



Doctoral Scholarships on the Qur'an in European Culture

The Université de Nantes, the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Università di Napoli l'Orientale, the University of Kent and the University of Amsterdam are hiring doctoral candidates to join our project “The European Qur'an: Islamic Scripture in European Culture and Religion (1150-1850)” (EuQu).

This is an exciting opportunity for early career researchers to be involved in a highly visible, international collaborative research project that involves leading academic institutions in Europe and beyond. We offer outstanding work and research conditions, competitive salaries, funded travel opportunities, options for prolonged stays at partner universities and involvements in ventures at the forefront of cultural studies and digital humanities. You will be conducting research under the supervision of four leading scholars in the field of Christian-Muslim relations and have the opportunity to collaborate and exchange with colleagues from a wide range of disciplinary, institutional and personal backgrounds.

Project summary

“The European Qur'an. Islamic Scripture in European Culture and Religion 1150-1850” (EuQu) is a six-year research project funded through a synergy grant from the European Research Council (ERC). Its four principal investigators (and host institutions) are Mercedes García-Arenal (Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales, CSIC, Madrid, Spain), John Tolan (Université de Nantes), Jan Loop (University of Kent) and Roberto Tottoli (Università di Napoli l'Orientale).

The project studies the ways in which the Islamic Holy Book is embedded in the intellectual, religious and cultural history of Medieval and Early Modern European Christians, Jews, freethinkers, atheists and Muslims. We will conduct research on how the Qur'an has been translated, interpreted, adapted and used in Christian Europe from the Middle Ages through the early nineteenth century, in order to understand how the Muslim Holy Book has influenced both culture and religion in Europe. EuQu will look at the role of the Qur'an in interactions with Islam, in debates between Christians of different beliefs and in critiques of Christianity during the Enlightenment.

The six-year project will produce interdisciplinary research through scientific meetings across Europe, a GIS-database of Qur'an manuscripts, translations and other works in which the Qur'an is discussed, and through PhD theses and monographs. It will bring the fruits of this research to non-academic audiences through a creative multimedia exhibition on the place of the Qur'an in European cultural heritage.

Candidates should consult the full description of the project, available at www.euqu.eu.

Qualifications

Candidates should have a recent master's degree (or equivalent) in the humanities, with a specialisation related to the themes of EuQu. They should have a high level of competence in the necessary languages (in particular Arabic or Latin, depending on the thesis topic). Each student will be enrolled at the one of the EuQu host universities with the possibility of co-enrolment in another university.

Possible dissertation topics

Each candidate will propose an original dissertation topic related to the themes of EuQu. Dissertations may be written in English, French, Italian or Spanish. Possible fields of research include:

- Synthetic comparison of translation strategies and ideologies of language study and translation between early modern polemical works
- The use that European scholars made of Muslim exegetical literature in order to understand the Qur'an.
- Translations of the Qur'an written before 1800 (in Latin and in various European vernaculars)
- Collecting the Qur'an (manuscripts and printed editions)
- The Politics and Economies of the European Qur'an (including theological and political obstacles that editions and translations of the European Qur'an faced)
- Polemical responses to the Qur'an
- The Printing of Arabic in Europe: The Qur'an and Islamic Texts
- A History of Qur'an Manuscripts in Europe
- Aljamiado Qur'ans and Tafsir
- The Qur'an in European material culture
- The Qur'an in European literature and thought
- The Qur'an in Central & Eastern Europe
- The Qur'an in European Jewish culture and scholarship
- Colonial Expansion and the European Qur'an
- The Qur'an and Antitrinitarianism

Responsibilities of the researchers

Each PhD student will be part of the EuQu international team of researchers.

In addition to researching and writing their dissertations, PhD students will also be expected to perform research tasks in connection with the subject of their dissertations. These tasks will include, for example:

- Bibliographical research:
 - Identifying manuscripts and printed books of interest to the project
 - Identifying recent scholarship and contacting scholars
- Database management:
 - Writing and editing entries (in English) on manuscripts and printed editions of the Qur'an, anti-Qur'an polemics, and other texts (in relation to each student's dissertation topic)
 - Writing prosopographical entries on owners, editors and publishers of these manuscripts and books
 - Identifying specialists in the field and inviting them to contribute to the database
- Participating in regular team meetings (including periodic seminars and workshops), at the host institution and at other EuQu partner institutions

Scholarship conditions

Value and duration of the scholarship vary between institutions, but they are of at least 36 months, subject to good performance and satisfactory annual reviews. The date of the beginning of the contract will be negotiated on hiring.

The researcher will travel frequently for conferences, workshops and research stays with partner institutions in Europe. Doctoral students whose theses are in co-direction or cotutelle will be expected to spend time in the partner university (30% minimum of their time).

The application should consist of the following documents (which may be provided in English, French, Spanish or Italian):

- 1) A thesis proposal of max. 5 pages (subject, research hypotheses, methodology, summary bibliography, etc.)

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| 2) | A detailed curriculum vitae of the applicant, with contact details (name, address, phone numbers, e-mail) |
| 3) | Copy of grade transcript (master's degree) |
| 4) | Copy of master's diploma |
| 5) | Title of master's thesis and name of advisor |
| 6) | In the case of a proposed dual direction of the dissertation, the name and contact details of the proposed co-director |
| 7) | 2 letters of recommendation from professors who know the candidate's work well (including a letter from the proposed co-director in the case of a proposed co-direction) |

Application procedures

All documents should be sent in PDF format to euqu@cchs.csic.es by March 1st, 2020.

Selected applicants will be interviewed in spring 2020. The interviews will be conducted by EuQu's four principal investigators. Applicants will be interviewed via videoconference.

Contact and information : euqu@cchs.csic.es