Frontinus-Gesellschaft e.V.

Internationale Gesellschaft für die Geschichte
der Wasser-, Energie- und Rohrleitungstechnik

Cordial Invitation
to the Online Lecture (ZOOM) on 14.11.2024, 6:00 pm (CET)

Davide Gangale Risoleo, PhD (University of Calabria)

Reconstructing Rome's ancient water supply from materials and their context: the RHyD project (Roman Hydraulics Database) and the lead pipes.

(Lecture in English)

Davide Gangale Risoleo was awarded his PhD in Ancient Sciences and Archaeology by the University of Pisa in cotutelle with Universität Tübingen in 2022. He is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Calabria and serves as a scientific collaborator on the project entitled “FISTVLAE. Le marché du plomb. Ressources, organisation, acteurs”, funded by Agence nationale de la Recherche (ANR: n. ANR-22-CE27-0019) and directed by Professor Christian Rico of the University of Toulouse Jean Jaurés. His research has primarily focused on the topography and urban planning of Roman towns in in northern Italy, with a particular emphasis on the role of hydraulic infrastructures. His research has recently been extended to encompass the same subject matter in ancient Rome.

Davide Gangale Risoleo about his lecture:

Lead pipes represent a kaleidoscope of interrelated information that varies according to the perspective from which they are observed. These perspectives include social and historical dynamics (epigraphy), technological processes and trade dynamics (geochemistry), and water supply and urban planning (archaeology). From the outset of the archaeology of Rome at the end of the 19th century CE, the scientific potential of these remains was recognised. Despite the long tradition of studies, however, there remain significant methodological issues in data collection. Indeed, over time, there has been no significant advancement beyond the epigraphic and, in particular, prosopographical approach initially employed by the pioneering scholars in this field. This has resulted in the omission of crucial information, including topography, metrology and technology. In essence, lead pipes have consistently been documented based on their inscriptions, without sufficient consideration of the contexts in which they were discovered, the intended function of the pipes, and the technology employed in their manufacturing. This is due to a rather mundane reason: frequently, these objects have not been studied in person, but only by analysing Heinrich Dressel's work (CIL XV), which was published at the end of the 19th century CE. As a result, the topography of the finds is frequently generic, the description of the pipelines is notably concise, and it is not possible to ascertain their waterflow.

Furthermore, the interpretation of the function of the site of origin is frequently arbitrary, based on the fundamental premise that an inscription in the genitive necessarily indicates the owners of a dwelling.

RHyD project collate the aforementioned observations with the objective of substantiating the necessity for a systematic integration of the informative stratigraphy that characterises these materials, without any features being overlooked and through a comprehensive archival and historical-archaeological information gathering process that ensures the formulation of more reliable topographical and urban interpretations.

The access data for the online meeting (ZOOM) are as follows:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87933930044?pwd=dlk4REZ4S0NnL3k2RGN2TVdtZTd3Zz09

Meeting-ID: 879 3393 0044, Kenncode: 631844

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans Mehlhorn
President of the Frontinus Society

Dipl.Ing. Gilbert Wiplinger
Head of the Scientific Board of the
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