CALL FOR PAPERS

The purpose of this workshop is to create an analytical framework for understanding the complex and interconnected economies of the Ptolemaic and Roman Eastern Desert in their geographical, social, and material contexts. In recent decades, major survey and excavation projects have produced vast quantities of textual and material data that have reshaped our understanding of the broader economy of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt, while also raising new questions about ancient institutions, material practices, and the role of different kinds of evidence in our assessment of the history of the Eastern Desert over the long term.

We seek to bring together researchers who can present new syntheses of archeological data on a regional scale and enter into dialog with scholars working on other periods and material subsets. The organizers will select papers that offer methodological, theoretical, or analytical approaches to material datasets, and avoid field reporting. We welcome submissions from junior and senior scholars, including advanced graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.

We invite papers that engage the following themes and topics:

Session 1: Quantifying the desert economy
Session 2: Material itineraries
Session 3: Economic networks
Session 4: Journeying and the economy of movement
Session 5: Economic diversity in the Graeco-Roman period in comparative perspective

For descriptions of topics suggested for each session, consult the expanded call for papers on the conference website: https://materialeconomy.sciencesconf.org/

Conference information

The deadline to submit a title and 250-word abstract has been extended to February 15, 2021. The submission is made on the conference website (see page for submission and registration procedures). Participants will be notified of the status of their submission by March 1. The conference will take place October 11-15, with each day dedicated to a single panel using the Zoom webinar platform. Abstracts and papers may be submitted in English, French, or German while we ask that conference discussion and presentations take place in English.

Participants will be required to submit a provisional draft (5000 word minimum, no notes or bibliography required) of their paper by August 22. Organizers will pre-distribute drafts to respondents and panel participants on September 12. Each author will also serve as a respondent for another paper in their panel. Sessions are structured around the respondent’s presentation and discussion of each paper (15 mins) followed by an author response and general discussion by panel participants (30-40 minutes).

Revised papers will be published in a peer-reviewed volume as part of the MOM (Maison de l’Orient et de la Méditerranée) Editions series and on the digital platform OpenEdition Books. More information on the submission process, panel themes, and conference organization can be found at the conference website: https://materialeconomy.sciencesconf.org.

The organization of this workshop is a collaboration between the Department of Classics of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Desert Networks project, hosted by the CNRS at the HiSoMA laboratory (Lyon, France), and which is funded by the European Research Council, ERC, within the framework of the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program - grant agreement no. 759078.

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