



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES

Section des sciences de la Terre
et de l'environnement

PhD Position – Megalithic societies in the Middle East 70% / 1st January 2022

As part of an international research project in Lebanon funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the National Science Center in Poland (NCN) the LAP - Laboratory of Archaeology and Anthropology in Geneva (Switzerland) – (<https://www.unige.ch/forel/lap/fr/>) invites applications for a PhD position in the field of megalithic societies in the Middle-East. The student will be part of a project that excavate and survey numerous sites in the North Lebanon to develop precisely-dated the structures, their integration in the landscape and their economic value at the end of the Prehistoric times.

Your position

The research focuses on the enigmatic first megalithic societies in the Levant, using the Akkar District as a case-study (northern Lebanon). Despite the multiple studies, which have provided extensive evidence of c. 15,000 megalithic tombs in the Near East, still very little is known about the character of the past communities who built and used these tombs. A key obstacle is the lack of absolute chronology for the monuments. The proposed research will explore the cultural identity of Akkar's megalith builders, their subsistence strategies, their interactions with the landscape and with other megalithic communities throughout the Levant, as well as their role in the emergence of the first city-states during a critical period of increasingly centralised authority and economic complexity. Research tasks will be conducted by two teams based at UniGe-LAP and IKSIO PAN over a 48-month period. The PhD-student will analyse the rituals and social organisation of the megalithic community from Akkar and its place in the megalithic phenomenon. The project involves archaeological research (excavations, survey, artefact studies) and architectural studies will explore issues of relative chronology, typology, construction methods of the megaliths, and cultural identity of their builders. GIS analyses will be used to study spatial organisation of the Akkar megalithic cluster, and landscape-architecture relationships. As for the regional significance of the Akkar cluster, GIS analyses will investigate inter-site visibility and connectivity, including with non-megalithic sites. A part of the analytical work will be performed in the laboratory of Prehistoric archaeology and anthropology under the scientific guidance of Dre. Tara Steimer-Herbet and Prof. Marie Besse and in collaboration with various partners. Furthermore, the PhD-student will also participate in the fieldtrips to the Middle East and collaborate closely with project partners.

Your profile

We are looking for a highly-motivated and proactive candidate with a master's degree in archaeology, more suitable in Middle East archaeology. The candidate should have a solid background and profound interest in architecture, social anthropology. Good knowledge of DAO, 3D software and GIS analysis is a great advantage as this PhD-project is very much based on a multidisciplinary approach. The ability to work both independently and within our team, as well as good communications skills including fluency in English are essential.

We offer you



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The selected candidate will have a 1-year contract, renewable for a maximum of 4 years. The contract is financed by private research funds. We offer an international, multidisciplinary and vibrant work environment and superb infrastructure. The project starts the 1st January 2022.

Application / Contact

Please submit your complete application documents, including (1) a letter of your research interests and motivations for applying for the position, your experience and skills, (2) a CV, (3) Sample of a scientific essay written by you, or a chapter of your Master thesis (3000 words), (4) Proof of academic qualifications and professional references, (5) contacts details of two references (one of them should be the main advisor of your master's degrees) to Dre. Tara Steimer-Herbet (tara.steimer@unige.ch). Reviews of applications will begin on the 1st of September and will continue until the position is filled.