# FANT 2026

Book of Contents / Abstractband

4. September 2026
Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main

18 Beiträge

Am 4. September 2026 kommen Forschende der Archäologie Afrikas in Frankfurt zusammen. Ziel ist es, das im Rahmen des SPP „Entangled Africa" entstandene Netzwerk zu erhalten, neue Kontakte zu ermöglichen und die Forschung zur afrikanischen Archäologie zu fördern. Es wird 3 Sessions mit Präsentationen von verschiedenen Forschenden geben. Außerdem werden Poster von Teilnehmenden ausgestellt. Abschließend wollen wir uns in einem gemeinsamen Roundtable zum Thema Archäometrie in der Archäologie Afrikas austauschen. Die folgenden Abstracts geben einen Überblick über die Beiträge des Treffens.

Falls ihr schon am Donnerstag in Frankfurt seid, der Ice Breaker ist um 18:30 im „Eichkatzerl“ in Frankfurt (https://www.eichkatzerl.de/). Schreibt kurz eine Mail, falls ihr dabei sein möchtet und noch nicht zugesagt habt.

## Ort

Das Event wird auf dem Campus Westend im Nebengebäude des IG-Farben-Haus (Poelzig-Bau) im Raum. NG 1.741a.

Dies sind die Location des Gebäudes: https://www.google.com/maps?q=50.1262196,8.6698829&z=17&hl=de

Das Nebengebäude (NG) liegt direkt am IG-Farben-Haus;von dessen Haupteingang haltet Ihr Euch nach hinten/rechts, dann ist das Nebengebäude ausgeschildert.

Wenn ihr von der U-Bahnhaltestelle Holzhausenstraße kommt oder an der Bushaltestelle „Bremerstraße“ aussteigt, ist das Nebengebäude direkt hinter dem Eingang zum Gelände.

Raum 1.741a befindet sich im 1. Obergeschoss.

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## Programm

**10:00** *Arrival*

**10:30** **Session 1**

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Umar Musa – *Revisiting Liesegang's Archaeological Archives, on the Old Kebbi Kingdom, Hausaland Nigeria*

André Luiz Ruivo Ferreira Burmann – *Figuren im Fundkontext: Stand und Herausforderungen einer westafrikanischen Synthese*

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Nick Gestrich – *New archaeological fieldwork in the Tagant, Mauritania: The end of the Tichitt tradition?*

Maximilian Schulze

Bolaji Owoseni – *Settlement and Landscape Architecture in Northern Yorùbáland, Nigeria: Recent Archaeological Research from the Pre-Medieval Period to the Recent Past*

Jan Kuper – *Archaeological Research of the University of Cologne in the Western Desert of Egypt: Achievements and Challenges*

Katharina V. M. Jungnickel – *Central African Holocene Late Stone Age: Continuity and subsistence in an understudied region*

**15:20** *Coffee Break*

**15:50** **Session 3**

Obeng Mensah, Deborah & Fäder, Eymard – *Beyond Photographs: Evaluating Structure from Motion (SFM) and Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) for Digital Heritage Preservation in the African Archaeology Archive Cologne (AAArC)*

Sonja Magnavita – *Trans-Sudanic vs. Trans-Saharan contacts: chemical analysis of glass beads from Kanem, Chad*

Juan-Marco Puerta Schardt – *Provenance analysis of clay smoking pipes in West Africa using pXRF*

Dirk Seidensticker – *Zwischen Handel und Wissensnetzwerken. Erste archäometrische Untersuchungen zu Töpfereitraditionen im Kongobecken*

**17:10** *Roundtable Archaeological Sciences*

**17:55** *Wrap-up*

**18:15** *End/ Beergarden*

## Präsentationen

### Adding value to medieval ceramic collections from Sudan held in German museum collections

***Ahmed Adam, Anne Haour*** · Sainsbury Research Unit, University of East Anglia, UK

As part of an ongoing move of the well-known African archaeology collections held at the University of Cologne's Forschungsstelle Afrika at Jennerstraße, we have been foregrounding the medieval ceramic collections from Sudan. These form part of the important assemblages built up during major international research projects.

collection, medieval, ceramics, Sudan

### Figuren im Fundkontext: Stand und Herausforderungen einer westafrikanischen Synthese

***André Luiz Ruivo Ferreira Burmann*** · Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, Institut für Archäologische Wissenschaften, Abt. III

Ausgehend von Forschungen zur Nok-Kultur untersucht das Projekt die archäologischen Fundkontexte von Figuren in Westafrika in diachroner und überregionaler Perspektive. Auf Grundlage einer Datenbasis von über 1200 Fundstellen seit dem 3. Jahrtausend v. Chr. werden vierzehn prähistorische sowie vier archäologisch-ethnologisch erforschte Kulturen vergleichend analysiert. Der Beitrag im Rahmen von FANT 2026 präsentiert den aktuellen Stand sowie zentrale zeitliche und methodische Herausforderungen.

Figur, Skulptur, Westafrika, Befund, Funktion

### Beyond Photographs: Evaluating Structure from Motion (SFM) and Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) for Digital Heritage Preservation in the African Archaeology Archive Cologne (AAArC)

***Deborah Obeng Mensah, Eymard Fäder*** · University of Cologne

The African Archaeology Archive Cologne (AAArC) holds a substantial collection of documented African archaeological artefacts and heritage sites. While photography and technical drawings have been the primary medium for archaeological documentation in the past, they have limitations in capturing surface detail and three-dimensional morphology. This study examines the added value of 3D model creation through Structure from Motion (SfM), as well as Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) within AAArC.

3D imaging, digital archives, cultural heritage preservation

### New archaeological fieldwork in the Tagant, Mauritania: The end of the Tichitt tradition?

***Nick Gestrich*** · Goethe Universität Frankfurt

The Late Stone Age Tichitt complex is famous (among archaeologists of West Africa, at least) for its early and large stone-built settlements, indications of social complexity, and settled agro-pastoral lifeways. At the same time, research has been rather sparsely spread over its large, densely settled area. Many of the key questions remain essentially unanswered. The Tagant, to the west of the Tichitt complex' core area, is often cited as having continued the Tichitt tradition beyond its end in the mid-first millennium BCE. However, the entire region has only been subject of fieldwork for a single PhD thesis in the early 1990s. Since then, satellite surveys have been carried out, which provide only limited information. This paper reports on first results of a restudy of materials and a short survey campaign, as well as giving a preview of future planned work.

Mauretania, Tichitt, Tagant, Settlements, Agropastoralism

### What do archaeological sites mean to people in coastal Bénin today?

***Anne Haour, Joanne Clarke, Didier N'Dah*** · Universität zu Köln

The coastal area of present-day Republic of Bénin contains archaeological and historical sites of global significance. Beyond the Bénin government's plans to make heritage-based tourism a lever of sustainable development, what do local tourism providers and local inhabitants think of this heritage?

archaeology, climate change, tourism, place-based knowledge

### Die archäobotanischen Vergleichssammlungen an der Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main

***Alexa Höhn*** · Goethe Universität Frankfurt

Vergleichssammlungen sind eine unverzichtbare Grundlage in archäobotanischer Forschung und Lehre. An der Goethe-Universität umfassen sie Hölzer, Pollen, Früchte, Samen und Phytolithen. Insbesondere die umfangreichen westafrikanischen Bestände stellen eine international bedeutende Ressource dar und werden regelmäßig von Gastwissenschaftlerinnen und Gastwissenschaftlern genutzt. Im Rahmen der Objektdatenbank CODA werden die Sammlungen systematisch digital erschlossen, um ihre wissenschaftliche Nutzung weltweit zu erleichtern. Zugleich dokumentieren die Objekte Umwelt, Kultur- und Kolonialgeschichte und besitzen damit einen eigenständigen Quellenwert für interdisziplinäre Forschung.

Sammlungen, Westafrika, Archäobotanik

### Central African Holocene Late Stone Age: Continuity and subsistence in an understudied region

***Katharina V. M. Jungnickel*** · Goethe University Frankfurt

The Holocene Late Stone Age (LSA) of Central Africa remains one of the least systematically investigated archaeological records on the African continent, and analysis of more than 200 archaeological sites demonstrates that current interpretations are shaped by biased, fragmented datasets from geographically restricted excavations rather than by prehistoric reality itself. At the same time, the evidence highlights the long-term coexistence of lithic technologies and ceramics, challenging traditional models that assume a linear transition from Stone Age to Iron Age and instead suggesting complex adaptive strategies within rainforest ecologies. By integrating archaeological synthesis with emerging artefact analyses, including lipid and residue studies, I argue for regionally grounded interpretations of Central African Holocene societies based on their own archaeological evidence rather than externally imposed savannah-based models or ethnographic analogy.

Central Africa, Late Stone Age, Subsistence

### Archaeological Research of the University of Cologne in the Western Desert of Egypt: Achievements and Challenges

***Jan Kuper*** · Universität zu Köln

Archaeological research in Egypt's desert regions has faced significant challenges in recent years due to regional and global constraints. Despite these difficulties, close collaboration with local partners has enabled joint initiatives in both research and academic training. This contribution provides an overview of archaeological projects and activities conducted by the University of Cologne in the Western Desert of Egypt over the past years and discusses future perspectives.

Western Desert of Egypt, University of Cologne, capacity building, fieldwork

### Trans-Sudanic vs. Trans-Saharan contacts: chemical analysis of glass beads from Kanem, Chad

***Sonja Magnavita*** · Goethe Universität Frankfurt

This talk presents the results of archaeometric analyses of a collection of 12th-14th century glass beads from the archaeological site of Tié (Chad) — the presumed capital of the early Kanem Empire northeast of Lake Chad. The appearance, manufacture, and chemical composition of the beads largely correspond to those of glass beads that were in circulation in the Indian Ocean region, suggesting a connection between Kanem and East or Northeast Africa. In light of the finds from Kanem, a trade route along the savanna belt seems more plausible than a trans-Saharan route, especially when other glass bead finds from the continent are taken into account as well.

glass, beads, Kanem, archaeometry

### Revisiting Liesegang's Archaeological Archives, on the Old Kebbi Kingdom, Hausaland Nigeria

***Umar Musa*** · Sainsbury Research Unit, University of East Anglia, UK

This paper reassesses the archaeological archives and material assemblages generated by a major, but largely unpublished research project, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and conducted in the Old Kebbi Kingdom in Sokoto State, Nigeria between 1990 and 1993. Titled "Towns, Villages, Hamlets and Ceramic Sequences in Old Kebbi ca. 500–1900 AD", the project was conducted by Gerhard Liesegang, focused on the 'history of historico-archaeological research on Kebbi', was not focused on archaeology as an academic discipline, but rather as a larger historical project initiated by Prof Lange centred on urban structures seen as a way to study transformations in Hausaland and in some West African states. Due to lack of access to the finds as well as time limitations faced by Liesegang, the archaeological materials were not analysed or described to a higher level, which led the work to mainly rely on the field notes and plans. Having already located the archival records at the Frobenius Institute in Frankfurt, as well as the archaeological materials deposited at the National Commission for Museums and Monuments' (NCMM) storage facility in Sokoto State, this PhD proposal seeks to reactivate the full archaeological potential of these data sets, through detailed and up-to-date analyses. This is with the aim of investigating the dynamics of the materials collected - trace evidence of trade, exchange, and material production within the Kebbi valley so as to reconstruct the region's pre-colonial socio-economic networks.

Kebbi, Liesegang, Archives, Archaeology, Hausaland

### Settlement and Landscape Architecture in Northern Yorùbáland, Nigeria: Recent Archaeological Research from the Pre-Medieval Period to the Recent Past

***Bolaji Josephine Owoseni*** · Sainsbury Research Unit, University of East Anglia UK

This paper presents the results of recent archaeological investigations at two historically significant settlement sites in northern Yorùbáland, Nigeria; Ilorin and Shao; both associated with the history of the Oyo Empire, one of the most influential states in pre-colonial West Africa. Archaeological surveys, excavations, and radiocarbon dating reveal long-term occupation extending as far back as 10,000 BC at Ilorin and with distinctive potsherd pavement floors and from the seventeenth century onward at Shao, and a diverse material assemblage, including pottery, beads, cowries, glass, and imported wares, attesting to complex patterns of local development and long-distance interaction. The findings contribute to broader debates on settlement development, landscape architecture, sociopolitical transformation, and the historical trajectories of northern Yorùbáland within the wider context of West African archaeology.

Northern Yorubaland, Settlement development, Landscape architecture, pre-medieval archaeology, Nigeria

### Provenance analysis of clay smoking pipes in West Africa using pXRF

***Juan-Marco Puerta Schardt, Umar Musa, Patrick Quinn*** · Goethe Universität Frankfurt

From around 1600 CE, clay smoking pipes become a regular component of West African site assemblages, yet they routinely differ from the accompanying pottery in both fabric and decoration. We apply pXRF to pipes and local pottery from 5 different sites, using the potteries geochemical signature as a baseline against which pipe provenance can be assessed to get a better inside on the relation between pipe and pottery production.

### Preliminary studies of Tagant ceramics

***Maximilian Schulze*** · Goethe Universität Frankfurt

Building chronological frameworks based on ceramic sequences is an established methodological approach in archaeology. However, the reliability of such chronologies for the Tichitt region and the associated areas of Oualata and Néma remains debated. The ceramic assemblages collected by Ould Khattar, together with the material recovered during the 2025 survey in the Tagant, offer initial insights into local processes of continuity and change, as well as into the relationships between the ceramic assemblages and their respective chronologies in the Tichitt region, the Tagant, and beyond.

### Zwischen Handel und Wissensnetzwerken. Erste archäometrische Untersuchungen zu Töpfereitraditionen im Kongobecken

***Dirk Seidensticker*** · Goethe Universität Frankfurt

Das Kongobecken zählt zu den am wenigsten erforschten Regionen Afrikas, obwohl seine Besiedlungsgeschichte eine zentrale Rolle für das Verständnis der sogenannten Bantu-Expansion spielt. Das Projekt untersucht mittels mineralogischer sowie geochemischer Untersuchungen (pXRF) prähistorische Keramiken und widmet sich der Fragestellung ob bestimmte Stile lokal an vielen Orten und damit innerhalb von trans-lokalen Töpfereigemeinschaften oder in zentralen Töpferdörfern produziert und anschließend in großem Umfang verhandelt wurden. Die Ergebnisse eröffnen neue Perspektiven auf soziale Netzwerken, Mobilität und Austauschbeziehungen im vorkolonialen Zentralafrika.

Keramik, Kongobecken, Archäometrie, Handel, Wissensnetzwerke

## Poster

### Ecological and Socio-Geographical Histories of Fruit Trees in Chad and its implication in management and trade

***Michèle Dinies*** · Freie Universität Berlin

### Multidisciplinary Investigation of a Newly-Discovered Iron Age Village in Northern Zambia: Subsistence Economy and Environmental Reconstruction

***Martha Kayuni*** · Universität zu Köln

### Monumentale Zeitzeugen – Archäologie rund um Grabhügel in Senegal

## Runde Tische

**Archaeometrical methods in African archaoelogy**

Archaeometric methods play an increasingly important role in African archaeology, allowing us to extract from archaeological materials a wealth of information on knowledge and skills, trade, and use that is not accessible to the naked eye. These methods differ considerably in terms of effort and the insights they yield. What they share, however, is the need for the research question, sampling strategy, data management, and data analysis to be carefully considered and aligned with one another.This roundtable offers an overview of different archaeometric approaches and a discussion of their opportunities and challenges. Which archaeometric questions and methods are currently relevant? What resources and capacities do we have, and how can we expand or connect them? How can archaeometric projects be designed together with African partners?