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Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah,
FEZ



10th INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM “CEPHALOPODS – PRESENT AND PAST”

University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah (USMBA), FEZ, Morocco

24th March – 3rd April 2018

FIRST CIRCULAR

All cephalopod workers are invited to attend the 10th International Cephalopod Symposium in late March 2018 in Fes, Morocco. As it has become tradition since the 1st Symposium in Tübingen in 1985, the symposium will deal with all aspects of both living and fossil forms, with nautiloids and their relatives, ammonoids, and coleoids. The meeting is intended to be interdisciplinary in its best sense, bringing together biologists and palaeontologists, advanced, and young researchers, from B.Sc. to Ph.D. students to the experienced professors and museum curators. The meeting is also open to amateur collectors with a serious science interest. Your talks and poster presentations are hoped to stimulate fruitful discussions, stimulate new research ideas and directions, and to create new research alliances and friendships. You will be able to see the impressive landscapes and cephalopod-bearing rock formations of the Middle, High, and Anti Atlas during pre- and post-conference excursions. The historical fascination and oriental beauty of Fes, our joint taste of the local food, and the wonderful Moroccan nature shall give us a splendid joint experience in order to increase the bonds within our community of cephalopod workers.

The city and university of Fes



Fes or Fez (Fas in Arabic) is the third largest city in Morocco, after Casablanca and Rabat, with a population of 946,815 (2004 census). It is the capital of the Fes-Meknes Region and located in northern Morocco, at the Wadi Fés just above its influx into the Sebou River. Fes is the oldest of Morocco's four imperial cities (the others are Marrakech, Meknes and Rabat). It was founded in 789 by Idriss the 1st, who was fleeing the Abbasids of Baghdad. He led local Berbers in conquest of the region and established the Kingdom of Morocco, before being poisoned by the Abbasids. In the 9th century, waves of immigrants from Spain (mainly Muslim families fleeing the Catholic Reconquest) and Tunisia brought expertise and wealth to the burgeoning city.

By the middle of the 9th century, the Karaouine University was built, one of the largest and the oldest in the world. By the 11th century, the city had a cosmopolitan population of more than 500,000 inhabitants, including Moors, Berbers, Jews, Turks and Christians, and the two settlements on opposing river banks established by Idriss the 1st, and then his son, had merged. Fes reached its zenith as a centre of learning and commerce in 1269 when the Merenids made it their new capital and its reputation as an intellectual hub began to grow. The city known as the 'Athens of Africa' was filled with many great buildings and monuments, including madrassas bearing a distinctive blend of Arab and Andalusian styles. It was also an important trading centre.

By the 16th century, the city had lost its capital status when the Wattasid Dynasty took Fes with the support of the Turks, and the city was finally conquered by the Ottomans in 1579. This prompted the move of the capital to Marrakech. During the 18th century reign of Moulay Abdallah, it became the capital once more.

In 1912, most of Morocco became a French protectorate, with Rabat as the capital. The Ville Nouvelle (new town) was built, characterized by wide, straight boulevards. Despite the ensuing neglect of the medina, the oldest and walled part of the city known as Fes el Bali was granted UNESCO world Heritage status in 1981 – the first time an Islamic and Arab city had been accorded with the title.

The Medina of Fez is considered as one of the most extensive and best conserved historic towns of the Arab Muslim world. The unpaved urban space conserves the majority of its original functions and attribute. It not only represents an outstanding architectural, archaeological and urban heritage, but also transmits a life style, skills and a culture that persist and are renewed despite the diverse effects of the evolving modern societies.

Why Fez for the meeting?

We choose Fes as our host because of its modern university with all required facilities, its convenient position to reach cephalopod outcrops in the Atlas Mountains and pre-Sahara to the south (Tafilalt and Maider), and because it is easy accessible by plain (with cheap taxi drive to the city), by train (detailed time table in 2nd Circular), by comfortable bus (CTM), or, along the modern motorway, by car (ca. 2.5 hours from Rabat).

Organizing Committee

Prof. Dr. R. Thomas BECKER, Institut für Geologie und Paläontologie, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany;

Prof. Dr. Ahmed EL HASSANI, Mohammed V University of Rabat and Hassan II Academy of Sciences and Technology, Rabat;

Prof. Dr. Omar ASSOBBHEI (President), University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah, Fes, and Hassan II Academy of Sciences and Technology, Rabat;

Prof. Dr. Abdellah BOUSHABA, University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah, Fes;

Dr. Lahssen BAIDDER, University Hassan II, Casablanca;

Dr. Zhor Sarah ABOUSSALAM, Institut für Geologie und Paläontologie, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany;

Dr. Sven HARTENFELS, Institut für Geologie und Paläontologie, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany;

Prof. Dr. Driss SADKI, Moulay Ismail University, Meknes;

Prof. Dr. Bouaza FEDAN, Mohammed V University of Rabat;

Dr. Farah EL HASSANI, University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdella, Fes;

Dr. Christian KLUG, Paläontologisches Institut und Museum, Universität Zürich, Switzerland;

Contact

Prof. Dr. R. Thomas BECKER, rbecker@uni-muenster.de (or shartenf@uni-muenster.de)
(especially for abstracts and scientific program)

Prof. Dr. Ahmed EL HASSANI, ahmedelhassani@gmail.com
(especially for questions of local organization and travel)

Venue

Conference Center of the University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah (USMBA) of Fez. We plan to organize the transport from downtown hotels and lunch at the conference site.

Conference language

English

Preliminary Program

- 24.-25.3. Pre-Conference Excursion to the Jurassic and Cretaceous of the Middle and High Atlas, 2 days:
- Day 1- High Atlas: Tizi T (Lias-Dogger); Rich area (Dogger, Aalenian, Bajocian); Ait Athmane (Domerian-Toarcian).
- Day 2- Middle Atlas: Ayn Hannou (Toarcian, Aalenian- Bajocian); Tizi issoulittène (Toarcian-Aalenian), Ait Moussa (Issouka) Lias - Domerian, Jbel Amrar (Toarcian – Aalenian – Bajocian), and Almou n'Boutssalli (Toarcian-Bajocian)
- All nights in a comfortable hotel (double rooms, single rooms with extra fee) in Midelt and Fez.
- 26.3. Evening (19.00) : Icebreaker Party in the Hotel Palais Medina and Spa
- 27.3. Welcome addresses, oral and poster presentations in the Conference center of USMBA Fez.
- 28.3. Oral and poster presentations; afternoon: some city sightseeing
Evening: Conference Dinner (details to be announced in the 2nd Circular)
- 29.3. Oral and poster presentations
- 30.3-3.4. Post-Conference Excursion to the Anti-Atlas (Tafilalt)
- Day 1: Drive to Erfoud, introduction to the Tafilalt Devonian at Bou Tchrafine (late afternoon); all nights in a comfortable hotel (double rooms, single rooms with extra fee) in Erfoud
- Day 2: The spectacular Emsian mudmounds of Hamar Laghdad (morning), cephalopod-rich Devonian of the western Tafilalt Platform (afternoon)
- Day 3: The nautiloid-crinoid-rich top Silurian to Lower Carboniferous of the Amessoui Syncline (southern Tafilalt), sunset at the famous Merzouga dunes
- Day 4: The cephalopod-rich Upper Devonian to Lower Carboniferous of the Maider Basin (Aguelmous Syncline)
- Day 5: Drive back to Fes, the Devonian (with Frasnian-Famennian boundary) in the Mirt area (on the way) – end of excursion in the afternoon in Fes (hotel for subsequent night not included)

Symposium contributions

All talks will have to be submitted as Powerpoint files that are compatible with a PC/Notebook. They should be presented in English and scheduled for 20 minutes (discussion time included). The organizers will select some key note contributions, which are allowed 30 minutes (including discussion); all authors will be notified of this honor well in advance. The program will be planned to avoid any parallel sessions. We encourage the submission of posters and promise that sufficient time will be allocated to explain and read them during several special poster sessions. There will be a small "Best Poster Award" on the last day of talks.

Symposium Topics (examples)

- Morphology and ecology of fossil and modern coleoids
- Cephalopod genetics and phylogeny
- Evolutionary trends of upper Palaeozoic and Mesozoic coleoids
- Ontogeny, morphometry, variability and the taxonomy of cephalopods
- Advances in the high-level (suborders to subclasses) systematics of cephalopods
- The impact of global events on cephalopod diversity, disparity, and distribution
- Rare cephalopod taxa: discovery, distribution, phylogenetic significance
- Cephalopods as index fossils for refined time scales
- Cephalopod (Palaeo)Biogeography and Evolution
- Open Symposium (all other topics)

We welcome further suggestions.

Abstracts

All abstracts will be formally published in a volume of the "Münstersche Forschungen zur Geologie und Paläontologie". They should not be longer than two pages including possible figures and references, using the font TimesRoman 11 (titles font 12 and bold). The email addresses of all authors have to be provided. The Second Circular will give further details for style and format that should be strictly kept. All abstracts will have to be submitted via email and in MS-Word format (.doc, .docx, .rtf) to Prof. R.T. BECKER (rbecker@uni-muenster) and/or the volume editor Dr. S. HARTENFELS (shartenf@uni-muenster).

Authors will be notified by email if their abstract requires revision and when their contribution is finally accepted. Posters should be planned for A0 size (in usual portrait style).

Registration and Fees

All cephalopod workers are asked to submit (by email) a first note of interest (preliminary registration, see form below). We welcome if you further distribute this circular to other workers whom we may not have on our list, which derived from the participation in previous International Cephalopod Symposia. The formal registration will start after our Second Circular together with the abstract submission and with fee payment.

We try to keep the conference fees low and affordable for many workers. They will cover the abstract volume, icebreaker party, conference dinner, lunch and coffee/tea during the three lecture days. The excursion fees will include the costs for the excursion guidebook (also to be published in the "MÜFO"), transport, water during the day, accommodation during the trip (double rooms, single rooms with extra fee), and meals (not for drinks at and after dinner). For a reasonable planning and calculation we would like to have your preliminary registration soon.

Accompanying persons are welcomed and should enjoy the tourist attractions of the city of Fez and the Moroccan spring time. Their reduced fees will include the icebreaker party, lunch and conference dinner. You may consider to use our Fez meeting as the starting point for some private holiday, visiting the other "Imperial Cities", especially Marrakesh, or to enjoy the splendid beaches of Essaouira or Agadir.

Payment (bank transfer) information will be given in the Second Circular.

Conference Proceedings

It is planned to publish a Proceedings Volume with short to moderately long papers as a special issue in a peer-reviewed journal with good impact factor. Negotiations have already started. Details will be given at the symposium. It is important to announce your interest to participate in such a volume at an early stage since this will strengthen our case.

Accommodation

Fez is a major tourist destination and, therefore, offers a wide range of accommodation styles, from Riads (with rented rooms in historical city houses) to cheap or moderately expensive hotels (between 45 and 120 € per night). All participants have to make their own room/hotel bookings. We will give some suggestions in the second circular (with specific meeting rate). Since Easter time is a main holiday season, we ask you to book not too late.

Useful Information

For visas apply to the Moroccan Embassy or consular office in your country. A Letter of Invitation will be sent to everyone who needs it. Most of West European and North American countries do not need a visa. Please contact: ahmed.elhassani@gmail.com for that. To know where the Moroccan embassies are situated in your country, see: <http://www.diplomatie.ma/default.aspx> and <http://www.consulat.ma/fr/index.cfm>.

More information on Morocco can be seen on:

<http://www.maroc.ma/PortailInst/An/>

<http://www.minculture.gov.ma/fr/>

<http://www.tourisme.gov.ma/> <http://www.mincom.gov.ma/fr.html>

Currency / Money Exchange

The Moroccan national currency Unit is the Dirham (MAD). Rates: One \$ US is about 8.50 MAD and one € is about 10.20 MAD. Exchange facilities of the internationally convertible foreign currencies and traveler's checks are available at the Casablanca and Fez airports and most of the bank office exchange in Fez, Midelt, Erfoud and at the hotels. The bank opening hours are: from 8.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m Monday through Thursday. A few banks open also Saturday morning. All Credit cards are accepted in most hotels, shops and travel agencies.

Medical insurance: The host country doesn't take responsibility of the medical insurance of neither the participants nor their accompanying members. Therefore, it is highly recommended that participants arrange travel insurance contracts with their travel agency. You do not require special inoculations apart from common ones (tetanus, hepatitis etc.) nor special protection against tropical diseases.

IMPORTANT DATES

July 2017	Second Circular
From 1. October 2017	Early Registration, Abstract Submission starts, early payment
From 1. December 2017	Late Registration (more expensive), Late Abstracts, late payment
From 15. January 2018	Abstract Submission closed / Third Circular and Program

Homepage

The circulars will be posted at:

www.uni-muenster.de/GeoPalaeontologie/

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PRELIMINARY REGISTRATION FORM

Full Name (with titles).....

Institution (with full address).....

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Post Code and Country.....

Email.....

Phone / Mobile Phone.....

Title of planned contribution.....

.....

.....

Oral contribution.....

Poster.....

I consider to submit a manuscript to a Proceedings volume (yes/no).....

I require a Letter of Invitation (yes/no).....

(Please extract this form and send it filled in by email to the organizers **until the 15th July 2017**)