

Doctoral position in the framework of the ERC Consolidator project MAJLIS: The Transformation of Jewish Literature in Arabic in the Islamicate World

Institution LMU Munich, Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies (Judaic Studies)

Start September 1, 2021

Deadline May 31, 2021

Salary level TV-L E13

Period of employment 3 years, with the possibility of a one-year extension

Part Time 75%

About the Project

In pre-modern times, an estimated ninety percent of the Jewish population lived under Muslim hegemony. Over the centuries, these Jews not only adopted the Arabic language for most forms of spoken and written communication, but also integrated concepts and techniques from their intellectual environment, resulting in one of the most extraordinary periods of literary creativity in all of Jewish history. Despite its importance, however, Judaeo-Arabic literature has been under-researched until very recently, due to inaccessible sources, disparate scholarly traditions and political antagonism.

The overall aim of MAJLIS is to explore comprehensively for the first time the fundamental way in which the adoption of Arabic transformed Jewish literature from the 9th to the 11th century. The project focuses on the Arabic literature of the Qaraites, a Jewish intellectual movement whose religious and scholarly center, the Academy of Jerusalem (the Dār al-‘ilm), played a catalytic role in these transformation processes. It will proceed by applying state-of-the-art digital tools to analyze manuscripts produced in the Academy with the aim of (1) tracing changes in Jewish literature and contrasting them to rabbinic literary models, especially with regard to how the texts were composed, produced, authored, and organized into a knowledge framework; (2) identifying the dominant scholars and analyzing their geographical origins, professional networks and institutional integration; and (3) comparing the Academy and its literature to non-Jewish literature and non-Jewish institutions of the time.

MAJLIS will not only fundamentally add to our understanding of the history of Jewish literature, but also demonstrate that Jewish heritage in the Near East is of transcommunal and transnational importance.

Your Competencies

- a successful degree (MA) in the field of Judaic or Arabic Studies, or other relevant fields
- previous experience in working with Judaeo-Arabic texts, in particular in the form of manuscripts, is desirable

- an autonomous, well-structured and self-reliant work routine
- the ability to work within an international team
- willingness to learn the digital tools used by the project
- fluency in English (if you do not speak German, basic skills can be acquired)

We Offer

During the entire period of the position, the doctoral student has the opportunity to pursue an innovative research topic in the framework of an expert team, to acquire additional competencies and to take advantage of opportunities for further qualification (professional development and leadership courses), provided by LMU. Further, the LMU offers family-support services. Two world-class research libraries (LMU and Bavarian State Library) are at hand. The project will support travel.

Topic of Dissertation

The topic of the dissertation must be connected to one or more aspects crucial to the project:

- Qaraite literature produced in the Academy of Jerusalem, the Dār al-‘ilm (9th to the 11th century)
- The formation of disciplines of knowledge in Judaeo-Arabic literature
- textual practices in Judaeo-Arabic literature
- The social history of the Dār al-‘ilm

Women are particularly encouraged to apply. We also welcome applications from applicants with disabilities. Applicants with disabilities will be given preference in case of equally qualified candidates. Your workplace is located in central Munich and can easily be reached via public transport. Residency in Munich is expected.

Applications should include a cover letter, which should include a first short idea for a dissertation topic, a short CV (max. 2 pages) and one letter of reference by someone who is familiar with your work. Please send your application by May 31, 2021, using the email specified below.

Interviews will take place on Zoom.

Contact

For questions, please contact: ronny.vollandt@lmu.de.