

Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae

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Project Description

In pre-modern times there were periods in which inscriptions constituted one of the most important means of public communication. Therefore the two undersigned applied to the DFG to support the project described here. It aims at collecting and editing all the inscriptions from that part of the so called Near East which is not included in the *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie et de la Jordanie*, namely Israel (excluded is - according to the UNESCO-Rules - the area of the Palestinian Authority and the Golan). Its time span extends from the 4th century BC, the beginning of Graeco-Roman hegemony in this part of the Near East, to its end in the middle of the 7th century AD, i.e. more or less one thousand years of history; furthermore it is a multi-lingual corpus: it includes all the languages used in this area namely, Latin, Greek and the various Semitic languages: Hebrew, Phoenician and the various Aramaic "dialects" (Jewish, Nabataean, Idumaeen and Palmyran, Christian Aramaic and Syriac), Thamudic, as well as Georgian and Armenian. All the inscriptions in these languages are to be collected, read, translated and as much as possible studied within their archaeological context. Their contents vary a great deal: political events, administration and jurisdiction, religion, economy; they reflect the everyday life of a society to a much greater extent than the literary sources do. The use of different languages attested in the collection testifies to the existence of numerous ethnic groups, who lived alongside each other, and together with each other; their content goes a long way to reveal social communications within the entire region. Needless to say the very many languages used in this territory have made it absolutely necessary for a group of specialists in single languages to cooperate closely with each other.

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