

Latin and Syriac artist signature in the Nativity church of Bethlehem © Estelle Ingrand-Varenne)



The inter-disciplinary epigraphic research initiative **EPIGRAPHIK IN DER HOLLANDSTRASSE** invites you to the

SECOND ONLINE LECTURE

EPIGRAPHIC WRITING IN THE NATIVITY CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

A CASE STUDY OF THE ERC PROJECT GRAPH-EAST

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The Nativity Church in Bethlehem presents a graphic symphony, sometimes cacophony, of inscriptions and graffiti in many languages (4th–21st c.). The majority of the exposed writings in mosaics and paintings were made in the 12th c., under the joint patronage of King Amaury and Emperor Manuel Comnenus. What were the epigraphic choices in Christ's birthplace and what do they reveal in this multicultural context? How were they received and transmitted until today?

Estelle Ingrand-Varenne is a French CNRS researcher, specialist of medieval epigraphy, at the CESCUM of Poitiers, currently seconded to the French Research Center in Jerusalem. She is the author of 3 books: vol. 25 (with V. Debiais) and 26 of the *Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale*, and *Langues de bois, de pierre et de verre*, on the languages in the inscriptions. She is the principal investigator of GRAPH-EAST and her research focuses on the inscriptions in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem.

GRAPH-EAST is an ERC project (2021–26), which proposes an innovative study of 2,500 graffiti and inscriptions in Latin alphabet in the eastern Mediterranean (7th–16th c). It aims at understanding the representation and practice of the Latin script, alien in the Byzantine and Islamic empires, providing a connected history of epigraphy in this area, and analysing this migrant Latin writing through the prism of cultural transfers between West and East: <https://grapheast.hypotheses.org/>

Seizing the opportunity to bring together people in a way not geographically feasible in normal times, the lecture will be given as a Zoom meeting. Even a larger online attendance should not affect a free-for-all discussion, the floor being opened for comments and questions by all participants. If you are planning to attend the lecture, please register via an email to andreas.rhoby@oeaw.ac.at.

Those who have registered will receive an email with the Zoom link on the 11th. We are keen to make the talk available to a broad audience, so please feel free to share the invitation with anyone you think might be interested. We look forward to welcoming a large audience!

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