Universität Basel, Dept. Altertumswissenschaften, Petersgraben 51, CH-4051 Basel

Technical lead in Digital Humanities

The four-years project "Reuniting fragments, identifying scribes and characterizing scripts: the Digital paleography of Greek and Coptic papyri" funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and hosted in the University of Basel is opening **a position for a technical lead**.

This person will be in charge of the creation and improvement of tools allowing writer identification and script classification from ancient papyri written in Greek and Coptic.
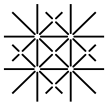
The applicant must testify advanced skills in one or several of the following topics: Handwritten Document Analysis, Digital Palaeography, Writer Identification, Handwriting Recognition, Computer vision, Pattern Recognition, Feature Representation, Machine Learning.

For any information, or to submit an application, please contact the project leader at i.marthot-santaniello@unibas.ch

Employment Start: 01 September 2019 (open to discussion)

Requirements: PhD-holders in Computer Sciences and experience in the topic(s) mentioned above will be prefered. Applicants with Master and/or able to attest a strong experience and motivation in the field will be considered.

Application: a cover letter and a CV

Project Summary

Greek and Coptic papyri preserved in the sands of Egypt are one of our main sources for Classical and early Christian literature. They are also crucial for the field of Ancient History of the Eastern Mediterranean world, as the texts found written in them span from the Hellenistic period to the Middle Ages. The papyri are often incomplete, however, broken accidentally during the course of time or, in more recent periods, intentionally cut to be sold in pieces in the antiquities market. It is precisely because of the fragmentary nature of these irreplaceable texts that palaeography, the study of ancient handwritings, is of great importance to papyrologists. First, palaeography helps to identify the specific handwriting of one individual over several fragments. Secondly, it provides dating arguments in the absence of other criteria, since Greek and Coptic scripts have developed consistently over time. The present research project aims to lay the foundation for an online interface through which papyrologists would be able to look for similar – or identical – handwritings to a given papyrus and typical samples of writings for a given period. To reach this ambitious goal, this project will first focus on three distinct and complementary case studies: the papyri which contain Homer's Iliad, written in Ancient Greek; the richest archive of the Byzantine period which is called the archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito written in Greek and Coptic (from the 6th c. A.D.); and the archive of Papas, written in Coptic, whose papyri were found broken in a jar and thus represent a real jigsaw puzzle for papyrologists.