

# ORAL HISTORY AS A TOOL IN ARCHAEOLOGY?

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Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> Juli 2025,  
Hegelstr. 59, Room 00-309, Mainz  
Organisers: Kathrin Gabler and Alexander Pruß

In the last years, projects have expanded to record the oral histories of current, former and past staff members as well as local communities linked to archaeological fieldwork along the Mediterranean. Especially in the fields of Egyptology and Near Eastern Archaeology various sites, teams and colleagues have started initiatives to document such non-written traditions and investigate possible archival information on local communities, via textual, visual and oral media. However, the potential of the method has still to be explored.

The 1-day workshop will provide an overview on the current state of the method in research projects, discuss its advantages and limits as well as its relevance for ancient studies as a further source of information in reconstructing ancient civilizations.

Experts from different fields and foci will introduce the method, discuss theoretical impacts, share practical, logistical and methodological experience to open the floor for future exchange and perspectives of oral history in archaeology and beyond.

The workshop will take place within the framework of internationalization at JGU Mainz, providing students and researchers with a further methodological tool as well as international exchange and insights into a hidden or underrated source of modern fieldwork and studies.

## Programme *Oral History as a Tool in Archaeology*

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**09:00** Welcome with coffee and tea

**09:15** Introduction by Kathrin Gabler and Alexander Pruß

**09:30** *Sensitive issues, Orality and Archaeology: How to approach looting, illegal activities and military occupation of sites*

Mathilde Mura, Aix-Marseille Université, Near Eastern Archaeology

**10:30** *Missing but not forgotten: The role of German prisoners of war in Hadrian's Wall research*

Catherine Teitz, JGU Mainz, Classical Archaeology

**11:30** Discussion

**12:00** Lunch break (organised for the speakers)

**13:30** *Drei Gründe, warum ich Methoden der Oral History nicht nutze*

Susanne Grunwald, Brandenburgischen Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Mittlere und Neuere Geschichte und Ur- und Frühgeschichte

**14:30** *Oral History of The German Archaeological Institute in Cairo*

Bassem Ezzat, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo, Egyptology

**15:30** Coffee break

**16:00** *People and places: The history of Egyptian Egyptology, archaeological workforce and ancient Egyptian houses through oral history (2013-2025)*

Fatma Keshk, The American University in Cairo, Egyptology

**17:00** Final discussion and perspectives

**19:15** Dinner for speakers at **Der Rote Kopf** (Rotekopfgasse 4, 55116 Mainz)

Registration for attending the workshop is possible until **1<sup>st</sup> of July** via email. Please contact: [kgabler@uni-mainz.de](mailto:kgabler@uni-mainz.de)

How to reach Hegelstr. 59? See [here](#)

Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz  
55122 Mainz  
[www.uni-mainz.de](http://www.uni-mainz.de)

