This set of conference proceedings will be a classic, like all the others, and consulted long after its immediate applicability has waned ... It captures the depth and breadth of archaeological research on the African continent and reflects the state of archaeology at a particular point in time.

— Natalie Swanepoel, Department of Anthropology & Archaeology, University of South Africa

Confronting national, linguistic and disciplinary boundaries, contributors to African Archaeology Without Frontiers argue against artificial limits and divisions created through the study of ‘ages’ that in reality overlap and cannot and should not be understood in isolation. Papers are drawn from the proceedings of the landmark 14th PanAfrican Archaeological Association Congress, held in Johannesburg in 2014, nearly seven decades after the conference planned for 1951 was re-located to Algiers for ideological reasons following the National Party’s rise to power in South Africa.

Contributions by keynote speakers Chapuruka Kusimba and Akin Ogundiran encourage African archaeologists to practise an archaeology that collaborates across many related fields of study to enrich our understanding of the past. The nine papers cover a broad geographical sweep by incorporating material derived from ongoing projects throughout the continent including South Africa, Botswana, Cameroon, Togo, Tanzania, Kenya and Nigeria. Thematically, the papers included in the volume address issues of identity and interaction, and the need to balance cultural heritage management and sustainable development derived from a continent racked by social inequalities and crippling poverty.

Edited by three leading archaeologists, the collection covers many aspects of African archaeology, and a range of periods from the earliest hominins to the historical period. It will appeal to specialists and interested amateurs.

Karim Sadr, Amanda Esterhuysen and Chrissie Sievers are all based at the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Cover illustration: Researchers’ chalk markings outline and sequence metal tool sharpening surfaces and stone axe polishing grooves at an iron bloom crushing site near Bitchabe, Togo, West Africa. © Philip de Barros