

**LIVING AND WORKING IN
THE ROMAN WORLD**
**ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF MICHAEL FULFORD
ON HIS 65th BIRTHDAY**

edited by

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with contributions by

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Michael Fulford's academic interests and this *Festschrift*

Michael's career has encompassed a wide range of research on the Roman world, chronologically, geographically, and in terms of the material studied. He has worked on sites spanning the Later Iron Age to the Medieval period, but obviously with a major focus on the Roman period. His main research area has been Roman Britain, and in particular the south of the province, with major excavations at Silchester² and Pevensey.³ The association with Silchester is particularly strong, as he has excavated on the site since 1974 with the current campaign in *Insula IX* set to run until 2015, not just in ground-breaking research but also in training of thousands of students and volunteers and promoting the site to tens of thousands of visitors (see chapt. 1).

He is also, however, familiar with the archaeology of many other parts of the Roman empire, in particular North Africa, where he analysed major pottery assemblages at Carthage and Sabratha.⁴ In Italy, with A. Wallace-Hadrill (see chapt. 5) he led a major research excavation at Pompeii, exploring the archaeology of two adjoining properties both in terms of standing and below-ground remains and adding significantly to our understanding of the site's chronology and early development.⁵

There has been a noticeable breadth in the types of sites studied. While Michael's main academic interest is urban archaeology, he has also worked on rural sanctuaries, the Saxon Shore Fort at Pevensey, and important villas including Lullingstone, Chedworth and Brading.⁶ Working with J. R. L. Allen, at Chesters villa in Woolaston (Glos.) he explored iron production at the site and in the surrounding region,⁷ while he has also been involved in a host of other landscape projects in southern Britain, notably on Salisbury Plain and in the Severn estuary wetlands.⁸

Michael is currently directing, with N. Holbrook from Cotswold Archaeology (see chapt. 2), a major new project on Romano-British rural settlement, exploiting commercial, developer-funded 'grey literature'. This valuable resource until now has been difficult to access and synthesise. The results of this project will significantly enhance our understanding of rural settlement in England and Wales.⁹

Michael has written about a wide range of themes in Romano-British studies: e.g., the Claudian invasion,¹⁰ the development of early client kingdoms,¹¹ and ritual practices such as structured deposition in pits and wells.¹² His other main area of research has been the analysis of Roman material culture, with much of his earlier work considering aspects of the Roman economy. His Ph.D. was on New Forest ware,¹³ and pottery has continued to be an important element of his research, for example when applying regression analysis,¹⁴ exploring the meaning of the distributions of black-burnished ware in Britain,¹⁵ reviewing Romano-British pottery studies,¹⁶ interpreting pierced

2 Fulford 1984a; id. 1989a; Fulford and Timby 2000; Fulford *et al.* 2006; Fulford and Clarke 2011.

3 Fulford and Rippon 2011.

4 E.g., Fulford and Hall 1989; Fulford and Peacock 1984; iid. 1994; Fulford and Tomber 1994.

5 Fulford and Wallace-Hadrill 1999.

6 Lowbury Hill, Berkshire: Fulford and Rippon 1994. Pevensey: Fulford and Rippon 2011. Lullingstone: Fulford 2003a. Brading: Tasker *et al.* 2011.

7 Fulford and Allen 1992.

8 Fulford *et al.* 1994; Fulford and Nichols 1992; Fulford *et al.* 2006.

9 Cf. Fulford and Holbrook 2011.

10 Frere and Fulford 2001.

11 Fulford 2008a.

12 E.g., Fulford 2001.

13 Fulford 1975a.

14 Fulford and Hodder 1974.

15 Allen and Fulford 1996a.

16 Fulford and Huddleston 1990.

vessels,¹⁷ and, most recently, through his leadership on the Samian potters' stamp project.¹⁸ He has also written widely on the Roman economy generally, exploring distribution patterns of a range of commodities to understand production and consumption across the empire.¹⁹

Another major research interest, in collaboration with J. R. L. Allen and influenced by his early training at Southampton under D. P. S. Peacock, has been the analysis of lithic materials. He produced a catalogue of stone sculpture from Bath and Wessex²⁰ and some of his papers have, for example, examined the sources of building stone from urban and military sites and their implications for transport and dating.²¹ Other publications have focused on the materials used for early Romano-British mosaics, and the industries that produced them.²² His interest in stone, pottery, trade, and particular Romano-British regions such as the Severn Estuary and the east coast, have been brought together in research on coastal archaeology.²³ In addition, he found time to consider other forms of material culture (e.g., analysing the composition and strength of Roman ferrous armour, or metal-detected finds of Iron Age and Roman date²⁴).

The leadership Michael has shown within professional archaeology has been noted above, and this has also led to a number of important publications, including the landmark review of *England's coastal heritage: a survey for English Heritage and the RCHME*,²⁵ and *Developing landscapes of lowland Britain: the archaeology of the British Gravels*.²⁶

* * *

The present volume, compiled in honour of Michael's 65th birthday, brings together papers by some of his many collaborators, friends and former Ph.D. students. The papers are grouped under three themes, mirroring Michael's key areas of interest: urban life, the study of Roman landscapes and the countryside, and the analysis of Roman artefacts and the economy.

Urban life in the Roman empire

The study of urban life in the Roman world has been the focus of much of Michael's research. This section begins with a summary of his work at Silchester. Through an almost unprecedented, long-term excavation programme by a single scholar at one site, Michael has greatly enhanced our understanding of this particular *civitas*-capital. A. Clarke *et al.* review the results of his various excavations at Silchester and explore how these mirror more general trends in Romano-British archaeology, such as a focus away from public buildings towards domestic sites, the application of new scientific techniques, and a diachronic and contextual analysis of the associated material culture.

The next paper provides a comparison with another important Romano-British town, Cirencester, for which, as with Silchester, there are many questions surrounding its later Roman character and whether that period should indeed be seen in terms of decline. N. Holbrook examines the evidence for new construction in the 3rd and 4th c. and what this reveals about the character of the Late Roman town, by comparing public and domestic structures. He also discusses the nature of the archaeological evidence for occupation beyond the 5th c.

17 Fulford and Timby 2001.

18 Hartley and Dickinson 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

19 Fulford 1982, 1989b, 2007a and 2009a.

20 Fulford and Cunliffe 1982.

21 Allen and Fulford 1999; Allen *et al.* 2001.

22 Fulford 2006a; Allen and Fulford 2004; see also Allen *et al.* 2007; Tasker *et al.* 2011; Wilkinson *et al.* 2008.

23 E.g., Fulford, Champion and Long 1997; Fulford 2007a and c.

24 Fulford *et al.* 2005; iid. 2004 and, e.g., Fulford *et al.* 1989; Creighton and Fulford 1998.

25 Fulford, Champion and Long 1997.

26 Fulford and Nichols 1992.

One of the reasons for the success of the work at Silchester is that it is a 'greenfield site', the absence of significant medieval and modern urban development allowing for detailed exploration. W. Bowden compares the results from Silchester and Wroxeter to his own recent work at Caistor-by-Norwich. While all three sites have gridded street plans and examples of public building types commonly associated with Roman towns, these sites developed in regions of *Britannia* that were geographically very distinct and that responded in very different ways to Roman rule. Bowden examines how different local and regional identities were expressed in the context of the 'Roman' urban form, and to what extent the features of the Roman urban form were co-opted in the expression of the new and changing identities that emerged in these very different regions of Roman Britain.

H. R. Hurst reflects on the impact of Michael Fulford's work at Silchester upon the development of the archaeology of Roman towns, and asks what specific contributions *insula* excavations can make. '*Insula*' is understood as a piece of a town surrounded by streets on four sides, but Hurst's paper considers more broadly large-scale, topography-based stratigraphic excavations on Roman urban sites. He contrasts the data to be gained from such projects with geophysical survey and various types of small excavations, using case-studies from Italy and beyond.

The final paper in this section, by A. Wallace-Hadrill, considers themes raised by others in this volume and, of course, by Michael Fulford's work, in particular the question of town planning and grid systems, from an Italian perspective. He reviews the evidence from a range of sites but focuses on two main case studies: Pompeii and *Falerii Novi*. Again, the question of dating looms large, especially for Pompeii, but Wallace-Hadrill also stresses the impact of topography, historical events, visual alignments with major points in the landscape, and rituals especially during the foundation stage.

Landscape archaeology and the Romano-British countryside

Towns and their buildings have to be understood in terms of their relationships to other sites and the wider landscape context, be that in Italy or Britain. The three papers in this section consider the Romano-British countryside from a variety of perspectives.

B. W. Cunliffe examines a particular building type, the aisled hall, in terms of its typology, chronology and social implications. He argues that aisled buildings relate to patron-client relationships and need to be understood within the context of the wider settlement they are found in. The origins of aisled halls may lie in urban basilicas and possibly Fishbourne palace, and their importance in rural Roman Britain may indicate the fusion of Roman traditions with the social requirements of the native élites.

N. Crummy adopts a holistic approach towards consumption, ritual and identity by contrasting attitudes to hares in town and country, and between Italy and Britain. While hares appear to have been venerated in Late Iron Age Britain and their consumption was taboo, in Roman Italy the animal was farmed in 'hare parks' (*leporaria*) for its meat. These two conflicting attitudes to the animal can be detected in the Romano-British diet, with hare bones generally absent from rural settlements but more regularly found in large towns and military establishments. Her paper uses written sources, iconography, zooarchaeological evidence and material culture to chart attitudes towards hares across settlement types, regions and cultural periods, from the Late Iron Age to the early 5th c.

S. Rippon examines regional variation in farming practices across parts of Roman Britain, and in particular the distinctive economy in coastal wetlands. The archaeological study of wetland and coastal landscapes has often been carried out in isolation from their wider socio-economic context. As a contribution to addressing that issue, this paper shows how the exploitation of marginal landscapes was an integral part of wider economic and social systems that embraced extensive areas of adjacent dry land. Rippon considers whether *pays* (districts with distinctive local character) can be

recognised in Roman Britain and discusses the evidence for animal husbandry, agriculture and salt production, particularly for the area thought to have been inhabited by the Trinovantes.

Artefacts, economy and society

Michael's artefact research has focused on the analysis of pottery and stone, and each of these categories is represented in the present volume by two papers. On occasion, he has also published on small finds and other categories of objects, such as stamped Neronian tiles and Roman armour.²⁷ Appropriately, therefore, the volume concludes with a paper on a Romano-British brooch type and its symbolic associations.

J. Timby offers a review of Early Roman pottery production in southern Britain, attempting to bridge the disciplinary divides that exist between period specialists, in this case between the later prehistoric and the Early Roman periods. Rather than viewing the large pottery industries active in the Early Roman period in southern Britain as Roman foundations, often inspired by military production, she argues that the origins of many such industries lie in the first half of the 1st c. A.D. and may owe their existence to immigrant potters.

Building on some of Michael's research on pottery assemblages and their implications for understanding the North African economy, D. J. Mattingly analyses the evidence of finds of Roman pottery from the Sahara and sub-Saharan zones in order to re-assess what their relative presence and absence reveals about the chronology, nature and organisation of Roman-era trans-Saharan trade. The analysis draws on a particular case-study, that of the Garamantes, the major kingdom of the central Saharan zone, who were major consumers of Roman fineware and amphorae, as well as a range of cooking wares and coarseware vessels and lamps. Contextual analyses highlight the use of imports in funerary display of status.

Michael has long championed the application of scientific techniques to archaeological questions. J. R. L. Allen discusses a range of techniques that can be applied to the analysis of stone objects. Sourcing techniques are applied to building stones in Norfolk and to mosaic tesserae originating from the Poole-Purbeck industrial complex, while other techniques offer opportunities for distinguishing stretches of walls built by multiple work-gangs. The paper discusses the social and economic implications of this material.

D. P. S. Peacock examines Romano-British power mills, driven by water, animals or humans. Millstones from such mills are larger than the domestic quernstones and indicate flour production on a much grander scale. Their use in Britain appears to be characteristic of the later Roman period and villa sites in particular.

In the final paper, exploring the social and cultural meaning of an unusual type of object, H. Eckardt examines a particular type of disc brooch, the enamelled shoe brooch. A new corpus of these relatively rare brooches offers insights into their typology, chronology and distribution. The paper also explores whether the brooches, and a host of other objects depicting feet, held particular symbolic meanings in the Roman period.

Conclusion

By any standard, Michael Fulford's academic career has been a most impressive one, with 31 authored, co-authored or edited books and more than 97 academic papers published to date, and many more in the pipeline. He also continues to work in many administrative roles, always with the goal of promoting archaeology generally and Roman archaeology in particular. Michael is also an inspiring teacher; he is remembered by colleagues and former students in the Department of Archaeology for the amount of detail conveyed in a lecture, and for inspiring fieldtrips to North Wales, Northumbria and Germany. Now freed from formal undergraduate teaching, Michael is

²⁷ E.g., Fulford *et al.* 2005.