



Serving the Gods.

Artists, Craftsmen and Ritual Specialists in the Ancient World.

22nd Workshop of the Melammu Project,

Wrocław 26-27 September 2024

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The functioning of the ancient temples as well as churches and worship places is highly dependent on their people: builders, architects, artists (sculptors, painters, musicians) and craftsmen, but also suppliers: butchers, winemakers, land and stock owners, not to forget highly specialized ritual personnel as well as those who pass by and leave dedications for their own gods in the temples of the others. This workshop aims to understand the complex role of those who were working for the temple, including ritual actors as well as the involvement of political authorities and their impact on the religious services and functions. All the individuals with their ethnicities, genealogies, capacities, etc. present diverse social strata and create a network within a place of worship. That is why we suggest to tackle this topic through the lenses of prosopography and archaeology of the ancient temples. The aim of this workshop is to foster a dialogue between different areas of studies of the ancient world, including the civilizations beyond the area of the Mediterranean basin to understand the social status (elites vs non-elites) of the people (individuals, families, communities) connected to the places of worships in different cultures.

We want to look at the epigraphic and other textual (e.g. historical and papyrological) attestations of the professions, vocabulary determining people and their connections to the sanctuaries. Furthermore, we are interested in the iconographical testimonies, attributes related to the professions issued for the temple services, not necessarily priestly.

Additionally, we will take into account the material and archaeological evidence found in the temples (pottery, masonry, small objects, etc.) connected to the craft workshops posing a question if we can attribute objects to people and particular workshops.

The conference invites applications from researchers of the ancient worlds from a wide range of interdisciplinary perspectives and approaches. It is open for researchers focusing on the ancient Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Ancient Near East, but also contributions on ancient India, China, Egypt, and the Pre-Columbian Americas are welcome. Both polytheistic and monotheistic systems in a wide chronological scope will be considered (until the Eve of Islam as an upper chronological border). The goal of working in the aspect of connected cultures and worlds is to improve our understanding of the “human” factor behind the remains of the places of worship.

We expect submissions with an abstract of **ca. 200-300** words and a short biography of applicants until **31th May 2024** on email addresses: aleksandra.kubiak-schneider@uwr.edu.pl and bernhard.schneider@uwr.edu.pl