Supplement 3
Christianity at the Frontiers

Some Case Studies
from the Roman and Late Antique Periods

Call for papers

There is an old myth, still recounted in some of the historiography on Late Antiquity, according to which the Roman army was directly or indirectly involved in the spread of Christianity, usually shortly after the conversion of Constantine. Proponents of that position generally rely on two points: 1) the testimony of the Church Fathers, who are constantly insisting on the receptivity of the soldiers to Christianity, at least from the time of Tertullian; 2) the fact that the Roman army promoted the spread of all kinds of oriental cults, which would also imply Christianity. By this logic, we should be able to observe a degree of Christianization in the provinces of the Empire which would be proportional to their level of militarization. The '*limes*' being theoretically the most militarized area in Late Antiquity, it should then be the most Christianized. Should we therefore see the military outposts as units of Christian propaganda around the Empire? Does the highly militarized '*limes*' constituted a 'weapon of mass conversion'? It is true that most of the episcopal sees of this part of the Roman world were founded in military camps. Compared to the importance of the militarization of these territories, the episcopal network was, however, very modest even up to the middle/end of the 6th century, so that the contribution of the army to the spread of Christianity does not seem as obvious is sometimes assumed.

In order to propose elements of answers to that research question, the Danubius project on Christianization of the Lower Danube (https://danubius.huma-num.fr) organized two successive workshops in the framework of international congresses of archaeology, first at the 24. International Limes Congress in 2018, second at the 26th EAA Annual Meeting in 2020. Papers from all archaeological and epigraphic aspects of Christianity on the border areas of the Roman Empire were welcome in these sessions. These contributions could focus as much on new discoveries, as on the re-evaluation of material already studied, within the period up to the 7th centuries AD. Among the themes for which discussion was encouraged, we can mention (but not exclusively):

- churches and artefacts with Christian meanings on the frontier and its hinterland;
- episcopacy and its impact on the urban fabric;
- monasticism and its occupation of the landscape;
- Christian testimonies in the army;
- Christianity beyond the borders of the Empire, etc.

The collection of case studies which were presented in 2018 and 2020 gave rise to a whole series of new historical questions and unexpected results. Some of the main elements of the dossier will be published in a supplement to the Frontière·s journal.

The aim of this call for papers is to complete this dossier with some new cases studies, mainly for the regions that were not represented or less represented during the 2018 and 2020 workshops: Britain, Gaul, Germany, Caucasus, North-Eastern Anatolia, the Middle East and Egypt.

Issue coordination

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Timeline

- 31 December 2023: Abstract submission deadline
- **1st September 2024:** Deadline for submission of full papers
- **Spring 2025: Publication**

How to submit

To contribute to this supplement of the journal Frontières-s, authors should send a title and an abstract of no more than half a page in English or French by 31 December 2023 by e-mail only to frontiere-s@msh-lse.fr, stating their status and their affiliation. Successful proposals will be notified within one month of submission, and the final submission of full papers will take place before 1 September 2024, for publication in spring 2025. No extension of the deadline will be granted. Contributions will consist of a text in French or English of up to 25,000 characters (excluding spaces), accompanied by abstracts in French and English (between 800 and 1,200 characters, excluding spaces) and keywords in French and English. For further information: https://publications-prairial.fr/frontiere-s/index.php?id=122.