



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA

Job Summary

Job Title: Research Associate (SIQILLIYA - Debunking Eurocentric Literary History)

Salary: 40,000 per annum

Department: Linguistic and Literary Studies

Hours/Contract: Full time, fixed term from 1 October 2023 (or soon after) to 30 September 2028

Reference: SIQILLIYA

Role Purpose: To conduct extensive and original research for the European Research Council-funded project 101088698-SIQILLIYA (see project summary below). You will work closely with other scholars as part of an innovative research team, under the direction of the principal investigator (PI), Prof. Nicola Carpentieri. As a Research Associate, you will play an essential role in the delivery of this major research project and contribute substantially to its outputs, thereby advancing the field of scholarship and your own research profile.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- You will produce a new edition of the relevant portion of Sicilian medieval poetry (Hebrew, Latin, Greek or Italian) assigned to your post. You will take care of the inspection, acquisition, collation and edition of all relevant manuscript and printed materials needed. You will publish your edition on the Project's digital platform.
- Your research will concern the poetry produced in Sicily between the 10th and the 13th century. You will study your texts in conjunction with the island's multiple literary

traditions: Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian. You will contribute to the project's main goal to produce an alternative narrative to "Le Origini" (the origins of Italian literature), one that will take into account the many poetic traditions of medieval Sicily.

- You will be a medievalist, proficient in two or more of the following languages and specialised in their medieval variants: Arabic, Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Italian. You will have some experience in editing manuscript sources. You will use your expertise to produce a new edition of the selected poetry and to examine the latter in conjunction with the other selected sources. You will contribute your findings and insights through discussions with your fellow researchers, whose expertise will pertain to other (possibly overlapping) linguistic areas.
- You will be ready to move to Padova, Italy, by the start of the project, and be in residence for its entire duration (holidays excluded).
- You will travel to libraries, archives and conferences around the world to collect your materials and disseminate your results. You will also participate in the organisation of two international scientific meetings to be held at the University of Padova.
- You will conduct research as part of a team of scholars under the direction of the PI, working to achieve the project's goals. Your creativity will be encouraged and your independence respected as you provide an essential contribution to the team.
- You will collaborate with your fellow researchers to regularly compare your findings according to key themes: the social aspect of poetic production, transcultural approaches to medieval poetry, the woman's voice in medieval Sicilian poetry, the poetry of court bureaucrats, vernacular and court poetry, praise and love poetry. The PI will direct this collaborative effort to ensure that it results in important insights about the broader processes of social transformation during the period.
- You will work according to a shared methodological approach that draws upon source criticism, literary criticism, social history, the history of ideas, and transcultural studies to interpret qualitative and quantitative evidence. You will contribute in innovative ways to the development of this methodological approach.

- The Team will hold bi-weekly, in person meetings. You will share your research findings throughout the course of the project with the research team during these meetings, as well as in presentations and papers.
- You will offer your research through articles in peer-reviewed journals and edited collections of essays.

Internal and External Relationships:

- Regular meetings and collaboration with the project research group
- One-on-one meetings and milestone reviews with the PI
- Participation in conferences, workshops, and seminars in Italy and abroad
- Liaison with external advisors and experts, including advisory board members

Planning and Organising:

- Effectively manage your time in order to deliver your research
- Prioritise tasks within agreed work schedules
- Adapt daily and weekly plans to accommodate new developments and be flexible to the evolving priorities of the research project

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience:

Essential

- PhD in Greek, Latin, Hebrew or Italian Studies (depending on application), chronologically focused on the medieval period
- Expertise in two or more of these languages: medieval Arabic, Greek, Latin, Italian, Hebrew
- Expertise in manuscript acquisition, collation, editing
- A portfolio of relevant, peer-reviewed publications in print or forthcoming
- Proficiency in English

Desirable

- Prior participation in a collaborative research project
- Proficiency in Italian
- Experience travelling to specialist archives and research libraries
- An existing network with other scholars who might provide advice or participate in organised events

- Experience in the organisation of conferences, seminars, and/or workshops
- Skills in palaeography, papyrology, and/or codicology

Project Summary:

Medieval Sicily occupies a crucial position in literary history: incorporating the three monotheistic traditions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, it has a repertoire of texts in Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Romance. In the 13th century, Sicily was the protagonist in a pivotal event in world literature: the rise of the Italian lyric. This early Italian poetry was to influence Dante and Petrarch, as well as humanists and scholars throughout Europe until at least the 18th century.

No study to date has been capable of addressing the poetry of medieval Sicily as a whole. Literary studies on Sicily have been compartmentalised according to disciplinary boundaries: a compartmentalisation which has hampered our understanding of the foundational role that Sicily's multicultural past played in literary history.

The SIQILLIYA project aims to address the complexities of medieval Sicilian literature by studying the totality of the court poetry produced in Sicily in Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Italian between the 10th and the 13th cc. The project thus promises to shed light on what amounts to a black hole in literary history: it will document over four centuries of cultural interactions, and allow us to fully assess the role of Sicily's many cultures in the rise of the Italian lyric.

Our team will collect all of the available evidence in an electronic corpus, to be published online under a Creative Commons licence, and then study it using the latest IT tools. Working across linguistic boundaries our team will approach this poetic corpus as a whole, in order to reveal how the multiple linguistic traditions of medieval Sicily interacted with each other, shaping a unique "semiotic community" whose expressions were to contribute to the formation of Western culture.