



## Session Proposals Limes Congress 2021

### 1

#### Roman imperialism and early frontier formation. The creation/reshuffling of tribal (id)entities

**Nico Roymans, Manuel Fernández-Götz & Erik Graafstal**

*Affiliation:* Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands

*Affiliation of co-organiser:* University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

*Affiliation second co-organiser:* city of Utrecht, the Netherlands

**Session Abstract:** In the past decade Roman archaeology has experienced a growing interest in the study of Rome's military expansion in the tribal frontiers of West- and Central Europe. Examples are the recent *hausse* in the research of Caesar's Gallic Wars and of the Augustan campaigns in Northern Spain and Germania. The result is a rapidly growing archaeological dataset which can be used to contextualize and re-assess the historical sources. We also observe a growing interest in the often extremely violent and predatory nature of Roman expansion in the tribal frontiers and in its short-term effects on the indigenous populations. This latter theme touches on the central aim of this session. We want to focus attention on the social and ethnic dynamics in the tribal frontiers during and directly after the conquest period. Historical sources point to a profound rearrangement of tribal maps and an intense restructuring of local power networks. Among the instruments used by imperial agents are large-scale land expropriation, forced deportation of groups, mass enslavement, genocide, land allocations to pro-Roman groups, and profound interference in intra- and intertribal power relations. The short-term effects of conquest were often highly disruptive, but at the same time the controlled settlement of 'friendly' groups and the newly created clientship ties with pro-Roman leaders led to the formation of new tribal (id)entities which often formed the basis towards a formal administrative integration. Potential subjects for this session are:

- Short-term demographic effects of the Roman conquest.
- Studies of group migration in Roman frontiers, thereby using material culture and/or isotopic data.
- Comparative analysis of historical and archaeological data on group migration in tribal frontiers.
- Imperial agency and the genesis of new tribal polities and identity groups in the early post-conquest period.