



Session Proposals Limes Congress 2021

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***FINES*. The mechanisms and politics of frontier collapse, and the afterlife of frontier installations**

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Session Abstract: The realpolitik of the Western Roman Empire saw its fragmentation and collapse occur throughout the 5th century AD, with different processes of imperial shrinkage and consolidation occurring in the Eastern Empire through the 5th-7th centuries. Historiographic tradition links the end of Roman frontiers with barbarian invasion and settlement and imperial collapse. New archaeological evidence and reassessment of older data has prompted revision of this simple and entangled narrative of barbarian invasion and collapse. Indeed, new scholarship has called for separation of discrete issues and the impact this had on the *limitanei* and Roman frontiers. This session will address the following questions:

- To what extent have textual sources and national myths pre-determined archaeological interpretation?
- What is the evidence for abandonment or destruction at individual sites?
- How do we recognise barbarians in the archaeological record?
- Is there a difference between Roman occupation of military sites and post-Roman occupation?
- Does the pattern of military occupation match that of urban and rural hinterlands of the frontier?