



H.F.R.I.
Hellenic Foundation for
Research & Innovation

Description of the funded research project
2nd Call for H.F.R.I. Research Projects
to Support Post-Doctoral Researchers

Title of the research project: Anonymous Byzantine scribes of the 14th century

Principal Investigator: Dimitrios Nikou

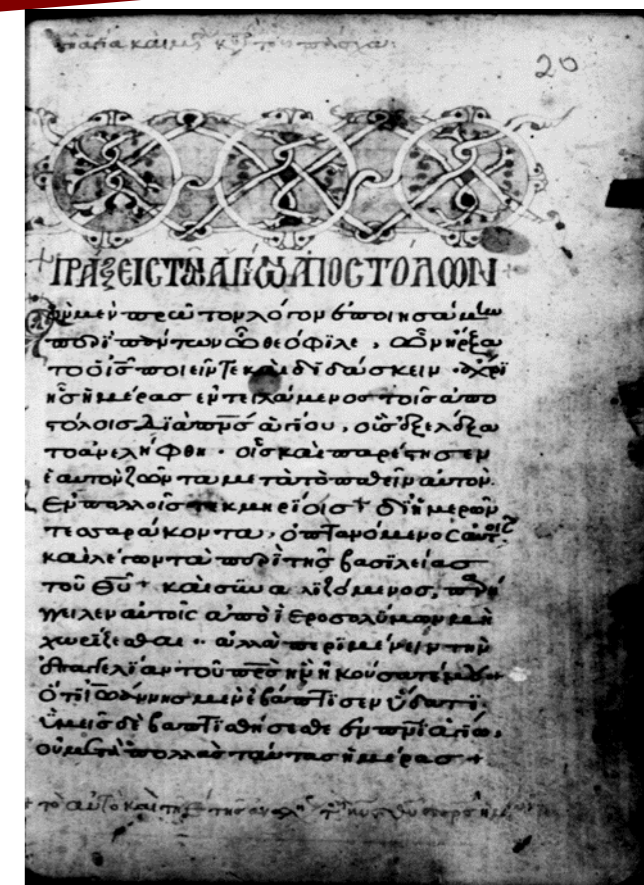
Scientific Area: Humanities & Arts

Institution and Country: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Host Institution: Department of Medieval Greek Literature – Centre for Byzantine Research of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Budget: 85.700 €

Duration: 36 months



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In the context of this project, I will make an attempt to systematically record and study anonymous Byzantine manuscript scribes. Due to the vast amount of material to be researched, the study of all anonymous manuscript scribes is impossible, therefore I chose the study of the anonymous scribes of the 14th century, a period of significant intellectual development and manuscript copying activity of Byzantine era.

Firstly, I will study the entire 14th century manuscript production, and the scribe of each manuscript will be identified and recorded. Next, I will create a user-friendly and easy-to-access database, which will contain information regarding each scribe, the specific pages of the manuscript he copied, the texts he copied, and samples of his handwriting, as well as the existing bibliography regarding the manuscript and the individual texts included in the manuscript. By using the aforementioned information, I will be able to identify the interests of each scribe, his time of action, as well as anonymous or known scribes with whom he collaborated during the manuscript copying process. In addition, I will make an attempt to identify of as many scribes of different manuscripts as possible, which are scattered in various libraries around the world, by conducting a careful comparative study of the handwriting samples, and combining them with the data collected for each scribe.

The prototype database for 14th century anonymous scribes which will be created will hopefully be a useful research tool for paleographers and scholars who study the manuscripts of that time.

Since the majority of paleographical aids are in printed form (books, articles), the 14th century anonymous scribes database will be an innovative electronic research tool, contributing to the overall academic effort to modernize the science of paleography, which is happening either by digitizing the manuscripts of many libraries (e.g. the National Library of France, the Vatican Apostolic Library, etc.) or by the creation of electronic databases (e.g. Pinakes of the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes of CNRS, France).

The aim of this research proposal is the creation of an integrated database, which will include 14th century anonymous Byzantine scribes with samples of their own handwriting, information about them and their copying activity, as well as the manuscripts that they copied, and last but not least, the relevant bibliography.

The electronic database of anonymous scribes will be a tool of great importance for paleographers and philologists, should it be created. The ease of access to the material, which will be accompanied by handwriting samples of each scribe as well as the existing bibliography about the manuscript and the anonymous scribe, will enable any scholar studying the copying activity of this particular century, or any researcher who studies the manuscript tradition of a text, to draw out basic conclusions about the scribe and the manuscript. The 14th century anonymous database will have a significant scientific impact, as it will contribute to the facilitation of scientific research, through the present research project.

The H.F.R.I. funding is the most important action for the recognition and reward of researchers, offering the opportunity to pursue their expectations and create an independent research career.

In regard to me, the H.F.R.I. funding is a great opportunity for my academic and professional development, as far as the support of my research proposal and my participation in international conferences, where I will have the opportunity to present my research results.



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