



# Call for Applications

The Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien and the Irmgard Coninx Foundation invite scholars to apply for up to **six postdoctoral fellowships** for the academic year 2017/18 for the research program **EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME)**. One of the fellowships is addressed to a scholar at risk.

**Closing Date: May 15, 2017 / Location: Berlin, Germany**

## 5 postdoc fellowships for the academic year 2017/18

### 1 Irmgard Coninx postdoc fellowship for a scholar at risk

**EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME)** seeks to rethink key concepts and premises that link and divide Europe and the Middle East. The program draws on the international expertise of scholars in and outside of Germany and is embedded in university and extra-university research institutions in Berlin. It supports historical-critical philology, rigorous engagement with the literatures of the Middle East and their histories, the social history of cities and the study of Middle Eastern political and philosophical thought as central fields of research not only for area or cultural studies, but also for European intellectual history and other academic disciplines. The program explores modernity as a historical space and conceptual frame.

The program puts emphasis on three programmatic ideas:

1) supporting research that demonstrates the rich and complex historical legacies and entanglements between Europe and the Middle East; 2) reexamining genealogical notions of mythical ‘beginnings’, ‘origins’, and ‘purity’ in relation to culture and society; and 3) rethinking key concepts of a shared modernity in light of contemporary cultural, social, and political entanglements that supersede identity discourses as well as national, cultural or regional canons and epistemologies that were established in the nineteenth century.

EUME supports and builds upon the following interconnected research fields:

**Cities Compared: Urban Change in the Mediterranean and Adjacent Regions** is directed by Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi, both of the Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin. It contributes to the debate on plurality, citizenship and civil society from the historical experience of conviviality and social, cultural, ethnic, and religious differences and conflict in the cities around the Mediterranean.

**Islamic Discourse Contested: Middle Eastern and European Perspectives** is directed by Gudrun Krämer, Institute of Islamic Studies, Freie Universität Berlin. It analyzes modern Middle Eastern thought in the framework of discourses on authenticity, modernity, secularity, and justice.

**Perspectives on the Qur'an: Negotiating Different Views of a Shared History** is directed by Angelika Neuwirth, Freie Universität Berlin. This research group situates the foundational text of Islam within the religious and literary landscape of late antiquity, early Islamic History and Arabic philology, and combines a historicization of its genesis with an analysis of its hermeneutics, its reception and perception in Europe and the Middle East.

**Travelling Traditions: Comparative Perspectives on Near Eastern Literatures** is directed by Friederike Pannewick, Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg, and Samah Selim, Rutgers University. This research group reassesses literary entanglements, translations and processes of canonization between the Middle East and other regions.

## **Tradition and the Critique of Modernity: Secularism, Fundamentalism and Religion from Middle Eastern Perspectives**

is a special forum, directed by Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, Ben-Gurion University, that attempts to rethink key concepts of modernity like secularity, tradition, or religion in the context of the experiences, interpretations, and critiques from the Middle East.

EUME is interested in developing new fields of research that bridge the gap between social science approaches and cultural studies in questions relating to the ongoing transformation processes in Europe and the Middle East (in cooperation with Cilja Harders, Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science, Freie Universität Berlin, Rachid Ouaiassa, Political Science Department, Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg and Kader Konuk, Universität Duisburg-Essen).

## **Fellowships**

The fellowships are intended primarily for scholars of art history, history, literature, philology, political philosophy, political science, religion and sociology who want to carry out their research projects in connection with the Berlin program. Applicants should be at the postdoctoral level and should have obtained their doctorate within the last seven years.

One fellowship provided by the Irmgard Coninx Foundation is reserved for a scholar at risk and offers scholars who suffer threats of life, liberty, and well-being in their own countries a safe location and conducive academic environment to carry out their research. Any scholar who faces a risk of persecution on account of belief, scholarship, or identity is eligible. SAR fellows need not be refugee scholars. Fellows gain the opportunity to pursue research projects of their own choice within the framework of one of the above-mentioned research fields and in relation to the overall program *EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE*. Successful applicants will be fellows of EUME at the Forum Transregionale Studien and associate members of one of the university or non-university research institutes listed below.

As a rule, the fellowships start on 1 October 2017 and will end on 31 July 2018. Postdoctoral fellows will receive a monthly stipend of 2.500 € plus supplement depending on their personal situation. Organisational support regarding visa, insurances, housing, etc. will be provided. Fellows are obliged to work in Berlin and to help shape the seminars and working discussions related to their research field. Scholars are also invited to apply with their own funding. The working language of EUME is English.

## Application Procedure

An application should be made in explicit relation to one of the research fields and consist of

- a curriculum vitae,
- a project description (no longer than five pages), stating what the scholar will work on in Berlin if granted a fellowship,
- a sample of scholarly work (maximum 20 pages from an article, conference paper, or dissertation chapter),
- the names of two university faculty members who can serve as referees (no letters of recommendation required).
- For the application as a scholar at risk, please add a threat assessment from a third party, such as the Scholar at Risk Network or a colleague.

The application should be submitted by **e-mail** as three (or four) separate WORD documents or PDF files in English and should be received by **May 15, 2017**, sent to

**eume@trafo-berlin.de**

EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME)

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## Institutional Framework

**EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME)** has been initiated in 2006 as a joint research program of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. It builds upon the previous work of the Working Group Modernity and Islam (1996-2006). Since 2011, EUME is continued at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

In scholarly terms, EUME is directed by a Collegium that currently consists of the following persons: Ulrike Freitag (Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin), Cilja Harders (Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science, FU Berlin), Kader Konuk (Institut für Turkistik, Universität Duisburg-Essen), Gudrun Krämer (Institute of Islamic Studies, FU Berlin), Nora Lafi (Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin), Angelika Neuwirth (FU Berlin), Rashid Ouassa (Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg), Friederike Pannewick (Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg), Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin (Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva), Samah Selim (Rutgers University), and Stefan Weber (Museum for Islamic Art, Berlin).

The Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien is a research organization that promotes the internationalization of research in the humanities and social sciences. The Forum provides scope for collaboration among researchers with different regional and disciplinary perspectives and appoints researchers from all over

the world as Fellows.

In cooperation with universities and research institutions in Berlin and the rest of Germany, it carries out research projects that examine other regions of the world and their relationship to Germany and Europe systematically and with new questions. It currently supports four research programs and initiatives: ART HISTORIES AND AESTHETIC PRACTICES, ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship, PRISMA UKRAÏNA – Research Network Eastern Europe, and EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME).

The Irmgard Coninx Foundation was founded in Munich in 2001. In association with the Social Science Research Center (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung) and the Humboldt-Universität Berlin, the Foundation organizes the Berlin Roundtables on Transnationality. The Roundtables provide a forum for international young academics and journalists to discuss the political and social challenges facing a global civil society. The Berlin Roundtables hope to contribute to an international discourse on the phenomenon of transnationality.

For more information on the Forum, please visit:

**[www.forum-transregionale-studien.de](http://www.forum-transregionale-studien.de)**

For more information on EUME and its research fields, please visit:

**[www.eume-berlin.de](http://www.eume-berlin.de)**

For more information on the Irmgard Coninx Foundation, please visit:

**[www.irmgard-coninx-stiftung.de](http://www.irmgard-coninx-stiftung.de)**

For information on the research institutions in Berlin participating in EUME, please visit:

- Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, FU Berlin  
[www.bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de](http://www.bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de)
- Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science, FU Berlin  
[www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/polwiss](http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/polwiss)
- Corpus Coranicum, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften  
[koran.bbaw.de](http://koran.bbaw.de)
- Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient  
[www.zmo.de](http://www.zmo.de)
- Friedrich Schlegel Graduate School of Literary Studies, FU Berlin  
[www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/en/friedrichschlegel](http://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/en/friedrichschlegel)
- Institute of Islamic Studies, FU Berlin  
[www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/en/e/islamwiss](http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/en/e/islamwiss)
- Museum for Islamic Art  
[www.smb.museum/isl](http://www.smb.museum/isl)
- Seminar for Semitic and Arabic Studies, FU Berlin  
[www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/en/e/semiarab](http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/en/e/semiarab)
- Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies  
[www.uni-marburg.de/cnms](http://www.uni-marburg.de/cnms)
- Institut für Turkistik, Universität Duisburg-Essen  
[www.uni-due.de/turkistik/](http://www.uni-due.de/turkistik/)