CALL FOR POSITION >

EARLY STAGE RESEARCHER 12

Networks of transmission of Islamic knowledge and mobility patterns of scholars in the pre-modern world

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION >

Relying primarily on the information contained in the online database PUA (Prospography of the ulama of al-Andalus: https://www.eea.csic.es/pua/), the aim of the project is twofold: to analyse the networks of transmission of Islamic knowledge and to analyse the mobility patterns of scholars. Transmission of knowledge in the medieval Arab-Islamic world was mainly accomplished via contact between master and disciple. That transmission was not achieved in one way alone; pupils would usually turn to several masters who would spread the same piece of information, ranging from sayings of the Prophet to full books. These circumstances led to the knowledge transfer network adopting partially connected mesh topology, in accordance with the terminology currently employed. Contact between master and disciple often implied travelling to different cities and regions of the Islamic world. But the fall of a sizeable part of al-Andalus into enemy hands (12th-15th c.) led to an increase in the geographical mobility of Andalusi scholars. The impact of the ensuing forced migration of scholars on both individuals and society needs to be studied. Were there uniform or widespread behaviour patterns? Was displacement first internal (i.e. within al-Andalus) before extending to other areas of the Islamic world? Did migrants settle in their new place of residence or tend to move frequently? Was migration definitive or were there attempts to return? How did migration affect scholarly practices and intellectual production? How were migrants received in the places in which they settled? Were Andalusi scholars able to maintain their religious authority outside their local contexts? By analysing the information contained in biographical and historical works, the intention is to get a picture of how migrant scholars themselves viewed the influence of those events on their lives. Special attention will be given to the depth of the émigrés’ sense of belonging and, hence, of being uprooted, in the new place of residence.

The ESR will be under the supervision of Dr. Mayte Penelas (CSIC-EEA) and co-supervision of Prof. Konrad Hirschler (Freie Universität Berlin) and of Dr. Fieke Schoots (CDS-Leiden University). External tutor: Erdogan Aykaç (Tropenmuseum).

REQUIREMENTS >

Essential criteria:
- Postgraduate or Master level degree (or equivalent) in Middle Eastern Languages and Studies or other similar domains
- Fluency in spoken and written English. A proof of the language proficiency (C1 level Cambridge Proficiency ; IELTS 7.0-8.0 or equivalent) has to be enclosed if English is not the native tongue
- Fluency in written Arabic
- Some knowledge of the local language or commitment to learn it during the period of the grant
- Commitment to collaborate in the general development of the project

Desirable criteria:
- Experience in working in an interdisciplinary team
- Interest in digital humanities techniques related to network visualisation
- Experience in working with Arabic sources (especially biographical) is expected

BENEFITS >

Successful candidates will receive an attractive salary, based on the Marie Curie Program regulations.

Eligibility criteria:
- no residence in Spain for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately preceding the engagement date
- no PhD degree
- less than 4 years of research, Master excluded
- not restricted to EU citizens

Application file:
- copies of degree certificates (Master degree or equivalent)
- curriculum vitae
- list of publications (if applicable)
- reference letter
- 2-page research proposal
- short motivation letter