

Geoarchaeological results from geophysical prospections at the Roman city of Urbs Salvia, central Italy

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We report on a combined magnetic–GPR survey performed in 2015 and 2016 at the ancient Roman city of Urbs Salvia, located in central Italy. The main objective of this survey was to reconstruct the urban organization of the city forum and determine possible sites of future excavations. We found a complex pattern of buried structures, possibly resulting from the coexistence of republican and imperial artifacts and burned structures. A test excavation at the location where we detected a long linear structure characterized by strong magnetic signal revealed the presence of thermal baths. GPR data were acquired in areas characterized by high magnetic noise induced by metallic infrastructures (e.g., fences), which prevented a correct acquisition of archaeological anomalies. These data not only allowed to overcome the magnetic noise, but provided interesting 3D reconstructions of the buried structures. A detailed GPR survey in the theatre area was also performed, with the aim to investigate the plan of the porticus post scaenam. This survey allowed to identify some interesting structures related to different chronological phases and confirms the epigraphic data related to the development of the monument.