



**Call for candidates for a doctoral position on a project
funded by the National Science Centre, Poland:**

**‘Epigraphy & Identity in the Early Byzantine Middle East’
grant agreement number 2019/35/D/HS3/01872
Faculty of History, University of Warsaw**

Institution: Faculty of History, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

Position offered: doctoral candidate contributing to a research project

Selection criteria:

Essential:

- MA in ancient history, Mediterranean archaeology, the classics, or Oriental studies.
- status of an enrolled doctoral student
- basic knowledge of Aramaic/Syriac or Biblical Hebrew, to the extent allowing them reading inscriptions
- modern languages: fluency in English, and ability to read in French, German, and Italian are necessary. Knowledge of Polish is **not** required.

Desirable:

- former experience in epigraphy is welcomed
- former experience in working with relational databases
- former experience in working with XML editors, in particular according to the EpiDoc (TEI XML) standards
- ability to read excavation reports in modern Hebrew and/or Arabic
- good communication skills and team work experience
- willingness to regularly exchange ideas and findings with the team
- ability to work do a deadline

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tel./fax: (48 22) 826 19 88; tel. (48 22) 55 20 415; e-mail: sekretariat.ih@uw.edu.pl
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Responsibilities/duties:

- creating complete datasets for Christian Palestinian Aramaic and Jewish Palestinian Aramaic inscriptions dating from the first Millennium C.E., compliant with the EpiDoc standards (TEI XML).
- participating in the work on datasets of Syriac inscriptions dating from the first Millennium C.E., compliant with the EpiDoc standards (TEI XML)
- integrating the collected datasets with a relational database, using digital solutions developed within the project, tagging, geopositioning and other forms of processing the records in the relational database
- participating in the analysis of the material collected
- giving talks at three international conferences
- together with the PI, producing an edited volume with proceedings of an international conference organized as an integral element of this project
- actively participating in the organisation of conferences and workshops planned in the project, which will include managing part of the correspondence on behalf of the project
- submitting at least one paper to a high-ranking international journal
- participating in the dissemination of the news on the progress of the project in social media
- the doctoral student will be required to develop together with the PI a phase-milestone plan for their work, against which their progress will be regularly monitored and subject to evaluation
- the doctoral student and the PI will hold weekly meetings (in person or via videocommunicators) discussing the work progress

Grant type NCN: SONATA – HS3, grant agreement number 2019/35/D/HS3/01872

Deadline for applications: 21 September 2020., 11:59pm

Format of submitting applications: email

Scholarship conditions: a 36-month research scholarship equal to 3500 PLN per month

Additional information: Project title: „Epigraphy & Identity in the Early Byzantine Middle East”. Principal Investigator: dr Paweł Nowakowski (Faculty of History, University of Warsaw)

How to apply/Required documents:

1. a letter of application (to the Rector of the University of Warsaw).
2. a copy of MA Diploma or relevant document.
3. a CV with a list of publications.
4. a supporting statement where the candidate singles out their experience useful for the project's aims.
5. an administrative questionnaire ('kwestionariusz osobowy') to be found at the University of Warsaw Website http://bsp.adm.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/166/2019/12/KWESTIONARIUSZ_OSOBOWY_KANDYDAT_11_2019-1.docx)
6. permission for processing personal data, to be found at the University of Warsaw Website http://bsp.adm.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/166/2019/12/Kluczula-informacyjna-przy-rekrutacji-do-pracy_11_2019-3.docx)

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Please, send all the documents no later than 21 September, 11:59pm, to: sekretariat.ih@uw.edu.pl and to the PI's address: pawel.nowakowski@uw.edu.pl

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview before a committee of three researches, which will take place via Google Meet between 22 and 25 September 2020.

The results will be announced before 30 September 2020. In case, the successful candidate declines to accept the scholarship offer, the scholarship will be offered to the second person on the list.

The recruitment procedure is compliant with the rules of issuing scientific scholarships, required by the National Science Centre, Poland: https://ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/uchwaly-rady/2019/uchwala25_2019-zal1.pdf

Details of the Project

Epigraphy & Identity in the Early Byzantine Middle East (Epigrafika a tożsamość na wczesnobizantyjskim Bliskim Wschodzie) is a team project funded by a Sonata grant (grant agreement number 2019/35/D/HS3/01872) awarded by the Polish National Science Centre (NCN). The project is run from the University of Warsaw, Faculty of History (Poland). The project will offer one 36-month scholarship for a person willing to obtain a PhD. The doctoral candidate will work in a team of four people, reporting to the PI of the project, with one postdoc and one IT expert.

1. Research objectives

The project aims at examining the reasons as well as possible social, religious, and political impact of the choice of language in the process of epigraphical commemoration of religious building programmes in the early Byzantine Diocese of the East (excluding Egypt and Libya). In Late Antiquity, a period of dynamic religious, political and social changes, linguistic distinctiveness could serve as an important identity marker and, at the same time identity factor, for Aramaic-speaking Christians, Jews, and Samaritans. Monumental epigraphy, which in that period is largely represented by religious building inscriptions on stone and mosaics, could be an efficient way of public asserting this distinctiveness, and could reciprocally impact the viewers, solidifying specific trends. The project will explore the validity of this hypothesis against other known identity markers and factors (religion, politics, social events), based on a broad survey of inscriptions in Greek, Syriac, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, Samaritan Aramaic, Hebrew, and Old Arabic.

2. Research methodology

The project will be undertaken by a research group, in addition to the PI consisting of a doctoral candidate, a postdoctoral researcher, and an IT expert. The PI will refer to three main methods, the first and foremost the comparative, cross-lingual analysis of inscriptions (comparative epigraphy). The PI will also attempt to apply several concepts developed by sociolinguistics on the functioning of languages and dialects, checking if there are corresponding phenomena in ancient societies, and if they are helpful in explaining the importance of the choice of language in inscriptions. In particular, the spatial functioning of texts on public display will be explored, and spatial modelling of data from sites where inscriptions in more than one language have been found will also be pursued. Thirdly, the team will work using an advanced database of non-Greek monumental inscriptions from the early Byzantine East, allowing one to export the epigraphical data compliant with the EpiDoc standard.

3. Expected scientific and societal impact of the project

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The project will offer a complex and innovative analysis of the epigraphical data, often published only within the last decade, which have not been yet broadly applied in historical research, and are totally absent from social studies. The results will contribute to developing our knowledge of factors and instruments of the processes shaping particular identities in groups using different languages, and publicly manifesting their linguistic diversity. They will also be of primary importance for a revision of existing views on the status of the Greek language in the public space of the early Byzantine Middle East. The results of the project will impact general sociolinguistics, still experimenting with applying their methods to the study of pre-modern societies. Scholars and wide audience will get free access to the on-line database of sites with non-Greek monumental inscriptions from the early Byzantine East, and will be able to export data compatible with the EpiDoc standards (a variant of TEI XML), thus readily applicable on a number of other research projects.



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