

UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA
2ND AND 3RD JUNE, 2027

Call for Papers

BEYOND BORDERS: RECONSIDERING THE CAUCASUS IN PRE-MODERN AGES

The Caucasus has long been studied through the lens of modern national boundaries or predominantly framed by its Christian alignments with the Roman and Byzantine worlds. While these connections were vital, such framing has often overshadowed the region's deep integration into the Iranian, Islamic, and broader Eurasian spheres. In reality, the historical dynamics of the pre-modern Caucasus were shaped by multi-directional mobility and diplomatic negotiation. They shared cultural practices spanning Constantinople, Ctesiphon, Baghdad, and Central Asia.

This conference brings together early-career researchers to challenge these traditional historiographical asymmetries. By shifting the focus away from regional isolation and Byzantine-centric perspectives, we aim to re-examine the Caucasus as a pivotal space of convergence, friction, and synthesis between Eastern and Western empires. We particularly encourage contributions that explore Armenian, Georgian, and Caucasian Albanian contexts in dialogue with the Sasanian World, the Caliphates, the steppe nomadic confederations, and the wider Mediterranean region and Iranian plateau. We are especially interested in approaches that bring different sources, disciplines, and methodologies into conversation with one another.

POSSIBLE TOPICS INCLUDE

- **Historiography, textual traditions, and language**
- **Imperial relations, diplomacy, and political space**
- **Religious transformation and interaction**
- **Art, architecture, material culture, archaeology, coins, seals, and inscriptions**
- **Cultural memory and the construction of the past**
- **Mobility, migration, and networks of exchange**

Please note that the organisers are unable to cover travel and accommodation expenses. Participants are therefore kindly requested to secure funding from their own institutions or other sources.

The organising committee intends to publish a selected number of outstanding papers as an edited peer-reviewed volume (or a dedicated special issue in a peer-reviewed journal).

While we look forward to welcoming participants in person in Vienna, we are committed to accessibility and will accommodate an online panel for scholars experiencing visa difficulties.

We welcome proposals from academics at all career stages, including independent scholars, and particularly welcome proposals from scholars from the region and those from marginalised backgrounds.

Please submit proposals for individual papers of approximately 20 minutes by January 31st (2027) to the scientific committee Forough Mahmoodi Darvish B.(forough.mahmoodi.darvish.baghal@univie.ac.at), **Cassandre Lejosne** (cassandre.lejosne@unil.ch)**, and Anahit Safaryan, including:**

- An abstract of 300-400 words
- A short academic biography of 100 words including your institutional affiliation, email address and field of study
- The title of your proposed paper

Notification of acceptance will be communicated to selected speakers by the end of February 2027

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Doctoral School of Historical and Cultural Studies

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