

# Entanglement and Globalization in Ancient Worlds

Autumn School, 14–17 November 2023, Innsbruck

## Introduction

‘The ancient world’ has become an accepted shorthand for a very narrow zone of human interaction, centred around a single sea: our self-imposed boundaries have lured us into mistaking a part for the whole.<sup>1</sup>

Michael Scott’s critique on the superficiality of the equation “the ancient world” = Mediterranean reveals a major methodological problem of contemporary research in ancient history. On the one hand there is an ever-growing acceptance of various degrees of interconnectedness as driving forces of historical processes, on the other hand a lack of scholarly accounts that not only mention such forms of connectivity but describe and explain them. A plethora of books with titles like “... *in the ancient world*”<sup>2</sup> tackling their specific subjects more or less exclusively from a Graeco-Roman perspective, aptly document a scholarly approach that is ultimately hindered by (over)institutionalized scholarly disciplines and—in the worst case—unreflected cultural bias. Furthermore, this ever-growing abundance of books seems to suggest that the ancient world not only ends a few hundred kilometers going up country from the Mediterranean, it also forces this “world” into quite narrow chronological boundaries. Therefore, *longue durée* processes that might encompass the Ancient Near East and Egypt, as well as Late Antiquity and Medieval Eurasia doesn’t seem to have a place in this ancient world.

Particularly in the light of methodological developments in modern social sciences during the last several decades—subsumable under the heading “global turn”<sup>3</sup>—such an understanding of the ancient world is revealed as a strongly misleading *pars pro toto* approach of little scientific value that needs to be overcome. The Autumn School **Entanglement and Globalization in Ancient Worlds** seeks to work on this overcoming with recourse to the well-known concepts of entanglement and globalization.

In his seminal study on the history of sugar consumption, Sidney Mintz used the word entanglement to describe how a singular comestible closely interlocked Caribbean and European worlds at the dawn of the modern era.<sup>4</sup> Today the concept of entanglement is not only a staple in the thriving field of so-called “global history”<sup>5</sup>, phenomena of entanglement keep being detected always further back in time.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Scott, *Ancient Worlds: A Global History of Antiquity* (New York: Basic Books, 2016) 23.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, 450 fn. 24 for examples.

<sup>3</sup> Eve Darian-Smith and Philip C. McCarty, *The Global Turn: Theories, Research Designs, and Methods for Global Studies* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin, 1986).

<sup>5</sup> See for instance the heavy use of the term in Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton • Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> See for instance *Appropriating Innovations: Entangled Knowledge in Eurasia, 5000–1500 BCE* ed. Joseph Maran and Philipp Stockhammer.

In contrast to that, the term globalization is used only reluctantly to describe historical phenomena before c.1000 BCE albeit a quite broadly defined and therefore easily extendable concept of “archaic globalization”<sup>7</sup> exists. This is especially striking since the theory of globalization uses a variety of quite clearly defined heuristic means—e.g. hybridization, variability, glocalization, grobalization etc.<sup>8</sup>—that seem, predestined for description and explanation of all kinds of connectivity through the ages.

The Autumn School **Entanglement and Globalization in Ancient Worlds** aims at exploring and explaining the different uses of entanglement and globalization outlined above by means of various case studies and theoretical considerations. This joint scholarly endeavour will shed further light on the heuristic value and applicability of said terms to further clarify a perception of an ancient world that goes beyond conscious or unconscious compartmentalisation.

## Date & Venue

- The Autumn School will take place in **Innsbruck, 14–17 November 2023**
- Venue: **Claudianasaal**  
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/de/public-relations/veranstaltungen/standorte-raume/clauidiana/>

## Procedure

- Seven invited lecturers will give a 45 min talk followed by 15 min of general discussion
- Afterwards, two autumn school participants will give two 15 min responses to the lecture followed by 30 min discussion (at first prevalently between lecturer and participant, later general)
- The responses will be prepared on the basis of **one or two lecture related papers** that the participants receive **three weeks before** the autumn school

## Travelling Costs

- Travel by train within the European Union can be fully reimbursed
- Flights from Britain can be covered up to 400 EUR
- Flights from the US can be covered up to 1500 EUR

>> for a preliminary programme see the next page

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<sup>7</sup> See Christopher A. Bayly, ‘Archaic’ and ‘Modern’ Globalization in the Eurasian and African Arena, C.1750–1850 (ed. Antony G. Hopkins; Globalization in World History, London: Pimlico, 2002) 47–73.

<sup>8</sup> For these four terms see Tamar Hodos, *Globalization: Some Basics: An Introduction to The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization* (ed. Tamar Hodos; The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization, London: Routledge, 2016) 3–11.

## Preliminary Programme

NOTA BENE: The current somewhat generic lecture headings are an attempt to blend the Autumn School's principal theme with the individual research interests of the lecturers and can of course be altered according to the lecturers' wishes.

	Tuesday November 14th, 2023	Wednesday November 15th, 2023	Thursday November 16th, 2023	Friday November 17th, 2023
		<b>Clashing cultures?</b>	<b>Classics without disciplinary borders</b>	<b>Entanglement and commemoration?</b>
09:00–09:45		Luigi Turri	Anca Dan	Hans-Joachim Gehrke
09:45–10:00		General Discussion	General Discussion	General Discussion
10:00–10:15	<i>Coffee Break</i>			
10:15–10:30		3rd Participant's Response	7th Participant's Response	11th Participant's Response
10:30–11:00		Discussion	Discussion	Discussion
11:00–11:15		4th Participant's Response	8th Participant's Response	12th Participant's Response
11:15–11:45		Discussion	Discussion	Discussion
11:45–14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>			
	<b>Entanglement: a hermeneutical toolkit?</b>	<b>Hybridization and variability</b>	<b>Cross-cultural perspectives vs. localism</b>	<b>Entanglement and rulership</b>
14:00–14:45	Hector Daniel Juarez Cosio	Hannes Fellner	Kathryn Stevens	Julia Burkhardt
14:45–15:00	General Discussion	General Discussion	General Discussion	General Discussion
15:00–15:15	<i>Coffee Break</i>			
15:15–15:30	1st Participant's Response	5th Participant's Response	9th Participant's Response	13th Participant's Response
15:30–15:45	Discussion	Discussion	Discussion	Discussion
15:45–16:00	2nd Participant's Response	6th Participant's Response	10th Participant's Response	14th Participant's Response
16:00–16:30	Discussion	Discussion	Discussion	Discussion
	<i>Evening Programme</i>			
16:30	Buffet Claudiana			
18:30		Pub Quiz	Dinner	