

Call for Papers

Red Sea Project X: Red Sea Horizons, Edges and Transitions
July 6-9, 2022

Occupying both the interstices and the center of overlapping fields of inquiry, the Red Sea as a geohistorical unit with many permutations and a deep chronological trajectory offers countless opportunities for investigation through the disciplines of history, archaeology, philology, anthropology, environmental sciences, area studies including Middle Eastern Studies, Indian Ocean Studies, and more. One perspective that prevailed in older historiographies is the definition of the Red Sea as “a sea on the way to somewhere else,” a distorting narrative that the Red Sea Project conferences of the past two decades, with their resulting publications, have nuanced and corrected. In Red Sea Project X we will continue this endeavor of centering the Red Sea by focusing on the broad themes of historical and historiographical horizons, edges and transitions. Historiographies of liquid spaces, especially those of the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean with which Red Sea studies clearly intersect, have fruitfully grappled with the notion of horizons in the quest for meaningful limits of geohistorical units of inquiry. Histories of real and metaphorical islands, shores, and edges have pushed the inquiry on maritime spaces and the literature on borders to new and sharper definitions. Red Sea Project X represents a milestone in the conference series: the previous nine projects have focused on crucial themes in the definition of the Red Sea geohistorical space, including trade and travel, Red Sea peoples and cultures, hinterlands and forelands, navigational and transportation networks, economies and natural resources, and human interaction with marine and littoral environments. With these cumulative contributions in mind, we invite proposals for papers that will explore edges and transitions in the histories and material cultures of the Red Sea, or reflect on the historical and historiographical horizons, divisions and invisible boundaries in Red Sea research. As the conference will take place on the island of Crete, Greece, we envision that transregional connectivities and comparative perspectives in maritime history, as well as the study of islands and insularity will continue to animate our joint inquiry. Conference themes will include:

1. Lines of sight, shores, and islands in the maritime experience
2. Archaeology and material culture of forelands, hinterlands, and contact zones
3. Movement, dependencies, and enslaved lives across geographic and temporal borders
4. The medieval and early modern, with an emphasis on the Ottoman, Red Sea
5. Traditional maritime technologies; the transition from the age of sail to the age of steam
6. Religion and the sea

The organization of Red Sea Project X is a collaboration between the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Crete, the Institute for Mediterranean Studies of the Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, and the Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies and Program in Mediterranean Studies at Emory University. Our conference will be hosted by the University of Crete and the Institute for Mediterranean Studies in the historic city of Rethymno, Crete, Greece. Details about lodging, program, and conference fees to follow on the conference website at redsea10.ims.forth.gr.

Paper proposal submission via the conference website, redsea10.ims.forth.gr
Paper proposal length: 300 words (maximum)
Paper proposal submission period: September 1, 2021–December 31, 2021

Place: Rethymno, Crete

Venues: Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas;
Student Cultural Center “Xenia”, University of Crete.

Please address all inquiries to Roxani Eleni Margariti (rmargar@emory.edu) and Antonis Anastasopoulos (anastasopoulos@uoc.gr).



The conference organizers are monitoring the COVID-19 situation and will issue an early notice in case a change in the format or dates of the conference is required. The University of Crete and the Institute for Mediterranean Studies of the Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas have implemented all appropriate measures and safeguards regarding COVID-19 but disclaim any liability for exposure to COVID-19.