



## **Call for Papers: ‘Jews, Christians, and the Materiality of Mortuary Rituals in Late Antiquity’, Research Unit of the European Association of Biblical Studies (EABS)**

The EABS Research Unit ‘Jews, Christians, and the Materiality of Mortuary Rituals in Late Antiquity’ (2024-2026) is inviting proposals for papers for the EABS Annual Conference 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> July 2024 (Sofia University, Bulgaria).

### **Overview of the Research Unit**

This research unit provides an interdisciplinary forum for biblical scholars and material culture specialists, seeking to understand the mortuary rituals of Mediterranean Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity both in their broader (‘pagan’) contexts and in relation to each other. The term ‘mortuary rituals’ refers to death-related ritual practices, such as the treatment of the body, mourning, commemoration, and continued interaction with the deceased (e.g., visits to the burial place, festivals for the dead). These rituals were facilitated by various forms of material culture, which still leave their traces: inscriptions, burial vessels, grave goods, funerary architecture, feasting accessories, etc. It is now generally acknowledged that the strict division between the mortuary rituals of ‘pagans’, Jews, and Christians is overly simplistic, also in terms of their material features. Since Jews and Christians were integral parts of their communities, their mortuary rituals were part and parcel of their cultural surroundings; at the same time, these started to take on distinctive features, often understood in terms of deliberate demarcation. This is the starting point for considering questions like these ritual practitioners’ attitudes towards death, the identities of the deceased and their relatives, or the boundaries between this world and the next.

### **Sofia 2024 Call for Papers “Investigating the Funerary Landscape in Late Antiquity: A Discussion of Theories and Methods”**

The aim of this session is to explore the plurality and diversity in mortuary material culture among Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity as embedded in their pagan context. The interdisciplinary approach and the discussion of theories and methods will bring together biblical studies and archaeological sources to investigate the funerary landscape of the Mediterranean. The planned session will serve as a platform for intellectual exchange and collaboration, allowing participants to present their research, engage in stimulating discussions, and foster connections with fellow academics. In order to establish an interdisciplinary forum, we would like to invite



both theoretical/methodological papers and exemplifying case studies from experts in various fields (Ancient History, Hebrew Bible Studies, New Testament Studies, Classical and Late Antique Archaeology, Epigraphy). We encourage presenters to submit proposals that clearly state the material presented and analyzed in the paper, the method(s) applied to this material, and how this contributes to our understanding of mortuary ritual in Late Antiquity.

**Venue: Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria**

**Conference Dates: 15–18th July 2024**

Please note that the working language of EABS is English. We accept abstracts and presentations in English only.

**Proposals for contributions (max. 300 words) are accepted until January 20, 2024 (23:59 CET). Please upload the abstracts here:**

[https://eabs.net/Shared\\_Content/Sign\\_In.aspx?LoginRedirect=true&returnurl=%2fEABS%2fEABS%2fAbstract\\_system%2f2024\\_Abstract\\_Submission\\_Sofia.aspx%3fhkey%3d1ba41096-8907-41f8-964c-546b79f63f65](https://eabs.net/Shared_Content/Sign_In.aspx?LoginRedirect=true&returnurl=%2fEABS%2fEABS%2fAbstract_system%2f2024_Abstract_Submission_Sofia.aspx%3fhkey%3d1ba41096-8907-41f8-964c-546b79f63f65)

Please note that you must be a current EABS member (or student member) in good standing (with membership paid and up to date) in order to submit an abstract. For further information about the conference, please see:

<https://eabs.net/EABS/EABS/Conferences/Sofia-2024/Sofia-2024.aspx?hkey=62d3e7ac-40a8-43dc-b31a-8dc058f98709>

**There is also the possibility to apply for grants and awards from the EABS:**

<https://eabs.net/EABS/EABS/Grants-and-Awards/Research-Grants.aspx?hkey=ec04a84a-7f93-4b4a-9ecd-7cb80f8f7e14>

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the chairs:

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