

Jerusalem, September 14, 2025

CFA: Post-Doctoral Fellowship:

Steppe Cities in Medieval Mongolia

The ISF project *Steppe Cities in Medieval Mongolia: Historical, Archaeological and Environmental Perspectives* at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem under the direction of Professors Gideon Shelach-Lavi and Michal Biran is offering a Post-Doctoral scholarship in Inner Asian history **beginning in October 2025 (ie next month) or later**. Scholars who have received their Ph.D. after October 1st 2020 and no later than September 1st 2025 are eligible to apply.

The successful candidates will be part of a unique interdisciplinary team focusing on cities that nomads established in the heartland of the Mongolian steppe from the 8th to 14th centuries CE. Integrating historical, archaeological, and environmental approaches, we aim to elucidate the roles, sustainability, and broader significance of these urban centers within the nomadic empires of the Uighurs (744-840); Khitans/Liao (907-1125) and Mongol/Yuan (1206-1368).

The successful candidate will be part of a team that ‘mine’ the historical records (in Chinese and other languages) for concrete data that are relevant to the understanding of the history of medieval Mongolia, with an emphasis on its cities and their functioning and sustainability, namely the role of pastoralism, local agriculture, and outside supply via regional or international trade in their economy; the identity and occupation of the people manning these cities, the role of the imperial center in founding and supporting these cities etc. We will map and analyze this data using qualitative and quantitative tools.

Post-doctoral fellowships are for around one academic year in Jerusalem (with a possibility of extension to two or more years). The fellow will receive a tax-free monthly stipend of 8500 NIS and travel expenses to Israel (economy class, up to 1500\$). S/he will be given office and research facilities at the Hebrew University. Travel money to participate in conferences is available on a competitive basis. The post-doctoral fellow will participate in the project's activities, including our field expeditions. S/he is expected to produce a project-related article(s) or a monograph.

The required criteria for submitting candidacy for the fellowships

- ☐ Proven academic excellence ;
- ☐ Sound knowledge of Classical Chinese and proven experience in working with Chinese sources for the Tang, Liao, Song or Yuan periods. Fluency in other languages (notably Mongolian, Russian, Classical Uighur) – an advantage. A specialization in the late Tang (ie Uighur) period- an advantage.
- ☐ Sound knowledge of Inner Asian and Chinese history

Interested individuals are requested to submit the following documents (in one PDF file):

- (i) Cover letter describing your academic experience and motivation for participating in the project (2-3 pages).
- (ii) Curriculum vitae.
- (iii) Abstract of the PhD dissertation.
- (iv) A writing sample: dissertation chapter or a paper that has been published or accepted for publication (no more than 30 pages).
- (v) Two letters of recommendation to be sent directly to TheWall@mail.huji.ac.il

Deadline for submission of application materials: Deadline is open: We begin the search now and prefer candidates who can start in the next few months. For those interested in starting in summer-fall 2026, deadline is December 17, 2025.

Please send the requested materials electronically, as one PDF file, to TheWall@mail.huji.ac.il (with cc to biranm@mai.huji.ac.il)

For question please contact Prof. Michal Biran at biranm@mai.huji.ac.il