

What is the Workshop about?

The history of the Mediterranean region is one of the most well-researched areas in studies of the ancient world. The kingdoms and empires of the Persians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, and Arabs all encompassed parts of this geographical space. Simultaneously, the Mediterranean could be a cruel environment, causing lasting limitations and obstacles for making a living. The harsh climatic circumstances of the various ecological microregions of the Mediterranean led to the establishment of contacts between the different communities in these divergent regions (Horden & Purcell 2000, 110-123, 342-344, Idem. 2006, 722-725). The connections between these various groups were established out of need but readily transformed into elaborate trade networks, which inevitably also led to the formation of elites.

Within these networks and communities, individuals tend to strive for status, influence, and recognition. The prerequisites and possibilities for acquiring, maintaining, and exercising an elite status greatly varied between different societies and historical periods. Equally diverse are the ways in which individuals represented their status to the outside world, whether as members of a specific elite or as non-elite actors seeking to acquire capital and therewith raise their social status. These trade networks entangled the Mediterranean, leading to exchange, competition, and conflict. This workshop is concerned with the formation of these entangled elites and their representation in or through literature or visual media. The goal of the workshop is to bring together scholars of various disciplines and historical periods to attempt to answer overarching questions, including how elites are formed within these structures and manage to uphold their status, which strategies and media were used for their representations, and how connections within and between the groups arise and manifest themselves. In order to explore these questions in a broad yet comparable framework, the workshop focuses on the extended Mediterranean (Afro-EurAsia) between 1200 BC and AD 800.

We are happy to announce that **Prof. Dr. Daniëlle Slootjes** (Universiteit van Amsterdam) will join us as a Keynote Speaker.

We especially welcome abstracts from early career researchers (PhD candidates and Postdocs) in the historical and archaeological disciplines. Please submit proposals for papers as a PDF abstract of 300 words in English.

Depending on the thematic coherence of the submitted abstracts, the workshop will take one of two formats:

(1) Workshop format: Participants will prepare a short written essay (approx. 5-10 pages) prior to the event. During the workshop, each contribution will be introduced by a brief presentation, followed by an extensive discussion based on the pre-circulated essays.

(2) Conference format: Contributions will be presented as individual 20-minute papers followed by discussion.

We aim to choose the format best fitting to the participants and their research interests. Naturally, the decision of either format will be communicated well in advance.

A publication of the contributions is not intended.

We strive to provide reimbursement for travel and accommodation expenses for presenters but would be grateful if these could be provided through home-university funding.

Abstracts may be sent until 30th of April 2026 to the complete organisation board.

How to apply?