Preface

This volume is the outcome of the second colloquium financed by the ERC Consolidator Grant DECOR (grant no. 681269), devoted to the topic Materiality as Decor: Aesthetics, Semantics and Function, which was held in June 2020. Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the colloquium took place digitally.

DECOR aims to provide a holistic analysis of the decorative principles employed in Roman Italy between the Late Republic and Early Imperial period (2nd century B.C. – late 1st century A.D.). The aim of this conference volume is to focus this approach on the decorative potential of materials. Alongside images, forms and ornament, materials were an elementary component of decor and design in Roman antiquity, with respect to both architecture and objects. This book concentrates in particular on three qualities of materials – aesthetics, semantics and function – and the manner in which these qualities interact. All of the authors refer to these categories and contribute to a cultural history of materials; individual papers differ, however, in contextual focus and methodological approach.

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