in order to ensure privacy of, for instance, higher ranks or the women in the military settlements.
- finds found inside the toilet are of lesser interest and should only be presented to help determine the last phase of use.