

Invitation to a lecture and discussion with

Dr. Luke Lavan (University of Kent)

Urban history from spolia in East and West AD 250-700

Spolia produces both fascination and disgust for many Roman archaeologists. How did the building blocks of so many elegant classical structures come to be incorporated in late antique walls? Why did this happen? In this paper, I propose to address some of these questions from a purely archaeological point of view, contrasting different regions, where the spolia habit takes many different forms. What can the testimony of pieces of stone contained in walls tell us about these issues, especially when considered contextually? Are we dealing with one process and one set of cultural attitudes, or many? By considering well-dated examples from across late antiquity, the spolia habit turns out to be varied and complex, both in terms of its spoliation practices and in terms of construction using spolia. Something resembling a new urban history emerges for a few sites, purely from the record of reused building materials.

21 June 2023, 15:15 - 16:45 Uhr
online: <https://uni-graz.zoom.us/my/roomakrieger>

Contact

Dr. Anna-Katharina Rieger

anna.rieger@uni-graz.at

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Photo: Luke Lavan, part of the Late Roman wall from Aphrodisias

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