

Archaeological, linguistic and textual evidence of Indian Ocean interactions with South East Asia

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The Indian Ocean is a vast maritime space in which African, Arabian and Asian maritime communities have interacted since as early as the Bronze Age. Recent investigations in the field of archaeology, ethnography, linguistics and literature have highlighted the value of maritime evidence in understanding past interactions between the western and the eastern parts of the Indian Ocean.

In archaeology, the finding of boat and ship remains showing different construction techniques has recently stimulated discussion about technological transfer, acquisition and change, through time, across different boatbuilder communities of the Indian Ocean.

Similarly, linguistic studies of evidence related to the maritime context, the lexicon of the sea, etc., have suggested a strong interaction among diverse maritime communities of the Indian Ocean and may reflect both trade and/or technological hegemony of some specific groups.

Textual evidence in Arabic and other regional languages has yet to be fully exploited in understanding the nature of these interactions.

The panel will bring together most recent themes emerging in the fields of archaeology, linguistics and history concerning maritime interactions across the Indian Ocean. We believe that interdisciplinary comparison across the different evidence types will help better understanding and interpreting these recent finds.

Single session panel