Post-doctoral research fellowship in
Social History of Premodern Java

In the framework of the ERC DHARMA (*The Domestication of “Hindu” Asceticism and the Religious Making of South and Southeast Asia*) project, the École française d’Extrême-Orient is seeking to recruit a post-doctoral research fellow in the Social History of Indonesia, with a focus on premodern Java, to join a team of epigraphists and philologists led by Arlo Griffiths.

**Remuneration:** between 2000 and 2500 € net, depending on experience

**Required qualification:** Doctorate

**Nature of the contract:** fixed term contract for three years

**Date of commencement:** 1 February 2021

**About the DHARMA project and the position**

The EFEO is seeking to recruit one post-doctoral research fellow in the Social History of Indonesia, with a focus on premodern Java, as part of a “Synergy” project funded by the European Research Council (ERC) as part of the program Horizon 2020 of the European Union.

The project DHARMA (*The Domestication of “Hindu” Asceticism and the Religious Making of South and Southeast Asia*) engages with the political, economic and social history of “Hinduism”. It is co-directed by Arlo Griffiths, professor of Southeast Asian History at the École française d’Extrême-Orient (French School of Asian Studies, EFEO), which has entered into a consortium involving three other institutions, namely the Centre d’Études de l’Inde et de l’Asie du Sud (CEIAS, UMR 8564, joint research unit of the CNRS and the EHESS, in Paris), Humboldt University in Berlin, and the University « L’Orientale » of Naples.

DHARMA is studying the history of the religion known today as “Hinduism” in comparative perspective, focusing on the period from the 6th to the 13th century. During this period, the Bay of Bengal served as a maritime highway for intense cultural exchange. The resulting process of “Indianization”, marked notably by the spread of “Hinduism”, of an Indian writing
system, and of India’s sacred language Sanskrit, touched large parts of South and Southeast Asia.

The Sanskrit word DHARMA can designate the cosmic law that is upheld both by gods and humans. But it is also often used to refer to any of the numerous temple-related foundations made to support this law. The DHARMA project seeks to understand the process of “institutionalization” of “Hinduism” by investigating the roles of various agents, from kings and noblemen to priests, monks and local communities. It emphasizes the social and material contexts of “Hinduism”. This emphasis requires a multi-regional, multi-scalar and multidisciplinary methodology in order to forge a real synergy of scholarship on premodern South and Southeast Asia.

The most important deliverable of the project is an online database that will give access to several thousands of editions of Asian inscriptions and will allow the data from these inscriptions to be exploited for historical research. We are dealing with ancient texts engraved in stone or metal, written in Sanskrit or in other languages of Asia, relevant to the history of the “Hindu” world. The online editions will be accompanied by translations into a western language and by metadata concerning the text-bearing objects, their findspots, etc. They will be furnished with maps and with images showing the inscriptions as physical objects.

**Responsibilities of the post-doctoral research fellow**

As member of a team of philologists and epigraphists, the principal responsibility of the post-doctoral fellow will be research on the premodern history of Java, as it pertains to the themes and priorities of the DHARMA project. Relevant areas for research include state formation, the development of social institutions, the interrelations between religion, politics, environment and the economy, the emergence of complex cultural forms, and their links with societies outside Java (notably on Bali and Sumatra), among others. The fellow will produce original research on the history of early Java, drawing on his or her own study of primary source materials such as inscriptions and transmitted texts. In addition to producing original research, the fellow will synthesize new findings produced by other researchers in the DHARMA project who are working on such primary sources. The fellow will also contribute actively to the online database of inscriptions that constitutes the primary deliverable of the DHARMA project.

The post-doctoral research fellow should, among other things:

- conduct independent research on primary sources and their historical contexts
- guide and assist doctoral and master students in the DHARMA project in their research on Old Javanese sources
- contribute actively to the development of the Javanese materials in the DHARMA database, including aspects of its design, its content and its conceptual model
- maintain a strong publication record in peer-reviewed scholarly venues, in the form of multiple articles and at least one monograph
- give seminars and attend scholarly conferences
- participate in workshops of the DHARMA project
- contribute to periodic reporting to the funding agency
Required competences and qualifications

Candidates must have

- fulfilled the requirements for a doctorate in one of the following fields: history, epigraphy, philology, textual and/or literary criticism
- competence in and experience with Old Javanese in a research context
- aptitude for individual and self-directed research shown by a track record of scholarly publication in a relevant field
- excellent communication skills (written and spoken)
- excellent interpersonal skills and experience working in multicultural contexts
- advanced competence in English (written and spoken), familiarity with French and Indonesian

Some experience in digital humanities research and with relevant tools is highly desirable, as is familiarity with Sanskrit, modern Javanese, and other relevant languages.

Application process

Applications should be sent before 31 December 2020, to the EFEO through the addresses direction-services@efeo.net and arlo.griffiths@efeo.net, in the form of a single PDF document no more than 15 MB in size, including:

- a cover letter explaining the candidate’s motivation and sketching some ideas of what specific groups of sources and research questions the candidate would propose to take up as member of the project
- the candidate’s CV (including list of publications)
- copies of relevant documentation demonstrating that the candidate satisfies the entry requirements (academic degrees, language skills)