

Elizabeth Clarke - Crooked Innkeepers, Bars and Brothels: travelling the road in ancient Italy

Take a journey along the roads of the Roman Empire. Using the evidence of archaeology in cities such as Pompeii, and of ancient writings, graffiti and tombstones, we shall look at speeds and methods of travel, places of rest, food and entertainment.

We are all familiar with the monuments celebrating the Roman Empire: the Colosseum, the Pantheon, dedicatory arches, temples and forums stretching across the Mediterranean world and beyond.

Yet the greatest, and longest, monument to Rome is its vast system of roads, developed as a statement of military, political and economic power, and still to be seen today. Take a journey along these roads, in part through the eyes of the 1st Century BC poet Horace, who travelled with emissaries of Emperor Augustus in the turbulent time after the death of Julius Caesar, a time of Mark Antony and Cleopatra and fast changing allegiances. Using the evidence of archaeology in cities such as Pompeii, and of ancient writings, graffiti and tombstones, we shall look at speeds of travel, methods of travel, places of rest, food and entertainment. We shall see indeed that a traveller's needs, and pleasures, have not changed.