

Sapienza, Università di Roma – British School at Rome – Università degli Studi di Verona

CONVEGNO

FORUM

Strutture, funzioni e sviluppo degli impianti forensi in Italia (IV sec. a.C.-I sec. d.C.)

FORUM

The design, function and development of forum spaces in Italy (4th century BC to 1st century AD)

9 – 10 DICEMBRE 2013

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Discovery and analysis of three fora in Northern Picenum by way of non-invasive survey

In Picenum Roman urbanism and the development of urban fora, as places of contact and acculturation and as town areas of crucial economic vitality, communal activities and political and religious display, has appeared quite late. The Roman intentions regarding the construction of representative central squares with a multifunctional perspective are however clearly recognizable from the late Republic onwards. Based on evidence from more than 10 years of intensive surveys, coordinated by the author in the valley of the river Potenza, new light can be shed on the topography and evolution of three Roman fora, situated in the coastal colony of Potentia and the inland municipia of Trea and Septempeda. The colonial forum, planned in 184 BC, as part of the foundation of a maritime Adriatic town for Roman citizens, is a fine example of regular insertion in the gridded town plan and of the application of certain Vitruvian standards often observed in new cities. The fora of the two inland municipia have a more complicated topography and planning, connected with the insertion of these public centres into existing roadside settlements. They display the adaptation of Italic population centres to the new standards of the Roman way of life. Especially the very large forum of Trea is in its more developed phase a fine example of a well-planned tripartite forum which takes in almost 1/3 of the walled urban area, manifesting in this way the mark of Rome as well as certain aspirations of the local elites.

The presentation will focus on the new archaeological evidence and on innovative ways (remote sensing, geophysical survey, geo-archaeological coring...) to study Roman fora without involving large scale excavations and destructive interventions. It shows that there is a bright new future for forum studies, in particular applied to abandoned urban sites.

References:

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