



## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Deadline: 15th November 2019

Recent years have seen a surge of scholarly interest in Hellenistic Central Asia. This is due to the emergence of new bodies of evidence, but is also a product of recent trends in scholarship towards cultural interaction, global history, and interdisciplinarity. Indeed, Hellenistic Central Asia is the locus of ancient cultural exchange *par excellence*: positioned at the nexus of the Eurasian steppe, and Iranian, Indic, and Chinese cultural worlds, and transected by expanding foreign powers, including the Achaemenid, Hellenistic, and Kushan empires. The sources we analyse in this field are accordingly varied – including archaeological, numismatic, and epigraphic data, as well as literary sources in Greek, Latin, Chinese, and Indic languages – and shed light only on certain aspects of the past.

In a related way, knowledge production in this field does not occur in a vacuum. Instead, the study of Hellenistic Central Asia exists within a matrix of unusually diverse and complex geopolitical contexts of the last centuries, and intertwined with their respective concerns and historiographical traditions. These encompass Russian Turkestan, the British Raj, Soviet Central Asia, the independence and partition of India and Pakistan, post-Soviet Central Asia, Silk Road-inspired policy-making, and modern Afghanistan, eighteen years into the present war.

In light of the above, it is crucial for research on Hellenistic Central Asia to factor in the complexities of both past and present. Accordingly, incorporating critical historiography into source analysis is a valuable enterprise. Concerns of the present profoundly shape human understandings of the past. And, inversely, our understandings of the past have implications for the present. This is true for pasts and presents across time: people in antiquity (a ‘historical present’) also engaged with and imagined their past in different ways, using social memory for different purposes. Many kinds of such temporal interactions can be explored. As humans have

diverse experiences of their world, ideas about the past are likewise not monolithic across society. It is therefore appropriate to speak of multiple pasts and presents.

The aim of HCARN 4 is thus to highlight and critically examine the entanglements between pasts and presents in research on Hellenistic Central Asia. By investigating a range of temporal interactions, as well as their impact on knowledge production, we also aim to attain a clearer perspective on the shared objectives of this field, and its future development. Speakers have two options.

Papers may present current research in light of the theme of entangled pasts and presents. Topics of interest may include:

- How did people in antiquity construct and interact with memories of Achaemenid, Macedonian, or Hellenistic imperial pasts?
- How intentional and meaningful were post-Hellenistic engagements with Hellenistic visual and material culture in Central Asia and northwest India?
- How much do coinages reflect numismatic, monetary, and political traditions, rather than politics of the time?

OR speakers may focus on far-reaching, relevant methodological issues, such as:

- How have past collecting or archaeological practices informed present numismatic and archaeological research? How can future work balance the lacunae of the past?
- How do contemporary cultural and political issues impact research design, methodology, and interpretation in this field?
- Current ethical issues in the field and their impact on scholarship: for example, how should scholars engage with significant relevant sources published from the antiquities market?

We welcome proposals for 20-minute papers from both established scholars and early career researchers. Abstracts of no more than 300 words, along with the author's name, title and institutional affiliation, should be submitted to Milinda Hoo and Lauren Morris at [hcarn4@gmail.com](mailto:hcarn4@gmail.com) by no later than **15 November 2019**. We anticipate being able to offer some travel funding to participants, on a case by case basis.

Milinda Hoo and Lauren Morris (University of Freiburg),  
with Rachel Mairs (University of Reading), Gunvor Lindström (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut), and Ladislav Stančo (Charles University)