

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

**Beyond Marginality: craftsmen,
traders and the socioeconomic
history of Roman urban
communities**

Oxford (UK), 21-24 July 2011

Convened by:
Miko Flohr, Andrew Wilson

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

Executive summary

Introduction

The workshop was held at Wolfson College, Oxford, United Kingdom, from 21 to 24 July 2011. It brought together 19 scholars, mainly archaeologists and ancient historians, working in 9 different countries. Participants arrived on the 21st in the morning, and the workshop started at 3pm that day with a welcome by the organizers and an introduction to the ESF by Prof. Kristin Kuutma. All left in the morning of the 24th after what was considered by most a very successful meeting.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the meeting was twofold. On the one hand, it aimed to discuss current approaches to the theme of the workshop – craftsmen and traders in the Roman world – on the other hand, it aimed to bring people from different countries and different disciplines together to get them to know each other and to create an environment that could lead to collaborative efforts. This was felt necessary because while there has been an increasing amount of scholarly attention to craftsmen and traders in the last two decades, scholars struggle to transcend national and disciplinary boundaries. Consequently, the field is marginalized in the wider discourse on the socioeconomic history of the Roman world, and connects only to a limited extent with the study of similar themes in other historical periods, such as the medieval period.

Environment

The arrangements at Wolfson College contributed significantly to realizing our aims. The Haldane Room, where the conference was held was spacious and well-equipped, providing the secluded environment needed for the sessions of papers. For the brainstorming sessions on follow-up projects, which we did in small groups at the end of the workshop, the college gardens provided a nice alternative. Lunch, drinks and dinners, all very well organized by Wolfson College Events Office, provided excellent opportunities for additional informal interaction, and people seem to have mixed well. The drinks at All Souls College, followed by dinner in Hall on the 23rd provided a suitable end to the conference.

Programme

The workshop was organized thematically, and consisted of four interdisciplinary sessions of papers of 20-25 minutes with 15-20 minutes of discussion after each paper and a 25-minute general discussion at the end of each session.

The conference started, in the afternoon of the 21st, with an introduction to the workshop and its theme, which formed a prelude to the first session of papers, which focused on the national traditions of investigating Roman craftsmen.

The morning session of the 22nd subsequently focused on current approaches to social and economic strategies of craftsmen and traders, while the afternoon session focused on the social world in which these people operated, especially, but not exclusively, on professional associations.

The morning of the 23rd was devoted to the position of particularly crafts in urban space, and focused on the issue of urban geographies. In the afternoon, there was a round-up discussion and a session in which we focused on possible future projects and collaborations (more on that below).

Scientific climate

The atmosphere during the workshop was very positive and constructive. Discussion following the papers generally was very open, and identified not only strengths and weaknesses of the argument presented, but also relations with other papers and with ongoing research by scholars not involved in the conference.

The organizers feel that the workshop was particularly successful because the participants were a mixture of emerging early career scholars, established mid-career specialists and senior academic leaders, while at the same time, many leading European schools of thought and research traditions were represented.

While the participants obviously did not agree on all issues discussed, the atmosphere encouraged them to express their personal views freely, and the ESF Exploratory Workshop proved an excellent opportunity to identify and discuss the scholarly background of emerging differences of opinion. Further, through papers and discussion it also proved possible to identify shared experiences and problems, and to discuss current and future priorities in research on Roman Craftsmen and traders.

As will be discussed in more detail below, all this ensured that the final session on results and future collaborations returned a set of clearly defined possible follow-up initiatives, which would be widely supported by the participants of the workshop.

2. Scientific content of the event

21 July, afternoon:

Miko Flohr (University of Oxford) opened the workshop by introducing the participants to the theme of the workshop, making a case for approaching the history of craftsmen and traders on a micro-level, and for more conceptual integration between ancient historians and archaeologists.

Jean-Pierre Brun (Centre Jean Bérard, Naples) gave an overview of archaeological investigations by French teams in southern central Italy, highlighting the enormous progress made in our understanding of the material remains of Roman workshops, particularly those related to production processes that used to be hardly identifiable, such as perfume-making. Andrew Wilson (University of Oxford) presented current and recent approaches to urban production in the Roman Empire from the Anglo-Saxon scholarly community, particularly focusing on questions of scale and organisation of individual workshops; spatial clustering or the lack of it; the status of craftsmen/workshop owners; the importance or otherwise of revenues from craft production to elite income streams; and finally, the aggregate significance of urban workshops in the economy of Roman cities.

Carla Salvaterra (University of Bologna) and Alessandro Christofori held a very thought-provoking paper on the study of occupations and crafts in Italy in the twentieth century, highlighting the relation between the political orientation of scholars in the modern world and their approach to the socioeconomic history of the Roman world.

22 July, morning:

Candace Rice (University of Oxford) used the evidence of shipwreck cargoes found in the western Mediterranean basin to discuss the strategies of traders involved in trade over longer distances, arguing in favour of such trade taking place on a rather large scale.

Cristel Freu (University of Rouen) used a wide range of evidence to look at the important role apprenticeship played in the world of Roman craftsmen, arguing it served as an economic strategy for those doing the work and meant cheap labour for the craftsmen.

Kai Ruffing (University of Marburg) used the Greek inscriptions and documentary papyri to tackle the issue of specialization, both within cities and between cities, highlighting the economic mechanisms behind specialization as an economic strategy.

Carol van Driel Murray (University of Amsterdam) used evidence for leatherwork to discuss the role of technology-transfer in tanning and shoemaking, arguing that the material remains of shoes from Egypt, the Netherlands and Vindolanda suggest empire-wide trends in shoe fashion, and, thus, strong economic integration.

Nicolas Monteix (University of Rouen) discussed his work at the bakeries of Pompeii, focusing specifically on the technology of the production process and the way in which bakers designed the production process.

22 July, afternoon

Lena Larsson Lovén (University of Gotenburg) gave a paper about the epigraphic and iconographic evidence for the role of women in crafts and trade, particularly in occupations related to textile and clothing.

Wim Broeckaert (University of Ghent) presented a new model for the role of freedmen as in Roman trade. Embracing the principles of New Institutional Economics, he argued that the specific legal status of freedmen, and the strong social ties with their former masters made them ideal agents in long-distance trade.

Nicolas Tran (University of Rennes) discussed a wide range of epigraphic and archaeological evidence focusing specifically on the social organisation of trade and craftsmanship in ancient Arles, and the role of patronage in professional networks.

Illias Arnaoutoglou (Academy, Athens) focused on the epigraphic attestations of professional associations in three cities in Roman Asia minor – Thyateira, Saittai and Hierapolis – comparing patterns of epigraphic commemoration between these sites.

23 July, morning

Penelope Goodman (University of Leeds) discussed the socioeconomic factors determining the clustering of certain workshop types in cities, starting from a modern example in Birmingham and then comparing this with Roman period sites.

Kerstin Dross-Krüpe (University of Marburg) focused on the topography of textile crafts, starting from the documentary material from Egypt and comparing this with archaeology.

Jeroen Poblome (University of Leuven) gave a paper on pottery production at Sagalassos (Turkey), discussing the social and economic factors that shaped its concentrated location in one quarter of the city.

Orsolya Lang (National Museum of Budapest) focused on the site of Aquincum (Budapest, Hungary), showing how excavations have been able to reveal rather precisely the economic geography of the city and the central role played in it by crafts and trade.

3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

The general impression among participants and organizers was that the workshop was highly successful and should be a starting point for more intensified collaboration throughout Europe and beyond. This was both formally indicated in the closing sessions, but also informally discussed by many throughout the conference.

Research objectives

Specifically, the ESF workshop identified the shared desire among participants for:

- a). Scholarly debate on a more methodological level concerning the use of archaeological and textual evidence for making sense of the world of Roman craftsmen and traders.
- b). Interdisciplinary approaches drawing links between different sets of evidence for crafts and trade and different historical contexts within the Roman world.
- c). Comparative approaches comparing strategies and situations in the Roman world with the Greek world, the medieval period, and other preindustrial civilisations including, most prominently, Han China.
- d). Approaches that link current scholarship on Roman craftsmen and traders more strongly with mainstream approaches to the socioeconomic history of the Roman world.

The participants agreed that collaborative networking efforts, especially on an international, Europe-wide level, and large-scale multidisciplinary research projects (involving research groups from universities throughout the continent) would be essential in realizing these objectives.

Follow-up initiatives

Participants agreed that publishing proceedings of the workshop would be a useful first step in achieving our objectives, and a deadline for submission has been set for November 1st, 2011, allowing for the final publication to appear, tentatively, in 2013. Proceedings are being prepared with OUP's series *Oxford Studies on the Roman Economy* in mind.

Further strategies to achieve the abovementioned research objectives emerged and were elaborately discussed, both formally and informally, at the workshop. These include:

1. One or more follow-up workshops or conferences aimed at broadening the scope of the collaboration – both within and beyond our field. These would include the Greek, medieval and early-modern period specialists as well.
2. A formalized network facilitating communication and collaborative efforts including scholars not only from ESF member states, but also from elsewhere in the world, such as the U.S.A. Such a network could play an essential role in securing funding, not only on an international level, but within countries as well.
3. A handbook on craftsmen and traders in the Roman world. This was discussed at some length, and while some participants felt that the current interest among publishers for

such handbooks created ideal circumstances for such a project, others thought more time for discussion among specialist would be necessary.

4. Data-sharing and compatibility: an issue that was very briefly discussed but could potentially be of key relevance, as the field is moving increasingly towards working with larger datasets. Shared data-hosting or compatible ways of data-storage allowing for cross-database searches could be one of the crucial benefits of collaboration.

In the forthcoming months, these plans will be discussed and further fleshed out among organizers and participants, identifying specific funding opportunities, both on the national and international level. We will closely follow developments at ESF, as a Research Networking Programme would be one of the most logical next steps. The general feeling of consensus on the need to pursue these plans at the workshop suggests that eventual follow-up projects will be supported by a significant group of scholars, which will greatly enhance the chances that they will result in successful applications.

4. Final programme

Thursday, 21 July 2011

Early afternoon *Arrival*

- 15:00-15:05 Welcome by Convenors
Miko Flohr (University of Oxford, UK) and Andrew Wilson (University of Oxford, UK)
- 15:05-15:20 Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)
Kristin Kuutma (ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH))
- 15:20-15:50 Personal introduction of the participants
- 15:50-16:30 Presentation "Beyond marginality: introducing the workshop and its theme"
Miko Flohr (University of Oxford, UK)
- 16.30-17.00 *Coffee / Tea Break*
- 17:00 – 19:00 Late afternoon Session: Bridging Boundaries, Merging Traditions
- 17.00-17.40 Presentation 1 "Archaeology of ancient urban workshops: the French research programme in Southern Italy"
Jean-Pierre Brun (Centre Jean Bérard, Naples, Italy [France])
- 17.40-18.20 Presentation 2 "Urban production and the Anglo-Saxon historiographical tradition"
Andrew Wilson (University of Oxford, UK)
- 18:20-19:00 Presentation 3 "La ricerca italiana del XX secolo sugli artigiani, i commercianti e le loro organizzazioni professionali nel mondo romano"
Alessandro Christofori (Università di Calabria, Reggio di Calabria, Italy) and Carla Salvaterra (Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy)
- 19.00 -20.00 *Drinks*
- 20.00 *Dinner*

Friday, 22 July 2011

- 9.00 – 13.15 Morning Session: Economic Strategies of Craftsmen and Traders
- 9.00 – 9.40 Presentation 1 "Directed Trade in the Roman Mediterranean: The Evidence of Shipwreck Cargoes"
Candace Rice (University of Oxford, Oxford, UK)
- 9.40 – 10.20 Presentation 2 "Disciplina, patrociniun, nomen: les gains tirés de l'apprentissage dans le monde romain"
Christel Freu (Université de Rouen, Rouen, France)
- 10.20 – 11.00 Presentation 3 "Driving forces for specialization: market, location factors, increase of productivity"
Kai Ruffing (Phillips-Universität, Marburg, Germany)
- 11.00-11.30 *Coffee / tea break*
- 11.30-12.10 Presentation 4 "Technological innovation and fashionable footwear: the leather trades in the NW provinces of the Roman Empire"
Carol Van Driel-Murray (University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands)
- 12.10-12.50 Presentation 5 "Spatializing the operational sequence: the Pompeian bakeries as a case-study"
Nicolas Monteix (Université de Ruen, Rouen, France)
- 12.50-13.15 Discussion

- 13.15-14.30 *Lunch*
- 14.30-18.15 Afternoon Session: Craftsmen, traders and their social environment
- 14:30-15.10 Presentation 1 “Urban Roman Women as Traders and Producers”
Lena Larsson-Loven (University of Gotenburg, Gotenburg, Sweden)
- 15.10-15.50 Presentation 2 “The demise of status: Dependent and independent freedmen in Roman Trade”
Wim Broeckaert (Philipps-Universität, Marburg, Germany)
- 15.50-16.20 *Coffee / tea break*
- 16.20-17.00 Presentation 3 “The social organisation of trade and craftsmanship in ancient Arles: heterogeneity, hierarchy and patronage”
Nicolas Tran (Université de Rennes, Rennes, France)
- 17.00-17.40 Presentation 4 “Hierapolis, Sittai, Thyateira and their craftsmen associations: A comparative analysis”
Ilias N. Arnaoutoglou (Academy of Athens, Athens, Greece)
- 17.40-18.15 Discussion
- 20.00 *Dinner*

Saturday, 23 July 2011

- 09.40-13.15 Morning Session: Crafts, trade and urban space
- 09.40-10.20 Presentation 1 “Working together: clusters of artisans in the Roman City”
Penelope Goodman (University of Leeds, Leeds, UK)
- 10.20-11.00 Presentation 2 “Artisanal archaeology at Ancient Sagalassos: Managing Potential in the past and present”
Jeroen Poblome (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Leuven, Belgium)
- 11.00-11.30 *Coffee / tea break*
- 11.30-12.10 Presentation 3 “About the topography of Roman Textile Crafts”
Kerstin Dross-Kruepe (Philipps-Universität, Marburg, Germany)
- 12.10-12.50 Presentation 5 “Smell and urban topography: industry and commerce in the Aquincum Civil Town”
Orsolya Láng (Aquincumi Múzeuma, Budapest, Hungary)
- 12.50-13.15 Discussion
- 13.15-14.30 *Lunch*
- 14.30-17.00 Afternoon Session: Discussion and future collaborations
- 14.30-14.50 Conference response
Andrew Wilson (University of Oxford, Oxford, UK)
- 14.50-15.30 General Discussion
- 15.30-16.00 *Coffee / tea break*
- 16.00-17.30 Closing Session: where to go from here? Possible future collaborations, activities and networking
- 17.30 *End of Workshop*
- 20.00 *Dinner at All Souls College*

5. Final list of participants

Convenor:

1. **Miko FLOHR**
Faculty of Classics
University of Oxford
New Barnett House
28 Little Clarendon Street
Oxford OX1 2HU
United Kingdom
miko.flohr@classics.ox.ac.uk

Co-Convenor:

2. **Andrew WILSON**
Institute of Archaeology
University of Oxford
36 Beaumont Street
Oxford OX1 2PG
United Kingdom
andrew.wilson@arch.ox.ac.uk

ESF Representative:

3. **Kristin KUUTMA**
Institute of Cultural Research and Fine Arts
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Tartu
Ülikooli 16-208
51014 Tartu
Estonia
kristin.kuutma@ut.ee

Participants:

4. **Ilias ARNAOUTOGLOU**
Academy of Athens
14, Anagnostopoulou str.
10673 Athens
Greece
iliasarn@Academyofathens.gr
5. **Wim BROECKAERT**
Department of Ancient History
Ghent University
Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 35
9000 Gent
Belgium
Wim.Broekaert@UGent.be
6. **Jean-Pierre BRUN**
Centre Jean Bérard
CNRS
Via Crispi, 86
80121 Napoli
Italy
berard@unina.it
7. **Alessandro CRISTOFORI**
Dipartimento di Storia
Università della Calabria
Via P. Bucci, cubo 28/D
87036 Arcavacata di Rende (CS)
Italy
alessandro.cristofori@unical.it
8. **Kerstin DROSS-KRÜPE**
Alte Geschichte
Geschichte und Kulturwissenschaften
Philipps-Universität
Wilhelm-Röpke-Strasse 6C
35032 Marburg
Germany
dross@staff.uni-marburg.de
9. **Christel FREU**
Université de Rouen
10, place des Martyrs
92110 Clichy
France
freu@quatramaran.ens.fr
10. **Penelope GOODMAN**
University of Leeds
Department of Classics
Leeds LS2 9JT
United Kingdom
P.J.Goodman@leeds.ac.uk
11. **Orsolya LANG**
Aquincumi Múzeuma
Záhoni u. 4
1031 Budapest
Hungary
lang.orsolya@mail.iif.hu
12. **Lena LARSSON LOVÉN**
Department of Historical Studies
University of Gothenburg
Box 200
405 30 Gothenburg
Sweden
lena.larsson@class.gu.se
13. **Nicolas MONTEIX**
Département d'Histoire
Université de Rouen
76000 Rouen
France
nicolas.monteix@gmail.com

14. **Jeroen POBLOME**
 Department of Archaeology
 Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
 Blijde Inkomststraat 21/3314
 3000 Leuven
 Belgium
 jeroen.poblome@arts.kuleuven.be
15. **Candace RICE**
 Exeter College
 Turl Street
 Oxford OX1 3DP
 United Kingdom
 candace.rice@arch.ox.ac.uk
16. **Kai RUFFING**
 Seminar für Alte Geschichte
 Philipps-Universität Marburg
 Wilhelm-Röpke-Str. 6C
 35032 Marburg
 Germany
 ruffing@staff.uni-marburg.de
17. **Carla SALVATERRA**
 Dipartimento di Storia Antica
 Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia
 via Zamboni, 25
 40126 Bologna
 Italy
 carla.salvaterra@unibo.it
18. **Nicolas TRAN**
 Campus Villejean
 Université Rennes 2
 ANHIMA (UMR 8210 du CNRS)
 Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art
 2 Rue Vivienne
 75002 Paris
 nicolas.tran@uhb.fr
19. **Carol VAN DRIEL - MURRAY**
 Amsterdam Archaeological Centre
 Turfdragsterpad 9
 1012 XT Amsterdam
 Netherlands
 C.vanDriel-Murray@uva.nl

6. Statistical information on participants

Due to two withdrawals, the workshop had 19 participants, excluding the ESF representative. Statistically they can be divided as follows:

<i>M/F repartition:</i>	Women:	8	Men:	11
<i>Countries of origin:</i>	United Kingdom:	5	France:	4
	Germany:	2	Italy:	2
	Belgium:	2	Sweden:	1
	The Netherlands:	1	Hungary:	1
	Greece:	1		
<i>Age Bracket:</i>	Senior academic leaders:	7		
	Mid-career specialists:	5		
	Early career scholars:	6		
<i>Specialism:</i>	Archaeologists:	9		
	(Classical / Mediterranean)	6		
	(Roman Provincial)	3		
	Ancient Historians:	10		
	(Epigraphists)	5		
	(Papyrologists)	4		
(Other)	1			