

CALL FOR PAPERS

Meeting the Other: Transfers and cultural interactions around the Nile Valley

27-28 March, Cairo – IFAO and PCMA

The IFAO and the PCMA are jointly organizing an international conference entitled: *Meeting the Other: Transfers and cultural interactions around the Nile Valley*. The event will take place in Cairo in the premises of both institutions from 27th to 28th March.

Meeting the Other: Transfers and cultural interactions around the Nile Valley

Exchanges between the inhabitants of the Nile Valley and their neighbours have shaped Egyptian society since the Early Dynastic times. Climate changes, trade and commercial issues, conflictual events, led to population movements that put different cultures face to face in various ways. The present seminar intends to investigate the dynamic and multidirectional nature of interactions between distinct groups of people in North-eastern Africa. The wide chronological framework of the conference, from the creation of the Egyptian state up to the beginning of the Byzantine era, when Christianity became the religion of the state (4th century AD), aims at a better understanding of the mechanisms that govern cultural interactions in a long-term perspective. This approach should highlight the patterns of differentiation and assimilation throughout ancient Egyptian culture.

The conference also intends to have a focus on the Third Millennium BC, a period of formation in which many of the forms of cultural expression of Egyptian civilization were shaped and, often, no longer changed. This chronological focus within the wider framework of the conference will thus help define some patterns of negotiation of cultural values which the Egyptian society both gave and borrowed from the outside, and will eventually help provide a clearer picture of the origins of what we define as the more general process of “meeting the others”. We invite papers related to, but not exclusively, the following topics :

Material culture as vehicle for intercommunity transfers. Funerary and religious practices, foodways and household ceramic production, daily life artefacts, are all evidence of fluid societies and cultural threads that can be deeply influenced by external contributions. Some objects have spread to different regions, while carrying with them their original cultural identity. Papers presenting archaeological finds or any other studies that reveal cross-cultural interactions through material remains and artefacts are welcomed.

Images of a (multi)cultural identity. This topic will take a deeper look into the iconographic and written evidence. The identity building often generates a sense of belonging to a specific group. It is reflected by attributes, symbols and names. However, images can be sometimes blurred by multicultural markers. We would like to discuss here examples of flexible identities and the specific situations in which they are being built.

The individual at the core of the exchange. The Other is not always the enemy to fight, but can also be a friend, a neighbour or a relative, whom one wishes to understand, to integrate and why not to copy. Closely related to the previous theme, this topic would be a particular focus on the individual, in order to understand to what extent he is an actor of his own integration. Can the individual be differentiated from the collective? We will welcome papers studying more particularly the role of women in the dynamics of cultural exchange.

Circulation of ideas and cultural practices. With people moving from one place to another, as well as with the objects they exchange, inevitably travel cultural practices, ideas and religious beliefs. The introduction of new deities, myths or the creation of composite forms of gods can be either the consequence or the driver of a societal transformation.

Furthermore, special attention will be given to the terminology used during the conference. Should we speak about cultural entanglement, multiculturalism, acculturation, or transculturation? An attempt to better define these terms and their areas of use, with the support of sociological and anthropological studies, will be considered.

The conference proceedings will be edited and published by the IFAO and the PCMA in 2022.

Submission Guidelines

Abstracts of 200–300 words should be submitted via the [online form](#) by 31st December, 2020. Please include your name, affiliation and a short biography with the abstract. The conference language is English.

Kindly note that in case of travel restrictions, you can record your conference in advance and be present online during its screening.

Submission Form : https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfsnaVic6vzUhekCyLObeguOruQE2jGHc_DV7xduDQK5QAWDQ/viewform?usp=pp_url