

First call for papers

Approaching Foreigners in Antiquity: Studying Intercultural Contact

Call for Abstracts – First International Conference on Antiquity in Central and South Africa. Potchefstroom, South Africa (5-8 February) – Deadline 30 June 2024

Dear colleagues,

The School of Ancient Languages and Text Studies of the North-West University of Potchefstroom in South Africa would like to invite you at the international and interdisciplinary conference:

Approaching Foreigners in Antiquity: Studying Intercultural Contact

5-8 February, 2025

North-West University

Potchefstroom

South Africa

We are interested in discussing intercultural contacts between different peoples in antiquity and ways to approach the study of such contacts. We invite proposals for papers. Each lecture may include any people and culture from Africa and the Mediterranean to Near East and India, but it should focus on the contacts they had with one or more other peoples in the above-mentioned geographical areas. For instance: “contacts between the Egyptians and the Nubians”. Or “contacts between the Phoenicians and the Philistines”. The timeframe of these contacts starts from the prehistoric times and goes up to the first millennium CE. Scholars who wish to talk about a later author’s views on past peoples and on their contacts with other peoples, are also welcome. The study to be presented may be related to any kind of contact in antiquity (language, trade, war, cooperation, science, technology, art etc.). We welcome linguistic, philological, historical, archaeological, geographical, anthropological, and DNA studies.

We now understand that the peoples of the ancient world did not exist in isolation and that trade routes connected the Mediterranean and the Levant with the Caucasus, India and further afield. We are interested in the various approaches to the ways in which cross-cultural contact between these people should be studied. We solicit papers analyzing and discussing contact between specific peoples and the methodological issues related to the study of this contact. Points on interest include, but are not limited to:

- the discrepancy between archaeology and written sources,
- the limits of archaeology, philology and DNA studies,
- the chronological gap between scripts or written sources and the reconstruction of an early past based on later sources,
- the social constructions of ethnicity, race, etc. in ancient societies, especially that of the ‘other’,
- the archaeology of migrated groups and nomads,
- the movement of peoples in antiquity (ships, horses, camels) and the extent of their mobility limits.

Carolina López-Ruiz, Professor of Ancient Mediterranean Religions and Mythologies, at the University of Chicago Divinity School and Department of Classics, will be the keynote speaker of the conference.

The conference will be held at the North-West University of Potchefstroom, South Africa and will have a registration fee of:

\$172,38 - 160€ -ZAR 3260 (including coffee, lunch and tea times for 4 days, as well as transportation from and to the airport).

The accommodation is not included in the price. Potchefstroom Sports Village (<https://services.nwu.ac.za/sports-village>) is offering accommodation for ZAR 1000 for each night (4 nights = ZAR 4000) to those who are interested. An optional conference dinner will be offered through an additional fee of ZAR 500. The conference plans an optional excursion to a game farm on Saturday, February 8 with an estimated extra fee of ZAR 300-400 (including dinner). The minibus that undertakes the transportation from and to the airport has a concrete time-schedule, so every participant that is willing to take the minibus should let us know in advance in order to inform him for the schedule.

It will be an in person conference. Online presentation will only be considered in exceptional cases. Everyone willing to participate at the conference should send us by June 30, a short abstract (up to 500 words). Applicants will be informed about the results by 30 July 2024. The abstract should clearly indicate:

- a) The specific peoples of antiquity with which the paper deals (e.g. Egyptians and Nubians).
- b) The spatio-temporal context (e.g. Late Bronze Age Levant).
- c) The methodological issues that will be the focus of the lecture and the rationale behind their association with these peoples.

Each lecture will be 25 minutes long (+5 minutes for discussion).

A second call for papers will be released in August. The payment of the registration fees will be made after the approval of the proposals in a bank account that will be sent via a separate email to the participants. For inquiries: asterioskechagias@yahoo.com