



Royal Academy for
Overseas Sciences 

International Conference

Minerals in Ancient Egypt, from Naqada to Alexandria



October 3-4, 2022
Palace of the Academies,
Brussels (Belgium)

Concept Note

Mineral resources, rocks, ore, minerals played a major role in the emergence and development of a centralized and powerful Egyptian state, from the 4th millennium BC to the Ptolemaic and Roman times. In the 4th millennium, imported minerals – obsidian, amazonite, lapis-lazuli – are closely associated to the emergence of social complexity, in the Naqada III period. Later on, in Dynastic Egypt, raw materials have been massively used for large architectural structures while luxury goods made use of rare minerals and precious metals, either mined locally or imported from remote sources. In the 4thC. BC, Ptolemaic Egypt opens on a globalized world, spanning from the Mediterranean basin towards Central Asia and new materials, unused in Dynastic Egypt – as for instance white marble – appear in country.

The conference aims at exploring the procurement, trade, use and value of all kinds of minerals and manmade products derived



from minerals, such as glass, in Egypt, Sudan and the Hellenistic Ptolemaic kingdom. The proposed approach is multidisciplinary as the study of procurement, sourcing and use of minerals gathers specialists from different research fields – archaeology, archaeometry, history, art history, philology, etc.

The concept of ‘value’ is a proposed red thread for the conference. This intrinsically complex concept refers to fluctuating and ambivalent meanings. On the one hand, value is probably specific to a given culture, possibly influenced by the rocks and minerals at hand. On the other hand, value is also a function of the intensity of the workforce invested in the procurement (mining, long-distance trade) and use (carving, smelting) of a given mineral. Further, value is also conferred through “resource greed” emanating from social or religious elite groups, linking precious minerals procurement and trade to increasing social complexity, from the Naqada elites to the Ptolemies.



The Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences Conference welcomes to-the-point, novel talks on the procurement, trade, use and value of minerals in and around Egypt. Different viewpoints from various disciplines are most welcome. We therefore invite original poster contributions on themes such as sourcing (geochemical/isotopic) analyses, archaeological contexts and finds, mapping ancient procurement sites, trade routes, uses of specific materials in art history, written sources, religious/ideological beliefs connected to minerals, etc.



Call for posters

The organizers invite proposals for posters by **31 May 2022**, to be sent to:

mininegypt@kaowarsom.be

Submitted proposals will include a title, author's affiliation, and an abstract of max. 300 words (a template is available on the conference website). Proposals will be peer-reviewed and acceptance will be notified to the authors by **30 June 2022**. English is the preferred language though contributions in French will also be accepted.

Registration fees for the 2 days (including buffet lunch, coffee break and abstracts book):
– 70 €.

– 50 € for the members of the RAOS.

– 20 € for registered MSc and PhD-students (a scan of the student card is required).

– A video link can be provided for free to overseas participants who could not attend the meeting in Brussels. Registration for obtaining access is required.

A peer-reviewed volume of papers will be published in the series Proceedings of the Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences; more information will be available by **July 2023**.

Guided tour exhibition 'Alexandria: Past Futures' (see: <https://www.bozar.be/en/calendar/alexandria-past-futures>) is foreseen on 4th October. Separated registration. More details will be available soon.

More Info:

<http://www.kaowarsom.be/mininegypt>

