

The Sources for African History: rethinking methods, challenges and opportunities



The general committee of the project **Fontes Historiae Africanae/Sources for African History**, the long-term international project under the auspice of the **International Union of Academies (UAI)** based in Brussels, cordially invites participants to the international meeting which will take place at **Beit al-Hikma, The Tunisian Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts in Tunis-Carthage, Tunisia** from **13th to 15th April 2023**.

The aim of the conference is to increase the international cooperation and academic discussion by bringing together different academies, institutions and scholars involved, or willing to be involved, in the publication of the critical editions and translations of the sources for African history.

In the last two decades, there has been a significant increase in scholar's interests in precolonial or early colonial African history. Despite notable development in the field, the lack of heuristic works and critical editions of sources for precolonial and early colonial history of Africa still represents the great challenge for historians. The conference thus primarily seeks to shed light on the following issues related to identification, examination, translation, publication and accessibility of the sources, written or non-written, for African history:

- the dispersion of sources for African history across large geographical space.
- the identification and translation of the manuscripts written in Arabic and in other African languages
- the transcription and translation of oral sources
- the identification and interpretation of materials related to the African precolonial and early colonial history written in Latin and other European languages.
- the challenges and opportunities of publication of critical editions of historical sources in 21st century.

In addition to these crucial topics, we encourage the participants to formulate and present their own suggestions which they consider significant in relation to the sources for African history.



The researchers willing to present their current works on particular manuscripts would be most welcomed.

What is more, the meeting aims to highlight the importance of the North African manuscripts for the precolonial history of Africa and trans-Saharan economic and cultural exchanges. As Sub-Saharan Africa has been the prime geographical frame of the project for decades, the North African manuscripts have been often under-estimated if not even excluded from the interest of scholars involved in the project. This meeting wants to change that and wants to profit from its hosting institution in Tunis to present the newly established Tunisian committee of the project *Fontes Historiae Africae*.

The meeting will take place from 13th to 15th April 2023 at the Academy Beit al-Hikma, The Tunisian Academy of Science, Letters and Arts, 25, Avenue de la République, Carthage Hanibal, Tunis.

The program is generally planned for two working days of presentations and discussions. The third day is reserved for cultural excursion organised by the Academy Beit al-Hikma. The working languages of the conference are French and/or English. There will be no conference fees but the participants are expected to cover their transfer and hotel in Tunis in full by themselves or by their respective institutions. The Academy Beit al-Hikma is willing to arrange the reduction of prices at the hotel Carthage Thalasso located close to the place of the meeting.

In this regard, we strongly encourage the academies involved to send a delegate/ or delegates to this important meeting. We also invite all academies willing to be involved in the project *Fontes Historiae Africae* to organise their national committees headed by national director and to send a delegate/ or delegates.

All interested participants have to confirm their participation as soon as possible and send by e-mail a proposal of title of their presentation **by January 31st, 2023** to the international co-directors of the project *Fontes Historiae Africae*:

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