

CALL FOR PAPERS
Roman Archaeology Conference, Split 16-17-18 April

Deadline: November 15

HYBRID ECONOMIC PRACTICES IN THE ROMAN WORLD

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One of the paradoxes of globalization is that the development or assimilation of foreign practices, objects or concepts reinforces self-identity at a local level. The concepts of ‘glocalization’, that is, the simultaneous occurrence of both globalizing and particularizing tendencies, and of cultural hybridity, have both helped to adjust our perception of cross-cultural contact in the ancient Mediterranean. Despite these recent challenges to the acculturation paradigm and the acknowledgement of colonial entanglement and negotiation, the prevailing historical vision tends towards a structural reductionism when it comes to economic practices, in which the catalyst for change lies exclusively in the macrostructures of economic power and the mechanistic articulation of modes of production (Pitts and Versluys 2015), with colonisation providing something of a *tabula rasa* for previous economic practices.

This session aims to move beyond dichotomous analytical constraints and reconceptualise the complex interweaving of different cultural and economic phenomena as coeval or contemporary, by incorporating the postcolonial notion of hybridity in the study of economic systems. Zein-Elabdin’s (2009) examination of economic patterns in modern Africa has been of particular inspiration. In her study, she argued against what she called a ‘double erasure of culture’: the conflation of modernity with development (modern/developed, traditional/underdeveloped) and an insistence on the possibility of understanding economic systems outside their cultural context. Building on this basis, we invite papers that try to interrogate not so much how certain forms, patterns or practices persisted beyond the baseline of the Roman invasion, but rather, how disparate economic and cultural phenomena intersect in the Roman world.

- Pitts, M. and M.J. Versluys, 2015: Globalisation and the Roman World: perspectives and opportunities, in M. Pitts and M.J. Versluys (eds), *Globalisation and the Roman World: world history, connectivity and material culture*, 3-31, Cambridge.
- Zein-Elabdin, E., 2009: Economics, postcolonial theory, and the problem of culture: institutional analysis and hybridity, *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 33 (6), 1153-67.