

Semitica et Classica V / 2012

Comparison and comparatisme in the Ancient Mediterranean



The journal *Semitica et Classica* aims to bring together studies of the Ancient Mediterranean, from the end of the Late Bronze Age to the Byzantine period. These studies focus on the Eastern shore of the *Mare Nostrum* as well as the Western shore. The Mediterranean was therefore a specific circulation place of ideas and knowledge from various backgrounds.

In **Volume I**, the foreword discusses “the abolition of borders in order to promote exchanges in a time where scientific journals are in demarcated areas”. It was said that “no area is foreign to others in an Oriental World, which was already rich historically, and in the Mediterranean World, which was the meeting point between ancient cultures”.

For the **volume V**, a remark on how to approach the Ancient Mediterranean World seems appropriate after the early volumes. In Ancient History, gathering research data, in order to improve knowledge, is not enough, thus one has to examine the methods and has to wait for the debate to be set up.

The journal title is about comparison as well as comparatism. The West was constantly influenced by the East via the Mediterranean from the beginning of the Iron Age, the interactions, which were varied, took place through various eras. It is therefore important to talk about comparatims instead of comparatism since one cannot compare neither analyze the influences, borrowing and acculturation for the end of the 2nd Millenium BC as one can do for the 3rd century AD. Moreover, the analysis of the influences can depend on whether the researcher is Hellenist or Orientalist.

Thus, the problem considered for this volume V of *SemClas* could be: **which comparisons and with what methods and practices in Ancient Semitic World and in Classical Antiquity?**

- A comparatism considering the diffusion phenomena?
- Or a comparatism more anthropological than historical, more synchronic than diachronic?
- A comparatism not seeking to establish homologies but highlighting the differences?
- A comparatism modelled as a means to seek or solely as a means to find?
- Or even, comparing what is comparable or comparing more freely (Marcel D tienne, *Comparing the Incomparable*)?
- Therefore, can one compare all fields between two cultural areas or are there limits or, rather, some dead ends?
- Beyond the method, is it not the topic and its issues that determine the comparison and the comparatism? etc.

To carry out this meeting of different perspectives, participants could bring their own questions while developing *a specific example* in their field of research not to be prisoner of any theory. Thus, one could have, from a case study, a better understanding of the Ancient Mediterranean, in the West as well as in the East.

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