

Newsletter

AT A GLANCE

Happy New Year 2026!
CFEE has a new look!

What happened in CFEE?



LIFE AT THE CFEE

- **The CFEE is transforming and optimizing itself!**



December 2025 was marked by a wave of modernization and reorganization at the CFEE. Several projects were carried out to improve the working environment and the quality of the reception area: repainting, installation of new toilets, and refurbishment of the library. The library underwent an initial reorganization with the aim of better showcasing our document collection and facilitating access to it. In line with this policy of optimizing space, the field equipment used for archaeological missions was transferred to a new storage facility at the French Embassy in Ethiopia. This move freed up space at the CFEE, which should allow for the creation of new workspaces, including shared offices, promoting exchange and collaborative work.

- **The CFEE construction project reaches a new milestone!**

Last January, the construction project for the future CFEE reached a key milestone with the completion of a soil study on the site of the future center. This work, carried out by a specialized company, enabled a precise analysis of the nature of the soil, an essential prerequisite for the continuation of the project. This concrete step forward marks a new phase in the preparation of the

construction site and confirms the steady progress of this project, which will shape the future of the CFEE.



- **Official launch of the SaGePro project**

The CFEE continues to strengthen its focus on gender. It has obtained a grant from the French Embassy as part of a Fonds Équipe France (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) dedicated to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that fight against gender-based violence. In this context, the CFEE has proposed to take a step back with an ethnographic study of professionals who support women victims of violence.

In a context marked by a high prevalence of violence, recent armed crises, and structural constraints on the health and social services system, the project focuses more specifically on the practices, knowledge, and experiences of the actors involved—community health workers, volunteers, caregivers, judicial personnel, and social workers—with an emphasis on the often invisible dimension of emotional labor. The project examines how gender relations, biographical trajectories, and professional hierarchies influence care relationships, coordination between professional groups, and the construction of expertise. By combining sociology of professions, ethics of care, and a biographical approach, the research aims to shed light on the tensions between institutional recognition, moral commitment, and working conditions, as well as to analyze the effects of these configurations on the quality of support provided to women victims of violence.

Designed as a collective investigation, the small team composed of Abeba Amare (AAU – associate researcher at CFEE), Tirsit Sahledengel (AAU – associate researcher at CFEE), Netsabrek Tamene (University of Wolkite), and Constance Perrin-Joly will conduct interviews with professionals in Addis Ababa and Tigray.

EVENTS & SEMINARS

- **(Erratum – October-November 2025 newsletter) CFEF and FMSEH seminar – “Biological and funerary perspectives on the emergence of food-producing societies in the Horn of Africa” – November 21, 2025**



CFEF & FMSEH SEMINAR BIOLOGICAL AND FUNERARY PERSPECTIVES ON THE EMERGENCE OF FOOD-PRODUCING SOCIETIES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

By Laura Maréchal (PhD), biological anthropologist at the University of Geneva

In the Horn of Africa, the emergence of the first food-producing societies is characterised by increasing social complexity, expressed notably through the diversification and expansion of trade networks, new strategies for resource management, and the presence of multiple cultural traditions. Among these innovations was the development of funerary monumentalism, aimed at commemorating the deceased while also demonstrating political and/or economic power.

To date, however, our understanding of the biological diversity and symbolic identity of the region's early herding populations remains limited. In this context, we present our research on the Antakari 3 necropolis (Gobaad Basin, Djibouti, 3rd millennium BCE). By examining funerary practices, biological affinities, and the spatial organisation of the necropolis, we offer new insights into the identity of these populations.

In the absence of ancient DNA data, our objective is to characterise the morphological variability of these human groups in order to explore population processes, patterns of (dis)continuity in human occupation, and, more broadly, the integration of these early food-producing communities into the evolutionary history of the region.

On November 21, Laura Maréchal gave a presentation as part of the CFEF-FMSEH seminar series, focusing on the funerary and biological perspectives of the emergence of food-producing societies in the Horn of Africa.

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resource management strategies, and the presence of multiple cultural traditions. Among these innovations was the development of funerary monumentalism, intended to commemorate the deceased while demonstrating political and/or economic power.

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More information here: <https://cfef.hypotheses.org/13172>

- **Addis Ababa City Guide Workshop – December 1, 2025**

On December 1, the CFEF hosted a workshop to discuss the drafting and revision of the City Guide to Piassa, a historic district of Addis Ababa.

Dominique Harre, assisted by Davide Ciuffini, led the discussion with a team of members from different academic backgrounds, who explored the main elements to be taken into account in terms of Piassa's urban space, landscape, and social fabric. Helen Zeray, Mebrat Melaku, and Jimret Arega, members of Heritage Watch Ethiopia, shared their perspectives on heritage buildings and the before and after in Piassa. Tadesse Girmay and Fasil Ghiorgis shed light on the issues from an academic perspective, with architect Maheder Gebremedhin rounding out the list of participants. Workshop members explored various possibilities related to the project, ranging from its educational scope to editorial initiatives.

- **FMSHE/CFEE Seminar – Stelae and Stone Monuments from Western Africa – December 19, 2025**



As part of the CFEE-FMSEH seminar series and the third anniversary of this study group, Alice Menzop Temgoua-Nomissing and Narcisse Santos Tchandeu presented their research on megalithism in West Africa on December 19.

This online seminar focused on the presentation of megalithic sites in Faro (Cameroon) and the Cross River-Grassland region (Nigeria-Cameroon).

More information here:

<https://cfec.hypotheses.org/13399>

- **Constellation Workshop – Harar – January 6, 2026**

The second workshop of the Kewakibt – Constellations program (funded by the French Institute of Islamology, supported by EHESS and CFEE) was held in Harar, at the Maison Rimbaud, in early January 2026. The team members worked on extracting and structuring data from biographical and hagiographical sources in order to identify the scholarly figures in the history of Ethiopian Islam and map their networks.

The workshop also included two public round tables in Harar and Addis Ababa, promoting dialogue between researchers, students, and heritage stakeholders. Presentations by Alessandro Gori (University of Copenhagen), Éloi Ficquet (EHESS), and Anne Regourd (CNRS) highlighted issues related to manuscript traditions, their study, and their conservation. These exchanges opened up new avenues of research and strengthened collaborations around Muslim intellectual history in Ethiopia.

More information here: <https://cfec.hypotheses.org/13941>

- **CFEE Seminar: Ethnography in Motion: Audiovisual Encounters Across Film, Installation, and Performance – January 23, 2026**



Itsushi Kawase presented more than 20 years of research in northern Ethiopia, specifically in the city of Gondar. In his lecture entitled "Ethnography in Motion," he revisited, as the polysemic title suggests, several movements in his approach: both the shift in research subjects, whose only commonality is the marginalized and potentially critical situation of the people being ethnographically studied, and the shift that the camera must make in describing these situations. Various film

excerpts illustrated this methodological point: first with an Asmarhi, a singer interacting with bar patrons and offering critical perspectives; then with the Zar possession cult, whose ritual appearances are always visually impressive; and finally with the daily lives of street children interspersed with interviews showing their ability to describe their conditions. The last part presented an exhibition held at the Osaka Museum, whose primary objective was not to explain, but rather to bring together musical forms from many parts of Asia and several places in Africa, sometimes with the artists themselves improvising jam sessions. This session, in addition to offering an introduction to various anthropological themes, showed us the originality of the work of this visual anthropologist, who is also a poet and musician, and always fully committed to describing reality.

More information here: <https://cfee.hypotheses.org/13726>



PUBLICATIONS & BLOG POSTS

- **International Conference "Masculine/Feminine: Crises, Representations, Circulations"**

The international conference "Masculine/Feminine: Crises, Representations, Circulations," held in Djibouti from November 24 to 26, 2025, is part of the APaSuN network, which explores life trajectories, gender relations, and their transformations from a comparative North/South perspective. It marks the end of the first phase of the network, funded by the ANR (Agence Nationale pour la Recherche) – MRSEI (Montage de Réseaux Scientifiques Internationaux) program. The conference invited participants to think of gender as a dynamic social relationship, traversed by the circulation of ideas, injunctions, practices, and experiences that redefine the boundaries between masculine and feminine. All of the papers presented highlighted how gender identities are shaped by tensions between cultural heritage, social norms, transnational influences, successive crises, and mobility. The conference was made possible thanks to the support of IRICA (Interdisciplinary Research Institute on the Horn of Africa), CFEE (French Center for Ethiopian Studies), UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), the French Institute, and the French Embassy in Ethiopia.

More information here: <https://cfee.hypotheses.org/13975>

- **Taphonomic Analysis of Faunal Remains from Lake Beseka, Ethiopia: Implications for Site Formation Processes and Paleoecological Reconstruction**

Addise Daba inaugurates the series of blog posts dedicated to the research conducted by the CFEE scholarship recipients of the class of 2025! In his blog post, Addise Daba presents his research findings on the faunal remains discovered in the Lake Beseka region. These artifacts provide insight into how humans interacted with other animals and their environment during the Late Pleistocene and Holocene. Through zooarchaeological and taphonomic analysis, these bones help reconstruct past landscapes, subsistence practices, and the processes that shaped archaeological sites.

More information here: <https://cfee.hypotheses.org/13853>

- **CFEE – INP: two heritage conservation students on internship in Addis Ababa (2025)**

This blog post recounts the internship of two student curators from the Institut National du Patrimoine (INP), Florian Doladille, specializing in archaeology, and Gaëtan Richard, specializing in inventory. Immersed in the CFEE, Florian and Gaëtan participated in discussions about the reopening and restoration of Villa Alpha, the home of artist Afewerk Tekle.

More information here: <https://cfee.hypotheses.org/13331>



THEY VISITED US *(in alphabetical order)*

Jean-Pierre Avannier, Cooperation and Cultural Action Service

Abeba Amare, Associate Professor (AAU)

Victoria Bel, PhD student, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University

Philippe Boucher, Professor Emeritus at the National Museum of Natural History

Tsegaye Ebabey, PhD student in archaeology, Addis Ababa University

Eloi Fiquet, Senior Lecturer at EHESS, as part of the IFI Constellations project

Dominique Harre, Independent Researcher and Associate at CFEE

Victoria Kernen, PhD student, Paris Nanterre University

Medhi Labzaé, CNRS researcher, as part of the ANR COPE project

Olivier Mouginot, Director of the Alliance Française

Ethiopian Heritage Trust NGO

Tirsit Sahledengel, Associate Professor (AAU)

Netsebrak Tamene, Associate Professor (University of Wolkite)

Véronique Sedro-Verneuil, author

What's Up in the Network

Cette section est la vôtre, faites nous parvenir vos actualités !

In addition to the ANR Ethiowar-COPE, led by Sabine Planel, which is entering its final year, the CFEE is partnering with two new ANRs:

- **ANR AcheleanRoots:**



The AcheuleanRoots project, co-led by the CFEE-MEAE, Addis Ababa (PI. Yonas Beyene) and PACEA-University of Bordeaux (PI. Anne Delagnes), began in January 2026 and will run for five years. It brings together an Ethiopian-French-Japanese team, including researchers, engineers, technicians, post-doctoral fellows, doctoral students, and master's students.

An international and interdisciplinary project supported by the French National Research Agency and the Leakey Foundation, AcheuleanRoots studies the behavioral innovations that accompanied the emergence and early stages of the Acheulean, the oldest complex material culture in prehistory.

For more information: <https://cfec.hypotheses.org/14022>

- **ANR Afrobees:**



The aim of this project (Yvonne Treis) is to study the language of traditional domestic beekeeping, forest beekeeping, and honey hunting in Africa, i.e., cultural practices threatened by climate change and deforestation and affected by the introduction of industrialized beekeeping. Based on annotated natural language corpora and lexical databases, two in-depth case studies will focus on beekeeping practiced by the Kambaata (Ethiopia) and honey hunting practiced by the Hadza (Tanzania). Adopting methods from linguistic documentation, ethnolinguistics, lexical typology, areal and diachronic linguistics, the

project will study (i) the structure of the beekeeping and honey hunting lexicon (e.g., specialized

beekeeping terms, derivatives and compounds, intra- and extra-semantic field polysemy) and (ii) the discourse of beekeepers and honey hunters on their activities and roles, on the relationship between humans, bees, and honey predators, and on the medicinal, cultural, and social importance of honey. The cross-cutting theme of the project will study specific terms related to bees and honey across Africa, drawing on existing lexical databases and supplementing them with targeted questionnaires. It will aim to discover shared words (cognates and borrowings) and common lexicalization structures (e.g., polysemy and shared word formation processes) and their grouping into specific language (sub)families or geographical areas. This will provide a better understanding of the history of the spread of beekeeping techniques in Africa.



Call for applications

- **Gender: DOCTORAL CONTRACT OFFER (2026-2029)**

Thesis topic:

Subjectivities, representations, and health policies in times of epidemic: telling one's story, filming oneself, showing oneself during the HIV/AIDS crisis

Supervised by:

- Patrick FARGES (ECHELLES – UMR CNRS 8264)
- Joëlle KIVITS (ECEVE – UMR Inserm 1123)

Supervised by a historian specializing in gender and sexuality and a sociologist specializing in public health, this doctoral research is based on a critical interdisciplinary approach. It will benefit from a dual research environment:

- within the ECHELLES laboratory (UMR CNRS 8264)
- within the ECEVE laboratory (UMR Inserm 1123)

Application deadline: May 31, 2026

Interviews with selected candidates will take place on June 23, 2026.

More information here: <https://citedugenre.fr/2026/01/09/aap-contrat-doctoral-subjectivites-representations-et-politiques-de-sante-en-temps-depidemie-se-raconter-se-filmer-se-montrer-durant-la-crise-du-vih-sida/>

Reach Out



If you have any questions, feedback, article ideas, or contributions, please email the secretariat (secretariat@cfee.cnrs.fr), and we will get back to you.

Check out the previous newsletter on our blog: <https://cfee.hypotheses.org/>