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Outsiders in Town: Mobility, Inequality, Integration, and Exclusion in the Roman West

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Recommended Citation

Liu, Jinyu, "Outsiders in Town: Mobility, Inequality, Integration, and Exclusion in the Roman West" presentation for the Spring 2022 Langford Conference, "Socio-Economic Inequalities of the Roman World" <https://classics.fsu.edu/spring-2022-langford-conference?fbclid=IwAR3jj6LLW00k4pRx4CVNqhDaLVcg07IHkL-V1hS8Y4b4Y4ruQwO9krnTIIO>

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The Spring 2022 Langford Conference

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES OF THE ROMAN WORLD

KIMBERLY BOWES
University of Pennsylvania

JESSICA CLARK
Florida State University

STEVEN J.R. ELLIS
University of Cincinnati

JINYU LIU
DePauw University

ELIZABETH A. MURPHY
Florida State University

REBECCA REDFERN
Museum of London

WALTER SCHEIDEL
Stanford University

JAMES SICKINGER
Florida State University

ROBERT STEPHAN
University of Arizona

ANDREW WILSON
Oxford University

GREG WOOLF
University of California Los Angeles

FEBRUARY 25-26

THE CONFERENCE WILL FOLLOW A HYBRID FORMAT.
SPACE IN THE CONFERENCE VENUE IS LIMITED, AND
PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

CONTACT DR. ELIZABETH MURPHY
(EAMURPHY@FSU.EDU) TO REGISTER IN-PERSON
OR REQUEST THE ZOOM LINK.

Generously supported by the Langford Endowment

The Spring 2022 Langford Conference

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES OF THE ROMAN WORLD

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25
TURNBULL CONFERENCE CENTER, ROOM 108

WELCOME

Hotel Pickup DOUBLETREE BY HILTON	8:00
Breakfast IN VENUE	8:15
Welcome Remarks and Conference Introduction ELIZABETH A. MURPHY (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY), ROBERT STEPHAN (UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA), AND CHRISTOPHER NAPPA (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY)	8:40

MORNING SESSION

CHAIR: ANDREA DE GIORGI

Roman Economic Performance and Inequality: In Defense of the Big Picture WALTER SCHEIDEL (STANFORD UNIVERSITY)	9:00
Inequalities in the Roman World: A Bioarchaeological Perspective REBECCA REDFERN (MUSEUM OF LONDON AND NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY)	9:50
Coffee Break IN VENUE	10:40
Roman Inequality and the Archaeological Record ANDREW WILSON (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)	11:00
Roman Peasants and the Metrics for Inequality KIMBERLY BOWES (UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA)	11:50
Lunch Break IN VENUE	12:40

AFTERNOON SESSION

CHAIR: DANIEL PULLEN

Urban Excavations and the Study of Inequality: Pros and Cons from Two Case Studies at Pompeii and Tharros STEVEN J.R. ELLIS (UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI)	1:40
Ground-Truthing the Ideal of Equity in Roman Colonial Foundations ELIZABETH A. MURPHY (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY) AND JESSICA H. CLARK (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY)	2:30
Coffee Break IN VENUE	3:20
House Size Distributions and Inequality in the Roman World: Problems & Potential ROBERT STEPHAN (UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA)	3:40
Faculty and Speaker Reception THOMPSON LIBRARY AND LANDING, DODD HALL	4:30
Hotel Pickup DOUBLE TREE BY HILTON	6:25
Dinner (Two Groups) IL LUSSO (6:30 PM) AND SAGE (7:00 PM)	6:30 / 7:00

The Spring 2022 Langford Conference

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES OF THE ROMAN WORLD

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26
TURNBULL CONFERENCE CENTER, ROOM 108

WELCOME

Hotel Pickup DOUBLETREE BY HILTON	8:00
Breakfast IN VENUE	8:15

MORNING SESSION

CHAIR: JOHN MARINCOLA

<i>The Politics of Inequality in the Roman Empire</i> GREG WOOLF (UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES)	9:00
<i>Outsiders in Town: Mobility, Inequality, Integration, and Exclusion in the Roman West</i> JINYU LIU (DEPAUW UNIVERSITY)	9:50
Coffee Break IN VENUE	10:40
<i>Economic Inequality and the Polis: A View from Classical Greece</i> JAMES SICKINGER (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY)	11:00
<i>Discussion and Reflections</i> ALL PARTICIPANTS	11:50

AFTERNOON EVENTS

Lunch ANDREWS RESTAURANT	12:45
Hotel Pickup for Excursion to Wakulla Springs DOUBLETREE BY HILTON	2:30
Hotel Pickup for Dinner DOUBLETREE BY HILTON	6:45
Dinner TABLE 23 RESTAURANT	7:00



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The Spring 2022 Langford Conference

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES OF THE ROMAN WORLD

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25
TURNBULL CONFERENCE CENTER, ROOM 108

MORNING SESSION

CHAIR: ANDREA DE GIORGI

Roman Economic Performance and Inequality: In Defense of the Big Picture

WALTER SCHEIDEL (STANFORD UNIVERSITY)

9:00-9:50

Macro-models make a significant contribution to our understanding of economic performance and economic inequality in the Roman empire. Comparative framing is essential for guiding our thinking on these matters by imposing some discipline on our conjectures. The application of Bayesian modeling allows us to improve on earlier estimates of Roman imperial GDP. The scope for estimating Roman income inequality is shown to be strongly constrained by GDP estimates and historical comparanda.

Inequalities in the Roman World: A Bioarchaeological Perspective

REBECCA REDFERN (MUSEUM OF LONDON AND NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY)

9:50-10:40

Bioarchaeology, the study of human remains in their socio-cultural setting, provides a unique perspective on the Roman world. It offers us the opportunity to understand the lives of people not recorded in inscriptions or other primary sources, and importantly, bioarchaeological data are independent- if someone experienced food insecurity during childhood, that is captured in their dental tissues. The lived-experience of the Roman world is embodied into the skeletonised remains, and analyses of the genomics, isotopes and palaeopathology present in these human remains provides unrivalled datasets with which to explore how the multitude of inequalities (e.g. racism, gender etc...) impacted its people. Using a number of case-studies from across the Roman world, this talk will show the range of insights that bioarchaeological data can provide, including into the capture and enslavement of conquered peoples, violence against women and children, and how socio-economic inequalities can be 'seen' in human remains.

Roman Inequality and the Archaeological Record

ANDREW WILSON (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

11:00-11:50

Roman Peasants and the Metrics for Inequality

KIMBERLY BOWES (UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA)

11:50-12:40

This paper presents some new data on Italian Roman peasants and the challenges their archaeology presents for any quantitative study of inequality - either inequality between peasants and rural elites, or between peasants themselves. This data suggests that many of the material indices used as proxies - for wealth, income, production or consumption - point to other variables entirely, and reveal instead a set of enduring assumptions about rural non-elites - where and how they lived, consumed, and the nature of their production. The same data points to other variables - time and volatility, specialization and mobility - which might be more useful. As a whole, however, the data force us to ask hard questions about why we are interested in inequality as an economic problem, and point to other questions in which the lives of the rural poor might be more central.

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25
TURNBULL CONFERENCE CENTER, ROOM 108

AFTERNOON SESSION

CHAIR: DANIEL PULLEN

Urban Excavations and the Study of Inequality:

1:40-2:30

Pros and Cons from Two Case Studies at Pompeii and Tharros

STEVEN J.R. ELLIS (UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI)

With a focus on two case studies - the University of Cincinnati's excavations at Pompeii and Tharros - the aim of this presentation is to evaluate the extent to which inequality might be measured both across and between these two cities. Whether through the recovery of artifacts or by the piecing together of the structural remains of neighboring properties as they developed over time, there's much that can be learned about urban inequality at something of a micro - or at least neighborly - level.

Thus the presentation will detail some of the social and economic differences between one neighbor and the next at each site, as well as consider something of the inequality that is evident between the sub-elite neighborhoods of the two cities themselves. But rather than showcase just the good that these large datasets can contribute to the topic, another aim is instead (or also) to demonstrate some of the often overlooked shortcomings of urban excavations and their methods in these studies.

Inequalities Ground-Truthing the Ideal of Equity in Roman Colonial Foundations

2:30-3:20

ELIZABETH A. MURPHY (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY) AND JESSICA H. CLARK (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY)

In a society only minimally concerned with directly regulating economic inequality, Roman centuriation was, in effect, an administrative process that imposed artificial structures of equality in terms of a good (land) in artificial colonial settlements. Despite investment in the establishment of these military colonies, they are frequently described by ancient historians as "failing" - often soon requiring new infusions of settlers a generation or so after founding. These failings were explained in moral terms: via the character of soldierly culture, or the composition of military communities. However, a closer investigation of the textual and archaeological records about these communities indicates environmental and social circumstances that ineluctably undermined the seeming equitability of these land distributions and drove disparity in land holding. To better appreciate these socio-economic dynamics in the Roman case, this paper then takes a comparative view to consider programs of land allotment in other historical colonial contexts, as well as ethnographically documented traditions of inter-generational landholding practices in the rural Mediterranean.

House Size Distributions and Inequality in the Roman World: Problems and Potential

3:40-4:00

ROBERT STEPHAN (UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA)

This study explores the pitfalls and potential of employing house size data as a metric for socioeconomic inequality in the Roman world. By focusing on three case studies - Britain, Italy, and North Africa - this project aims to understand diachronic trends in various regions of the empire, highlighting the way pre-Roman developmental trajectories governed the impact of Roman rule on inequality. Results of this study underscore the methodological difficulties of this approach. Definitions of what constitutes a house, disparities in excavation and publication, and changes in house layout all provide obstacles to developing a coherent and commensurate data set. Nonetheless, this paper argues that housing data can still provide useful, if imperfect, information about Rome's impact on the distribution of wealth across a range of socioeconomic spectra.

The Spring 2022 Langford Conference

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES OF THE ROMAN WORLD

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26
TURNBULL CONFERENCE CENTER, ROOM 108

MORNING SESSION

CHAIR: JOHN MARINCOLA

The Politics of Inequality in the Roman Empire

GREG WOOLF (UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES)

9:00-9:50

Empires are by definition extractive systems that give rise to economic inequality, but they vary in the way wealth is distributed within them. This paper compares the Roman empire in this respect with the situation in some other early empires. It asks how far peculiar political features of the Roman case, such as the survival of Republican social structures and the dependence on quasi-autonomous city-states, explain specifically the Roman patterns of inequality. Particular attention will be given to intergenerational accumulation and dispersal among the propertied classes, the impact of imperial and local fiscal systems, and long term dynamics of change in the first seven centuries CE.

Outsiders in Town: Mobility, Inequality, Integration, and Exclusion in the Roman West

JINYU LIU (DEPAUW UNIVERSITY)

9:50-10:40

Scholarship on the scale, motivations and impact of local, regional, and long-distance mobility in the Roman World has increased significantly in the past decade. There has been a general tendency in the existing scholarship to lean towards a positive assessment of the interaction between the non-locals and the locals. This paper, however, wishes to zoom in on the issue of exclusion at the local level to contribute to the larger topic of mobility and inequality in the Roman World. The paper proposes to cover the following interconnected questions: What are the methodological challenges of studying exclusion? What kind of resistance might an immigrant or a resident alien encounter in his/her new place of residence? How might the immigrants/resident aliens' experiences have been unequalized by diverse factors including ethnicity, gender, economic and social status, and so on? To what extent were the various forms of integration in fact triggered by or responding to mechanisms of exclusion?

Economic Inequality and the Polis: A View from Classical Greece

JAMES SICKINGER (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY)

11:00-11:50

This paper departs briefly from the Roman empire to examine some aspects of economic inequality in the city-states of classical Greece. Scholarship generally holds that the Greek poleis achieved a level of prosperity and degree of political, social, and economic equality during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. higher than other ancient societies; that state of affairs changed only with the conquests of Alexander III ("the Great") of Macedon and the ensuing emergence of the Hellenistic kingdoms, when mainland Greece in particular experienced an economic decline that continued throughout Hellenistic and Roman times. This view has much to commend it, but it also risks downplaying the challenges inherent in evaluating income inequality, patterns of landholding, and other criteria for assessing public and private wealth within individual poleis, while neglecting stark differences in the social, political, and economic makeups of individual city-states. This paper will suggest that vast differences in wealth, even if less marked than elsewhere in the ancient Mediterranean, remained a persistent feature both within and across Greek poleis throughout the classical period.