



XXIII International Limes Congress 2018

Belgrade–Viminacium September, 2–9th 2018

Call for papers for:

Building materials: Elements of construction, elements of expression?

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Abstracts due by **March 31st, 2018**

Whether it be by forts, watch towers, or walls, military installations played an integral part in defending the Roman Empire and projecting control over its border regions. The construction of these installations, along with their associated infrastructure and support buildings (such as roads, baths, barracks, *horrea*, *etc.*) as well as the civilian buildings and settlements that followed in their wake, was therefore of the utmost importance. While there are many ways to study these structures, a particularly fruitful avenue of their exploration is through their building material. The construction materials used along the frontiers often depended on the local geography and availability of resources (stone, timber, clay, earth, water, lime, *etc.*). These installations therefore not only expressed Roman military might, but also represented the ingenuity of its architects, engineers, surveyors, construction workers, and material preparers. Above all, these works embodied the Roman military's capacity to organize the logistics that form the basics of building on such a large scale. In many cases it may also be possible to see the influence of indigenous building traditions on these Roman military installations.

This session focuses on the literal building blocks of the Roman *limes*, and the people who selected, created and used these elements of construction. We would like to invite contributions which present a specific building material and how it has been used for a specific context, or which consider new methods of analysis. More general contributions are also welcome that explore:

- Where are building materials sourced: locally, locally-adapted, or imported? What does this tell us about who sourced these materials and who used them?
- How are these materials used in constructions: to what extent is regional or local influence present in the building program of the Roman frontier?
- Can we trace developments and innovations? Or experiments, failure, and deterioration of skills and knowledge – in different places, at different times?
- What evidence is there for ephemeral building materials (i.e. timber, unfired clay/bricks, other organic materials), and what can this tell us?
- How can the application of theories, such as *chaîne opératoire* or network analysis, contribute to the study of these materials or building processes?
- What is the influence of local building traditions on Roman building techniques in new territories, and, what happened to these local traditions once the Romans had established themselves?
- To what extent did the regional geography or availability/lack of resources affect the decisions made by engineers and builders regarding the building material and techniques used?
- What was the role of civilians in constructing the *limes*? Were they just bystanders or leading participants? To what extent did the military contract out the work or rely on civilians for the sourcing, preparation, or actual assembly of the material?

Conference information:

- Registration and abstracts are due by **March 31st, 2018**.
- You can download the registration form at:
<http://limes2018.org/registration/>
- Abstracts should be in English and no more than 400 words, and they should be sent to both caharvey@umich.edu and limescongress.serbia@gmail.com.

Additional information about the 24th International Limes Congress can be found at:
<http://limes2018.org/>.