

## „ROMIT“ – ROMAN ITINERARIES

### Design of a Cultural Route of the Roman Archaeological Sites Based on the “Tabula Peutingeriana”



### Focus Group Minutes

Survey conducted from 25th January – 4th February 2005

Moderation of Focus Groups:  
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## Agenda

Zeit	Thema
14:00-14:15	Welcome
14:15-14:25	Presentation of "ROMIT"
14:25-14:45	Self-presentation of Participants
14:45-15:30	Discussion
15:30-15:45	Coffee Break
15:45-16:30	Discussion
16:30-16:50	Conclusions
16:50-17:00	Evaluation

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## 1. Why have you come today?

At the beginning of the moderated discussion, the participants explained the reasons for their interest in the project ROMIT. They also expressed their expectations towards the focus group. Following aspects were mentioned:

### 1.1. New Possibilities of Co-operation

- A *cross national* cultural route is an interesting idea.
- It is eligible that smaller museums and associations *support each other*.

### 1.2. Enhancement of Name Recognition

- Smaller museums in economically underdeveloped regions could *enhance their name recognition* and *number of visitors* due to the project.
- Historian Roman groups expect from the project the enhancement of *contact persons* and *orders* in *Bavaria*.

### 1.3. New Possibilities of Knowledge Transfer / Teaching

- The possibilities of *learning on site* due to new archaeological routes and excursions are interesting.
- New possibilities of knowledge transfer and the conduction of exercises are created *both at the museum on site and virtual via archaeological websites*.

### 1.4. Conservation and Development of Cultural Assets

- The perspective of *reasonable conservation* of cultural assets, on the one hand, and development of *gentle tourism*, on the other hand, arouses interest.

### 1.5. Hope for Continuity of the Project

- There is hope for *persistent continuity* of the project in contrast to singular co-operations and advertising efforts of some archaeological sites.

### 1.6. Door Opener for Aid Money

- The promotion of *smaller museums and associations* is eligible.

## 2. What is the purpose of a Roman cultural route?

### 2.1. Enhancement of the Public Awareness for Archaeology

A cultural route could enhance the *public awareness* for archaeology. For this purpose, the topic "Romans" is very suitable. These are the reasons:

- The Romans left lots of *building fabric*. This fosters the satisfaction of archaeological needs.
- The communities are very *proactive* in the installation of Roman museums and the development of Roman sites.

- The knowledge transfer of Roman culture is managed more *authentic* by a cross national initiative than by singular measurements. This is because also the Romans thought and lived *global* and in *networks*.
- A networked cultural route offers numerous starting points for *comparative archaeology*.
- A cultural route offers numerous *possibilities of teaching*, such as for study trips in the field of adult education.

## 2.2. Platform for Information, Co-operation and Usage of Common Resources

The Roman cultural route could facilitate the development of a platform for *information and cooperation*. This would be the *first platform in Bavaria!* The platform could be used

- by the *archaeological sites among each other* (i.e. for calling attention on each other, for the exchange of material such as Roman maps, questionnaires, ideas for museum quizzes etc.)
- by *archaeological sites and educational institutions* (i.e. for the exchange of didactical material such as templates for handicrafts, Roman cooking recipes etc.) and for organization of teaching units in a Roman museum. (Annotation: Especially with the regard to the school reform G8, teachers might seek for the *museum as a new learning location*).
- by *archaeological sites and providers of Roman events* (such as historic Roman groups, Roman craftsmen, Roman gastronomy etc.)

The exchange of information and material could be based on database-driven search engines and/or on virtual discussion groups / newsgroups on the ROMIT website

## 3. What is the subject matter of a Roman cultural route?

### 3.1. Roman Culture

- A Roman cultural route should include clearly visible Roman *monuments, museums and streets*.
- *Authentic historic Roman groups* could enrich the Roman cultural route by their vivid presentation. They could even make something visible, which is no longer existent.
- It should be paid attention that the cultural route will become more than only an 'addition' of museums and sites. Instead of, the *cross connections* between the museums and sites should be identified and pointed out nationally and transnationally.

### 3.2. Other Culture

- Unlike Italia, the archaeological sites and museums in Bavaria do not only deal with Roman culture. Therefore the cultural route should focus on the *Roman aspects* of the museums, but also consider *non-Roman culture that is only linked to Roman culture* (i.e. the influence of the Romans on the Baiuvarii).

## 4. What are the target groups for the Roman cultural route?

There are various possibilities to differentiate the tourist target groups:

### 4.1. Differing Groups according to their Goal-Determination of the Visit

The groups of visitors can be divided into those,

- who are accidentally at the site.
- who aimed to visit the site and have come with interest.

#### 4.2. Differing Groups According to their Interest in Roman Culture

The group of visitors, who are interested in Roman culture, can be differentiated in:

- International tourists (with destinations such as Rome and Naples)
- Local tourists (with destinations such as Trier, Xanten, Mainz)
- Small-scale tourists (with destinations towards local sites)

Annotation: International and local tourism can be only found at larger centers of Roman cultures. Smaller museums and archaeological sites, who are the target groups of ROMIT, are often only visited to a smaller extent.

#### 4.3. Differing Groups According to the Field of Education

From the perspective of the field of education, visitors can be divided into:

- Pupils from schools (i.e. excursions within the subjects Local History and Geography, Latin, Archaeology (basic and intensive courses), schools outings)
- Students from universities (i.e. excursions within the study of Archaeology)
- Participants of adult education (i.e. study tours).

It has to be highlighted that especially by the market of education, smaller museums and archaeological sites can be supported independently from the market of tourism. *Educational institutions* can make *targeted use* of the offers of a Roman cultural route, i.e. to find and visit the 'next Roman fort'.

#### 4.4. Differing Groups According to the Mobility of the Visitors

Differing groups according to their mobility divides visitors into:

- Hikers
- Bikers
- Motorists

Annotation: In reference to the bikers, concerns were expressed: The duration of a biker at one location is often too short for the visit of a museum or a historic Roman group. Presumably the support of museums and Roman groups by biking tourists will only succeed, if the biker abides at least a whole day and visits only one museum or event per day.

#### 4.5. Differing Groups According to the Age of the Visitors

Differing groups according to their *age* divides visitors into:

- Children up to about 13 years
- Adolescents and young adults between 14 and 24 years
- Adults between 25 and 35 years
- Middle-aged and advanced in age persons

Annotation: It is difficult to attract adolescents and adults up to 35 to museums. Presumable reasons: Adolescents may have a lower interest in museums, adults between 25 and 35 may not come due to their life circumstances (young families with small children).

#### 4.6. Differing Groups According to the Self-organization Degree of the trip

Visitors can be divided into:

- All-inclusive tourists (often older people)
- Individual tourists (often younger people)

Annotation: At the adult education centre (VHS) Erlangen, the trend can be observed that participants of study trips grow older. Presumable reasons: The higher price level and the 'shop-soiled' image of study trips (tightly organized agenda, missing 'edutainment' etc.). Furthermore, younger people are able and want to organize their trips individually and self-organized. Thus the project ROMIT could especially address the target groups of these younger individual tourists.

### 5. What are the visitor's needs of a Roman cultural route?

Independently from the target group, visitors and tourists wish for the combination of interestingly designed archaeological *learning offers* with *fun*, *sociability* and good *meals*.

#### 5.1. Design of Interesting Learning Offers

For the concrete design of *attractive learning offers*, the following suggestions were made:

##### 5.1.1. Online Learning

The possibility of online learning could be used by learners in preparation of their on site visit. A visitor, who will have dealt with the archaeological site virtually in advance,

1. will be encouraged to visit the archaeological site in reality
2. will gain much more knowledge on the sightseeing tour than without preparation. ("One only sees, what one knows.")

For these purposes, the following virtual offers could be developed:

- *Materials*, such as cooking recipes or templates for handicrafts (i.e. Limes towers), might be put on the ROMIT website as .pdf-documents. So learners could prepare their excursions to an archaeological site in a quite sensual way.
- *Virtual sightseeing tours through restored sites* could be offered. Con: High technical effort. => Probably it would be more economic to offer drawings instead of a virtual round tour.
- In relation to the topic "virtualization", it is recommended to study the conference transcript of the intervallic congress *CAA (Computer Applications in Archaeology)*.

##### 5.1.2 Learning On Site

- *Visualization* eases the visitor's introduction into Roman topics. For example, the Roman *thermae* in Xanten are visualized on colored plexiglass. Something similar could be developed for the archaeological sites of the ROMIT cultural route, especially for those that are barely visible.
- *Impartation of experiences*: Just a vitrine with exhibits does not impart experiences to the visitor. Experiences only arise by the lively combination of the exhibit with well-

known or ostensive elements. For these purposes, historic Roman groups could depict *aspects of Roman life* (i.e. by try-ons of chain mails, helmets etc.)

- *Impartation of itineraric thinking* by
  - the design of a *modern map* in the style of the Tabula Peutingeriana
  - the comparison of the Tabula Peutingeriana with a *satellite map*, on which the paths of the Tabula Peutingeriana are traced.

This way of representation is 'sensual' and 'provides fun'. Such a map should be purchasable.

- *Lectures and/or guided tours* should enrich and revive the archaeological site.
- At each archaeological site, hints on *other parts of the cultural route* should be explicitly given. Also background information should be provided, highlighting the *connections* between the different parts of the cultural route. Tourist guides should be designed accordingly.

## 5.2. Fun

It was assumed that „people want a Roman Disneyland“. However, it was not further discussed to what extent this thesis applies and what exactly is expressed by the term “Roman Disneyland”.

## 5.3. Sociability

For the satisfaction of the human need for social contacts, it was suggested to offer guided tours on the archaeological sites. On the one hand, these would impart knowledge, on the other hand, they would embed the visitor into a group of other visitors.

## 5.4. Gastronomy

It was suggested, that the Roman sites could co-operate with the local gastronomy. The gastronomes could offer a choice of Roman meals.

## 5.5. Incentives for the Visit of Several Sites of the Cultural Route

An attractive offer for visitors and tourists might be, for example, a “*Roman Rally*“. A tourist could receive stamps into their 'bonus booklet' for the visit of several sites of the cultural route. If the booklet is complete, the visitor might be asked to answer a little Roman quiz. Then the bonus could be honored, i.e. as a free Roman meal at an co-operating inn.

## 5.6. Target Group Specific Access to the Cultural Route

To make the access to the cultural route for different target groups attractive, the following suggestions were made:

- A brochure should be provided with *special information* for
  - hikers
  - bikers
  - motorists
- On the ROMIT website, *individual route suggestions* should be requestable for the visit of Roman sites.

- It should be possible, to get route suggestions for *GPS devices* that can be used by the navigation system of the car.

## 6. How should the Roman cultural road be brought to market?

### 6.1. Increase of the Awareness for Roman History in Bavaria

An important aspect of marketing ist the increase of the public awareness for Roman history in Bavaria. It is barely known that *Bavaria is a former Roman province*. Instead of, the typical tourist connects with the State Bavaria "fresh air, crystal clear water, hiking, solid meals, and Bavarian folk music".

### 6.2. Cultural Route as Modular System

Similar to the Route to Santiago, it should be possible, to visit the Roman cultural route in stages. The several stages of the cultural route can be defined as 'modules'. Individual tourists should be pointed on the various modules at each site of the cultural route.

Such modules could be differentiated in many ways:

- regional
- thematic
- historic (i.e. period of occupation, period of Limes extension, period of Roman forts).

If the cultural route was differentiated regional, then a *hiking guide* could be compiled for each region. This could be published via the ROMIT website as .pdf file or as printed booklet.

Annotation: The production costs for a printed booklet are about 16.000 EUR.

### 6.3. Ways of Publication

The Roman cultural route could be published by:

*ROMIT-Website*

- with competent *contact persons*
- with ROMIT *event calendar* (with information about Roman festivals etc.)
- with ROMIT *route planner* for the individual request of routes to Roman sites
- *linking the Roman sites* for the exchange of information and materials and for the contact to organizers of Roman events
- *linking with common archaeology and museums websites*

*Multipliers*

- Local tourist organisations
- Offerers of coach tours, the ADAC, adult education centers (VHS)
- Press, radio, TV
- Hotel infrastructure displaying flyers
- Usage of the signposts of the German Limes-Commission or the Via Claudia project.  
(Annotation: It is not possible to design a completely "new" route, as there already exist some routes).
- Cooperation with replica manufacturers (i.e. Ars Mundi)

#### 6.4. Corporate Design

The sites that are involved in the cultural route should

- compile a common booklet
- share a logo
- use consistent signage
- use the same basic graphic elements.

#### 6.5. Endorsement

- Cities and townships could subsidize the museums.
- Probably a sponsor could be found for a uniform range of products dealing with the Roman cultural route (i.e. Ars Mundi).

#### 6.6. Synergy Effects

- The more places are involved into a Roman cultural Route, the easier the whole region can be represented as "*historic region*".
- A local market day could be combined with a Roman event.
- *A co-operation of archaeological sites and the local gastronomy* could satisfy the need for Roman culture combined with Roman meals. Annotation: Probably it might be difficult to impart this concept to gastronomes. Should this be the case, then an artificial demand could be created. Example 1: For a "Museum Day" with 100 visitors, a Roman menu is being ordered. Example 2: Offerers of coach tours could include Roman meals as inherent part of their program.

#### 6.7. Separation to Other Concepts

- *Separation to other tourist concepts*: In Bavaria, various *Roman sceneries* exist. The question comes up, to what extent the Roman cultural route would co-operate with other existing Roman concepts or not.
- *Differentiation of Roman history to local history*: In Bavaria, museums are usually not exclusively Roman museums, but particularly *prehistoric museums*. Accordingly, visitors should be pointed on the fact that "separate" Roman history does not exist, but that it is embedded into a local, cultural context. The connections between Roman culture and local history should be highlighted explicitly. Each involved place should find and express its own local imprint. Also non-regional, historic connections into the modern times should be pointed up (i.e. the influence of Roman rights to our modern legislation).

### 7. Which resources does a Roman cultural route need?

#### 7.1. Financial Resources

Financial resources are essential for securing the continuity and sustainability of the measurement.

## 7.2. Personal Resources

A Roman cultural route needs:

- competent expert guidance by a Roman Provincial Archaeologist or an Old Historian
- continuous update of the ROMIT website by committed persons
- persons for caring about public relations and the conduction of effective marketing

## 8. Which chances and risks do you see?

### 8.1. Chances

- exciting idea
- synergy effects by networking
- advertising effects
- New cultural routes are wished by the tourist public (compare i.e. the 'Duererweg', the Road to Santiago, the increasing interest for study tours)

### 8.2. Risks

- Risk of competitiveness among the museums and communities for high numbers of visitors
- Risk of 'local' instead of 'networked' thinking
- Reserves of tourism managers, if new cultural programs and concepts overlap with existing ones
- Risk of missing financial and personal resources
- Risk of insecure continuation of the project (compare the "Via Danubia" project: It was completed after the installation of signposts and the publishing of a brochure)

### 8.3. Possible Resolutions

The various ideas and approaches suggested by the focus groups should be divided into *short-, middle- and long-termed goals*.

- For securing the continuation of the project in the short and middle term, further project work could be carried out at *university* (i.e. by a doctoral candidate).
- For the middle and long term, the realization of the project goals should not only be based upon the own's initiative of each archaeological site. Instead of, the 'Roman experience' of the cultural route should be offered by a *superior cultural organization*. Such an organization should set on two targets: To *conserve* the cultural heritage and to *disperse* it in the public awareness.
- Permanent jobs should be provided for *professional and organizational* competent contact persons. They should tutor the cultural route and keep it in the public awareness by effective marketing. The competences of the contact persons can be described in detail: Committed to topics of the Roman period, personal knowledge about the regions and places of the cultural route, information about further regional contact persons for detailed questions.

- Funding: Sponsors and possibilities for advertisement should be found. Partly the funding could be provided by a *membership fee*.
- Sustainability: It is important to measure the usage of the Roman cultural route at each site (i.e. a small museum could ask the visitor: "How did you come to know about us?")

## 9. Conclusions of the focus groups

At the end of the focus groups, the participants expressed their high interest in the development of the Roman cultural route in Bavaria. For the further process of the project, they made the following suggestions:

- FIM should inform the experts regularly about the status of the project
- FIM should make contact to further archaeological sites and receives useful information by the experts.
- After the processing of all ideas and the concretion of further steps, the experts should be invited again at the end of 2005 to another focus group.

FIM-NewLearning says ‚Thank you very much‘ to all participants of the focus groups for their rich and differentiated impulses.