



# 'Africa on the Move'



The African Archaeology Group 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
conference  
McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research,  
University of Cambridge  
8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> September 2017

## Second Call for Papers and Further Information

To mark the 10th anniversary of the African Archaeology Group and the John Alexander seminar series at the University of Cambridge, we are holding a conference dedicated to 'Africa on the Move.' The dispersal of our species out of Africa sits prominently in the popular imagination while internal African diversity has received relatively little attention. In this conference we wish to focus on the dispersal of people, artefacts, and ideas *within* Africa throughout the ages.

Moving beyond the conception of Africa as a monolithic entity, the structure of diversity within Africa is a critical issue, even for 'Out of Africa' questions. Africa is a vast area and its internal human diversity is unparalleled. Recent studies have shown that not only is there great ecological variation within Africa but also that the pattern of this variation has changed radically over time, with phenomena such as the 'Green Sahara.' Isolated languages and diverse morphologies in human remains hint at contrasting patterns of ethno-linguistic diversity in the past as distinct from those visible today. New research is beginning to draw coherent pictures of the origins and spread of epoch-changing technologies such as metallurgy and agropastoralism. Sourcing studies are allowing us to reconstruct ancient trade networks linking different parts of the continent. Archaeology is also providing a fresh perspective on the spread of ideas in the recent historical past. The main aim of the conference is to focus on interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary research.

We welcome thematic submissions from various disciplines, time periods, and geographic foci (not excluding from beyond Africa). The conference theme is intentionally broad and invites multiple interpretations of complex issues. The conference will be structured around three main interrelated themes that we invite participants to address:

- 1) 'Dispersal of People' will examine how the current ethnographic, genetic and linguistic distribution maps of Africa emerged, as well as what extinct groupings might be inferred from the deep time record.
- 2) 'Dispersal of Artefacts' will look at the spread of various technologies across Africa, including iron working and farming, and also examine trade networks such as between the coast and the interior, or across the Sahara.
- 3) 'Dispersal of Ideas' will consider the spread of ideas, including states, monotheistic religions, slavery, and colonialism. Currently, we would particularly welcome proposals focussing on this theme.

Together, we hope that the conference will build a dynamic picture to enhance our understanding of diversity within and throughout the African continent.

Presentations will be 30 minutes long, including 5 minutes for questions; posters should be no smaller than A2 size. Please send paper and poster abstracts of up to 300 words to Jacke Phillips at <jsp1005@hermes.cam.ac.uk> (please do not include images). Abstracts should be sent as PDF or Word documents and should include the speaker's preferred theme, full contact information and a brief academic biography. General enquiries and registration requests should be sent to Shadia Taha at <st446@cam.ac.uk>.

The deadline for submission of abstracts has been extended to the **15<sup>th</sup> April 2017**; acceptances will be announced by the 25<sup>th</sup> April.

Registration and payment is to be made by the **31<sup>st</sup> July** via the website:

<https://onlinesales.admin.cam.ac.uk/myaccount/>. Login or Register, then select 'Conferences & Events'/'McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research'/'Africa on the Move'