

Dear friends and colleagues

Please find below the final program and abstracts for the symposium in honor of Richard Holton Pierce on October 26: “From River to Sea through Desert and Text”, and are happy to announce the program for the day.

The day is divided in three overarching topics: “Along the River”, “The Desert and the Sea”, and “Papyri, Books and the Internet”. Because of the number of participants, short presentations are limited to 15 minutes. Keynote lectures are 45 minutes.

With kind regards from the organizing committee, Bergen, October 16, 2015.

Pål Steiner

Alexandros Tsakos

Eivind Heldaas Seland

Bergen University Library

Dept. of archaeology, history, cultural studies and religion

**Symposium in Honor of Richard Holton Pierce's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday**  
**“From River to Sea through Desert and Text”**

October 26 2015, Bergen, Sydneshaugen skole, Auditorium R

**09.00-12.00: Along the River**

09.00: Introduction by Pål Steiner (UiB)

**09.15: Keynote lecture**

**László Török: “Ancient Nubia in 2015 CE.”**

10.00: Coffee break

***10.15-12.00: Short presentations***

10.15: Kåre Berge (NLA): “Lethal water and land of bondage? Egypt and the Nile in biblical cultural memory.”

10.30: Ingvild Gilhus (UiB): “Animals and ascetics in Egypt.”

10.45: Jørgen Bakke (UiB): “Liquid Images: Water in Ancient Greek Culture.”

11.00: Else Kleppe (UiB): “Potsherds on Graves.”

11.15: Anders Bjørkelo (UiB): “Sources for economic history in 19th century Sudan.”

11.30: Discussion

12.00: Lunch

**13.00-16.00: The Desert and the Sea**

13.00: Introduction by Eivind Heldaas Seland (UiB)

**13.15: Keynote lecture**

**Gábor Lassányi: “Archaeology of the Red Sea Hills in the first Millennium AD.”**

14.00: Short break

***14.05-16.00: Short presentations***

14.05: Gidske Andersen (UiB): “A desert forest - a regional resource base in the Red Sea Hills of Egypt.”

14.20: Knut Krzywinski (UiB): “Do droughts occur in a desert?”

14.35: Nils Anfinset (UiB): “Crossing the Red Sea? Contacts between the Nile Valley and the Arabian Peninsula in the late 4th and early 3rd millennium BCE.”

14.50: Henriette Hafsaas-Tsakos (UiB): “The importance of the Eastern Desert for the incorporation of societies along the Nile in the Bronze Age world.”

15.05: Knut Vikør (UiB): “Trade and religion in Eastern Sahara.”

15.20: Jørgen Christian Meyer (UiB): “With Alois Musil and Gertrude Bell in the Syrian Desert.”

15.35: Discussion

16.00: Coffee break

**16.15-17.30: Papyri, Books and the Internet**

16.15: Introduction by Alexandros Tsakos

***16.30-18.00: Short presentations***

16.30: Espen Aarseth (ITU): “Studying Senet - a game without rules.”

16.45: Odd Einar Haugen (UiB): “Qualitative and quantitative textual criticism: Parvum Lexicon Stematologicum.”

17:00: “Daniel Apollon (UiB): “Fluid content and pervasive paratexts: Towards a criticism of digital-only contents.

17:15: Einar Thomassen (UiB): “Nag Hamadi after seventy years.”

17.30: Discussion

**18.00-19.00: Richard H. Pierce / discussion**

20:00: Dinner, Restaurant Naboen, Sigurdsgate 4 ([www.grannen.no](http://www.grannen.no))

## Abstracts for the symposium presentations

### **A desert forest - a regional resource base in the Red Sea Hills of Egypt**

**Gidske Andersen**, University of Bergen, [gidske.andersen@uib.no](mailto:gidske.andersen@uib.no)

TBA

### **Crossing the Red Sea? Contacts between the Nile Valley and the Arabian Peninsula in the late 4th and early 3rd millennium BCE.**

**Nils Anfinset**, University Museum, University of Bergen, [nils.anfinset@uib.no](mailto:nils.anfinset@uib.no)

Over the two recent decades there has been a significant increase in studies connected to large-scale contacts and systems. This paper questions the possibility of crossing the Red Sea in the 4th and early 3rd millennium BCE. The paper will look at the cultural setting in the Nile Valley, particularly the A-Group, and comparatively what is happening on the Arabian Peninsula. What are the possibilities, what are the difficulties, and is it at all plausible? An analysis of some of the metal objects from the Nubian A-Group may point in direction of a source across the Red Sea. Other possibilities are connections across land at a time when there were significant social and economic developments in the Nile Valley, Levant and Mesopotamia. However, regardless of connection over land or across the Red Sea, the question remains the same – why metal from the Arabian Peninsula deposited in Nubian A-Group graves and what are the cultural implications of this?

### **Fluid content and pervasive paratexts: Towards a criticism of digital-only contents**

**Daniel Apollon**, University of Bergen, [apollon@uib.no](mailto:apollon@uib.no)

As growing number of digital documents (integrating e.g., texts, visuals, tables, audiovisual dynamic content, haptic interaction and hyperlinks) are conceived only in and for online environments, and as more and more printed documents indeed have a digital infancy, there is a need to reappraise and expand the tradition tools of textual criticism to address novel physical and cultural conditions for textual variation and evolution. The novelty of the digital situation is characterised by several factors: the sheer volume of content available at any time, the materiality and constitution of these « textoids » or « neotexts », the increasing role of non-human software agents as authoring and editing forces, collaborative authoring, and the growth of paratextual devices at the expense of what was traditionally conceived being–indisputably– «a text ». Wikipedia is a good example of such a forward-evolutive, paratext-driven and potentially never ending massive multilingual textual tradition. Still, the tools, the craft and the theories of textual criticism may remain indispensable to investigate these new patterns of textual traditions.

## **Liquid Images: Water in Ancient Greek Culture**

**Jørgen Bakke**, LLE, University of Bergen, [jorgen.bakke@uib.no](mailto:jorgen.bakke@uib.no)

This paper discusses images of water in ancient Greek culture from Homer to Aristotle. The discussion includes concrete images (iconography), literary descriptions (*ekphraseis*) and natural historical models. In ancient Greek art and literature the element of water is personified as river gods, water nymphs, and hydrological monsters like the Lernean Hydra. While Greek thinkers from the Ionian natural philosophers to Aristotle tried to build models of how water works in the natural world, cultural images often portray the encounter between water and man as a battle. Heracles is the primeval hydrological hero, who wrestles with the river-god Acheloos and fights the Lernean Hydra. In Early Greece descriptions of water is associated with cosmology (Hesiod) and the afterlife (Homer). In descriptions of the Greek city water also became an important symbol of urban civilisation. Already in the late archaic period natural springs and cisterns had been replaced by a network of water pipes and architecturally elaborated fountain houses. In Athenian vase painting Heracles struggle with Acheloos was now replaced by young Athenian women collecting water at the fountain house.

## **Lethal water and land of bondage? Egypt and the Nile in biblical cultural memory.**

**Kåre Berge**, NLA University College, [Kare.Berge@NLA.no](mailto:Kare.Berge@NLA.no)

The so-called Exodus story in the bible (Exodus 1-15) appears as an ethnic or national charter-myth. Ethnic identity is a boundary phenomenon. It is also a constructed and invented entity. However, it seems equally clear that in ethno-symbolism, i.e., in nationality and ethnicity as investigated from the Geisteswissenschaften, there is an emotional element. Scholars have argued that underlying the biblical Exodus story is the myth of the battle with the Sea Monster. It is the purpose of this presentation to show how this biblical text plays on the emotional aspects of the Monster myth in order to create a sense of "Israelite" identity, and on the ethical "otherness" of Egypt and Pharaoh so as to set the standard of Torah didacticism in "Israel."

## **Trade along the Nile between Sudan and Egypt in the 19th century. A case study**

**Anders Bjørkelo**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [anders.bjorkelo@uib.no](mailto:anders.bjorkelo@uib.no)

The paper will outline a geographical dimension, al-Matamma, al-Khandaq and Upper Egypt and focus on Sudanese traders operating within this region. Emphasis will be on family networks, cooperation and partnerships with one family as a case. Finally, the paper will look at how trade was financed and what kind of legal instruments were employed.

## **Animals and Ascetics in Egypt**

**Ingvild Sælid Gilhus**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [ingvild.gilhus@uib.no](mailto:ingvild.gilhus@uib.no)

The theme of the paper is how animals are constructed in ascetic texts in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century. Sources are Nag Hammadi texts and Monastic literature. The aim is to analyse main discourses of animals in these texts – especially discourses of struggle and domination, but also discourses of metamorphosis and didactic discourses.

## **The copper-ores in the Eastern Desert and the incorporation of Nubia into the bronze using world**

**Henriette Hafsas-Tsakos**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [Henriette.Hafsas@uib.no](mailto:Henriette.Hafsas@uib.no)

Richard Pierce has been involved in the scientific exploration of the Eastern Desert. In this study dedicated to him, I focus on the implications of the presence of copper-ore in the Eastern Desert for the riverine societies in Nubia during the Bronze Age (c. 3500-1200 BCE). I have recorded all finds of copper-alloy objects in native contexts in Nubia between the First and the Fifth Nile Cataracts from the 4th to the 2nd millennium BCE. This shows that neither copper-alloy objects nor copper metallurgy were adopted at the same time in this extended region, and even though the people of Nubia were neighbours to the copper-rich regions of the Eastern Desert, copper-alloy objects only became numerous after the native peoples had adopted metallurgical technology and started to make copper-alloy objects themselves. I also discuss how the people in Nubia acquired both copper-alloy objects and later also the technological know-how to make copper-alloy objects themselves, as well as the implications of having copper-ores in their hinterland for the relationship with Egypt.

## **Qualitative and quantitative textual criticism: *Parvum Lexicon Stemmatologicum***

**Odd Einar Haugen**, LLE, University of Bergen, [odd.haugen@lle.uib.no](mailto:odd.haugen@lle.uib.no)

Until the early 20th century, textual criticism was a qualitative discipline, above all relying on the analysis of errors made in the process of copying a text. This was the basis for the genealogical method as it was developed by 19th century scholars like Karl Lachmann in Germany and Gaston Paris in France. However, both scholars were looking for more rigorous practices in the critical work – Lachmann for an analysis without subjectivism, *recensio sine interpretatione*, and Paris for a fault-free recension, *une opération pour ainsi dire mathématique*. In the early 20th century, quantitative methods were tentatively developed, and from the late 1980s a wide variety of numerical methods have been applied to textual criticism. However, very few scholars have training in both fields, the philological and the numerical, so there is a need for resources, even minor ones. One resource of this type is the *Parvum Lexicon Stemmatologicum*, which was initiated in 2011 by the *Studia Stemmatologica* network and now counts almost 250 entries. Here, the entry *Directed Acyclic Graph* keep the entry *Stemma Codicum* company, and both are describing essentially the same model. This little lexicon is presently a free wiki hosted at the University of Helsinki. The challenging question is whether it makes any sense to publish resources of this kind when Wikipedia is all around. Is it actually possible

to compete with Wikipedia? This short talk will conclude with some thoughts about modern Internet resources.

Reference: <https://wiki.hiit.fi/display/stemmatology/Parvum+lexicon+stemmatologicum>

### **Potsherds on the Grave. Aspects on burial traditions in the Renk district, South Sudan**

**Else Johansen Kleppe**, Bergen University Museum, [else.kleppe@uib.no](mailto:else.kleppe@uib.no)

The presentation is based on fieldwork carried out in the Upper Nile province in South Sudan between 1975 and 1983. My aim was to get an idea about the antiquity and the settlement on the *debbas*. The term *debba* refers to a low mound in flat country and many of these locations are archaeological sites and most are also inhabited today. Focus is on data from the two sites Debbat El Eheima and Debbat Bangdit. C14 datings from Debbat El Eheima fall within the range Cal. 1890-1740 BC and 770-430 BC while those from Debbat Bangdit fall within the time range Cal. 260-610 AD and 1440-1650 AD. Traces of settlements with special activity areas and grave remains located within the settlement areas were revealed.

Focus is on burial practices and in particular on possible interpretations of potsherd grave covers documented. The presence of broken ceramic pots and other potsherds located on top of graves is a unique feature, and the thickness of such covers might be related to status and identity of the person buried. Some parts of a potsherd cover on a grave might have been formed when the burial itself took place. In certain cases later memorial ceremonies might also have taken place at a specific time and perhaps on more than one occasion depending on the status of the deceased. Ethnographic observations are brought into the discourse in order to elucidate this.

### **Do droughts occur in a desert?**

**Knut Krzywinski**, Dpt. of Biology, University of Bergen, [krzywinski@bio.uib.no](mailto:krzywinski@bio.uib.no)

TBA

### **Archaeology of the Red Sea Hills in the first Millennium AD.**

**Gábor Lassányi**, Dpt. of Roman archaeology, BHM Aquincum Museum, [lassanyi.g@gmail.com](mailto:lassanyi.g@gmail.com)

The huge arid area between the Nile and the Red Sea in Egypt and Sudan called the Eastern Desert was largely unexplored archaeologically until the last few decades. Although small scale surveys and a few larger scale projects have now revealed the abundance of the archaeological heritage of this land, still only a preliminary picture can be drawn of its history.

This paper focuses on the AD 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium, a period from which a large number of written sources testify to the interactions between desert dwellers and the communities along the Nile Valley, both in Egypt and in Nubia. After a short introduction to these written sources, the archaeological heritage of

the desert communities will be discussed, with special attention to the areas where these tribes settled nearby or inside the Nile Valley.

In addition to the interpretation of the finds, first hand field results will be presented from current projects in the Upper Egyptian deep-desert, el-Kab's region and from the Red Sea Hills in the vicinity of Port Sudan.

### **With Alois Musil and Gertrude Bell in the Syrian Desert**

**Jørgen Christian Meyer**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [jorgen.meyer@uib.no](mailto:jorgen.meyer@uib.no)

Gertrude Bell and Alois Musil give us a unique glimpse into Bedouin life, Palmyrene society and the landscape in the end of the Ottoman Empire, before the introduction of the motorized transport and the modernisation of Syrian society. Their accounts are invaluable for our understanding of the exploitation of the resources in and around Palmyra in the preindustrial era.

### **Nag Hamadi after seventy years**

**Einar Thomassen**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [einar.thomassen@uib.no](mailto:einar.thomassen@uib.no)

TBA

### **Ancient Nubia in 2015 CE.**

**László Török**, The Institute of Archaeology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS),  
[tl.napata2015@gmail.com](mailto:tl.napata2015@gmail.com)

This paper surveys the main trends in the study of the ancient Kingdom of Kush before and after the publication of the volumes of *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum* (1994-2000) with special emphasis on recent research on the Egyptian-Nubian interface in the New Kingdom period; the emergence of the El Kurru chiefdom and its political and cultural transformation into a kingdom; and the genesis and structure of the double kingdom of Egypt and Kush of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty.

### **Trade and religion in Eastern Sahara**

**Knut Vikør**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [knut.vikor@uib.no](mailto:knut.vikor@uib.no)

The trade route from Tripoli to Lake Chad was an important channel for culture contact, at least from medieval period to the nineteenth century. Salt, slaves, and other goods were exchanged in a complex network of interlocking local and regional trade networks. But religions were also exchanged, and by tracing the trade, we can also say something about religious developments in this area. Of particular interest is the development of the Ibadi branch of Islam, which survived for centuries in the Saharan regions due to their trading activities. In this paper we will trace the religious impact of the Ibadi trade network of this region.



## **Studying Senet - a game without rules**

**Espen Aarseth**, IT-University of Copenhagen, [aarseth@itu.dk](mailto:aarseth@itu.dk)

The ancient game of Senet, found in Egyptian tombs from about 3000 B.C., presents an interesting ludo-philological challenge: the rules are not known, only the board, pieces, and a few depictions of its use. Several rule-sets have been invented in recent times, but in what sense can the game itself be said to have survived? Or has it been lost? For the game scholar, the question becomes, is it possible to study a game without its rules? The paper investigates methodological and existential aspects of researching a game without rules.

## **Abstracts for participants not presenting at the symposium**

### **Bridging Gaps at the Museum: Archaeological Sources and Resources in Contact Zones**

**Saphinaz-Amal Naguib**, Dpt. of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo, [s.a.naguib@ikos.uio.no](mailto:s.a.naguib@ikos.uio.no)

In his book *Musée et muséologie*, Dominique Poulot (2005) argues that the shift from what he calls the ‘depot museum’ to the ‘exhibition museum’ has transformed the institution of the museum. Nowadays, the fame of a museum is based on the originality of the display and the aesthetic approach of the exhibitions it arranges rather than on the quality, uniqueness or exhaustiveness of its collections. A number of museums of cultural history and universal museums partake in enterprises where culture, politics and economics are interlinked, and where programs of sustainable development are important assets. This has led them to reconsider their role in society, their relationships with the heritage and collections they are responsible for and their exhibition policies. During the last decade, we have been witnessing a new turn in museums that has to do with reflexivity and an increased awareness to the question of sustainability. The article discusses methods and scopes of museums regarding their use of archaeology as a source and a resource in exhibitions about Ancient Egypt. In my use of the terms *source* refers to a point of origin, in our case archaeology. This source triggers creativity and initiates activities. As for *resource*, it refers to the effects and viability of the activities produced by the source. In short, how archaeology may serve to generate, expand and sustain museum’s activities. Bridging the gaps between disciplines and laying the grounds for free choice learning is, in my view, a first step. Reflexivity about the work of archaeology and museums is a second one. Establishing a politics of trust between museums, archaeologists, institutions and local populations is the next one.

## **Umm Gomyana and the Zar**

**Richard Johan Natvig**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [richard.natvig@uib.no](mailto:richard.natvig@uib.no)

In 1950 the German orientalist Enno Littmann published a number of Egyptian zar songs dating to the first decade of that century. While Littmann's work is of great value for the study of the spirit possession phenomenon called zar and especially the zar songs, it is also in many instances biased, coloured by his idea of what he regarded as a more or less "true Islam" versus what he regarded as superstitions, "Zauber" (magic), and syncretism. Partly because of this bias, and partly for other reasons, he did not always understand the songs. One of the songs he was unable to understand properly is a song about a female character called Umm Gomyana. This paper offers a new interpretation of this song by showing that Umm Gomyana, whose identity escaped Littmann, is one of the most popular female Coptic saints in Egypt throughout the centuries. This leads up to a brief discussion of the role of saints, including Christian saints, in zar.

## **The microcosmos of Horsiese's coffin**

**Pål Steiner**, University of Bergen Library, [pål.steiner@uib.no](mailto:pål.steiner@uib.no)

This paper discusses the cosmological layout of the four-poster rectangular outer coffin of Horsiese in Bergen University Museum. The coffin utilises sections of Underworld books along the walls of the coffin combined with an iconographic representation of the sun's journey on the vaulted lid. Together these elements create a three dimensional stylistic representation of the cosmos surrounding the body, so that Horsiese's participation in the daily solar cycle is secured.

**Alexandros Tsakos**, AHKR, University of Bergen, [alexandros.tsakos@uib.no](mailto:alexandros.tsakos@uib.no)

TBA