



Session Proposals Limes Congress 2021

20

Basilicas and churches in military outposts

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Session Abstract: In the absence of ancient texts describing the details of the process of Christianisation in the frontier regions of the Roman Empire, it is often very difficult to understand some of the archaeological finds in that matter. Among them, we can mention the Christian basilicas and other churches built in direct links with medium to small military outposts. This session will analyse, both in archaeological and historical points of view, the Christian buildings of worship found near or inside the documented forts located on the edges of the Empire. The focus will thus be on peripheral military site.

The goal is to document the topographical evolution of the spiritual life of the Roman garrisons between the fourth and the seventh century, by trying to identify the characteristics of what can call a “border Christianity”, together with the changes of the military space possibly caused by its development. The study of religious architecture in these sites is, without a doubt, the most concrete means of achieving these objectives, because data such as a more-or-less marked monumentality, the position with regard to the fort, the chronology of construction or the type of materials used can offer many factors for a deep reflection on the issue, as well as helping to understand the extent and identity of border communities linked to the military context.