

The research project Palmyra Portrait Project, funded by the Carlsberg Foundation and affiliated with Centre for Urban Network Evolutions (UrbNet), School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University, is looking to recruit a full-time research assistant for the period 1 June 2019 – December 2019.

Place of employment: Moesgård, Moesgård Alle, 8270 Højbjerg, Denmark.

The position

The successful candidate is expected to take on a key role in managing the project database of Palmyrene funerary portraiture and, generally, assisting the project leader in pushing the work forward.

Tasks include:

- documenting and describing new portraits in the database according to set criteria
- supporting publication projects (including copyediting and providing content for exhibition catalogues)
- training new research assistants and student helpers
- facilitating processes in connection with funding applications
- reporting to funding agencies.

Qualifications

Applicants are expected to be able to document:

- as a minimum a Master's degree in classical archaeology or a related discipline
- familiarity with Palmyrene portraiture and sculpture
- a professional level of English (spoken and written)
- excellent attention to detail
- a methodological and structured approach to work and good organisational skills
- good time-management skills and ability to meet deadlines
- good interpersonal and collaborative skills.

Applicants who can document experience from similar roles will have an advantage.

The application must be uploaded in English.

Further information

For further information about the position, please contact Professor Rubina Raja (rubina.raja@cas.au.dk).

For more information about applications, please contact HR supporter Marianne Birn (mbb@au.dk).

About the Palmyra Portrait Project

Palmyrene funerary sculpture is the largest corpus of portrait sculpture in the Roman world outside Rome, which makes this group of material extremely significant both in relation to issues of identity in the Roman provinces, as well as in comparison to core-Roman portraiture studies. Both are facts which have been completely ignored in scholarship until now. There are more than 3000 pieces scattered through various museums and private collections across the world. These have never been collected, catalogued and treated as a single corpus. The aims of this project are therefore threefold: to compile a corpus of all known Palmyrene funerary portraits, to digitalise the H. Ingholt-archive and to produce text volumes to accompany the corpus, as well as a number of publications on various aspects of Palmyrene sculpture. The corpus and the archive will be made available online. To achieve these goals effectively, this project must be undertaken by a group of researchers at various stages in their careers.

The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek (NCG) has the largest collection of Palmyrene sculpture outside Syria (after Istanbul) and holds the detailed archive compiled by Ingholt. Therefore, the collection and archive in Copenhagen makes an excellent starting point for a detailed study of the portraits. The senior researchers, Rubina Raja and Andreas Kropp, have examined the archive, the collection at the NCG and surveyed material in other collections in order to prepare the project. Palmyrene portraiture has been studied for more than a hundred years, but still there has been no attempt at compiling a comprehensive corpus or understanding the portraits within their Roman imperial and local contexts. Ingholt provided the chronological basis with his study of Palmyrene sculpture (in particular the NCG collection) in 1928. His work still remains valid. Ploug published the catalogue of the NCG collection in 1993 but never accomplished her planned publication on the jewellery and headgear of the portraits. The Ingholt archive in the NCG provides an important insight into the chronology of the portraiture and holds more than 800 illustrations with notes by Ingholt and additions by Ploug. One project component would be a digitalisation of the archive.

Scholarship on Palmyrene sculpture is particularly lacking in the English-speaking world, the main publications being written in French and German and wrongly focusing on the “provincialism” of the portraits. A handbook by Colledge “The Art of Palmyra” (1976) remains the only work of its kind. A corpus in English would be groundbreaking and provide opportunities for further studies while underlining the importance of a Danish-based international collaboration focused around the NCG collection. Especially in the English-speaking world, Palmyrene portraits have been misinterpreted as being Roman provincial portraiture. This would imply that they follow imperial styles and fashions. This is not the case. They follow a trajectory of their own. Unlike Roman portraits, they are not individualised, but idealised – mostly with generic facial features. Through their clothing, jewellery and gestures, they communicate their local identities in a very distinct way, blending Greco-Roman, Parthian and local elements. Rather than a haphazard blending of elements, they express a highly developed knowledge of current fashions and trends in the outside world and use them in a unique way in their local context. For instance, while the funerary busts are often dressed in Greek manner, the full-length banqueters are depicted in a Parthian fashion with richly embroidered garments and boots, showing the importance of dressing according to context, which in turn implies that style followed specific contexts and not simply Roman imperial trends. Such aspects are of crucial importance for the understanding of local societies.

Learn more: <https://projects.au.dk/palmyraportrait/>

The Department of Culture and Society deals with the interaction between culture and society in time and space:

- From the traditional disciplines of the humanities and theology to applied social research
- From antiquity to the issues facing contemporary societies
- From familiar Danish cultural forms to other very different worlds
- From local questions to global challenges.

The department’s goal is to produce compelling research with an international resonance, as well as offering teaching and talent development of high quality. The department is closely linked to society, both in Denmark and abroad, and contributes to social innovation, research communication and further and continuing education.

For a more detailed description of the department, please see this website: <http://cas.au.dk/en/> .

Formalities

Faculty of Arts refers to the Ministerial Order on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Danish Universities (the Appointment Order).

Appointment shall be in accordance with the collective labour agreement between the Danish Ministry of Finance and the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations.

Further information on qualification requirements and job content may be found in the Memorandum on Job Structure for Academic Staff at Danish Universities.

Further information on the application and supplementary materials may be found in Applicant Guidelines.

All interested candidates are encouraged to apply, regardless of their personal background.

Faculty of Arts

The Faculty of Arts is one of four main academic areas at Aarhus University.

The faculty contributes to Aarhus University's research, talent development, knowledge exchange and degree programmes.

With its 500 academic staff members, 260 PhD students, 10,500 BA and MA students, and 1,500 students following continuing/further education programmes, the faculty constitutes a strong and diverse research and teaching environment.

The Faculty of Arts consists of the School of Communication and Culture, the School of Culture and Society, the Danish School of Education, and the Centre for Teaching Development and Digital Media. Each of these units has strong academic environments and forms the basis for interdisciplinary research and education.

The faculty's academic environments and degree programmes engage in international collaboration and share the common goal of contributing to the development of knowledge, welfare and culture in interaction with society.

Read more at arts.au.dk/en

Aarhus University offers Relocation service to International researchers. You can read more about it at <https://international.au.dk/research/>

Send Application

Application Deadline:
22 March 2019

Academic contact person:
Rubina Raja

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Vacant positions:
1

Hours per week:
37

Number of months:
7

Expected date of accession:
01/06/2019

Aarhus University

Aarhus University is an academically diverse and research-intensive university with a strong commitment to high-quality research and education and the development of society nationally and globally. The university offers an inspiring research and teaching environment to its 39,000 students (FTEs) and 8,000 employees, and has an annual revenues of EUR 884 million. Learn more at www.au.dk/en