



Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren e.V. | ZMO |
Kirchweg 33 | D-14129 Berlin

Job Advert

PhD Student in Political Science/IR/Middle East Studies/Intelligence Studies

The Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO) in Berlin is an independent academic research institute focused on the historical and contemporary politics of Africa and Asia. The institute is a member of the prestigious Leibniz-Association of Research Institutes in Germany.

The ZMO is now seeking to hire

One Phd Student

to be employed for 36 months. The envisaged starting date is 1st May 2019.

The position is within the research project "Learning Intelligence: The Exchange of Secret Service Knowledge between Germany and the Arab Middle East 1960-2010" (head/PI: Dr. Sophia Hoffmann). The project explores the international relations between German and Arab intelligence agencies to investigate whether such contact led to similarities (or differences) between them. The bigger puzzle addressed by the project is the role that intelligence agencies play for modern statehood and international relations. The project team comprises the PI, a total of two PhD students and a student assistant.

The candidate will be expected to carry out a comparative study between the East German intelligence agency and one Arab intelligence agency (Iraq, Egypt, Yemen or Syria), based on extensive literature study, archival research and interviews in Europe and the US. Highly proficient reading skills in German and Arabic are essential. The exact title and case studies of the project will be determined together with the candidate.

The ideal candidate should possess good knowledge of international relations and/or political theory (an interest in theory is crucial to carrying out this project!).

The candidate will be enrolled for a PhD in political science, from the Free University Berlin (FU). The candidate will be supervised by Dr. Hoffmann and a second supervisor from the FU.

From October 2019 the candidate will participate in the programme of the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies. This school offers a fantastic set of courses focused on writing and research skills, and offers access to the wider Berlin academic community and a cohort of international PhD students. The candidate is expected to be present at the ZMO three days a week, and a move to Berlin for the duration of the project is desirable.

Please send your CV and Cover Letter to sophia.hoffmann@zmo.de.

Applications will be received until 15th March.

Women are explicitly encouraged to apply!

Job Description:

Title: PhD Student.

Duration: 36 months.

Salary: 65 % of German Salary Tarif TVöD 13, translates into between EUR 1400 and 1600 after tax, depending on personal circumstances (taxation differs).

Location: ZMO, Kirchweg 33, 14129 Berlin.

Key Tasks:

Research/academic tasks:

- Carry out an independent research project, comparing German and Arab intelligence agencies.
- Extensive literature review, archival research and interviews.
- Present research results at conferences and workshops; write academic papers.
- Participate in regular team meetings to discuss theoretical concepts, methodological approaches and research findings.
- Participate in institutional academic life at the ZMO.
- Participate in the programme of the Berlin Graduate School of Muslim Cultures and Societies from October 2019 onwards.

Administrative and organisational tasks:

- Carry out the organisational requirements of a research project, incl. organising own travel, archival access etc.
- Comply with internal administrative requirements, such as filling in travel forms, book orders etc.

Person specification (essential)

- Master's degree in politics, international relations or related social science (anthropology MAs with an interest in political anthropology, and theoretically interested historians or regional scholars are welcome). Please note that the PhD can only be awarded in political science.
- Excellent Arabic reading skills, mothertongue level or near. You need to be able to quickly scan and read texts, including possibly bad photocopies of handwriting (in the archives).
- Excellent German reading skills (again, this is essential for reading archival documents).
- Very good English (reading, writing, speaking).
- Ability to take initiative and work independently.
- Ability to travel to the US.
- Research experience, or a deep interest in developing research skills and investigate complex paper trails.

Person specifications (desirable)

- Good knowledge of IR and/or political or sociological theory.
- Good knowledge/experience of qualitative or comparative research methodologies.
- Previous study of the (international) politics of the Middle East.
- Previous study of East Germany's Ministry of State Security and/or West German intelligence agencies.