

# Fully-funded PhD position in Near & Middle Eastern Studies

Date of appointment October 1, 2024

The Seminar for Near and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Basel is offering one fully-funded doctoral position for the research project *Futures Interrupted: social pluralism and political projects beyond coloniality and the nation-state*. This five-year project, started in January 2024, is led by Falestin Naïli (principal investigator) and is funded through a Swiss National Science Foundation Consolidator grant.

## The project:

This collective project aims to renew our perspective on the period between the end of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the age of nations in the Arab world by paying particular attention to local actors. The focus on unrealized social and political projects promoted by local actors allows us a look at the Arab world beyond the colonial framework and beyond the prevailing nation-state model. It also offers a view of alternative articulations of belonging and political community, using case-studies stretching from North Africa to South West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula. *Futures Interrupted* will be particularly attentive to the ways in which these unimplemented or unfinished projects dealt with the social pluralism which characterized the region at that time and which, in many parts of the area, was upset by the colonial division into separate states that occurred mostly after the First World War.

The project will follow a bottom-up approach, proceeding from daily life and practice and moving up to social and political movements. It will be source-driven, not theory-driven, while engaging critically with existing social and political theory. Its objective is to enrich the pool of concepts at the disposal of political science and sociology through a grounded historical analysis of social and political imaginaries in the Arab world.

This implies the search for new types of sources, specifically in order to document non-elite experiences and imaginaries. The crossing of a great variety of archival sources will bring into dialogue the different levels of discourse, activism and constraint linked to political action. Oral history will occupy a particularly important place within the research strategy, since it allows access to narratives of social groups which rarely leave written sources. Given the chronology of the project, this will entail the analysis of existing oral history archives, in addition to interviews with the remaining witnesses of the last two decades under study (1940s to 1960s). Poems, songs, ego-documents and self-narratives will constitute another source for the analysis of idioms of belonging, community and political action.

Details about the research project:

<https://nahoststudien.philhist.unibas.ch/de/forschung/forschungsprojekte/futures-interrupted/>

## The position:

The doctoral position is intended for a project dealing with unimplemented projects for anticolonial emancipation and liberation in the context of the last few decades of French colonial rule in Algeria and how they took into account the social pluralism of Algerian society.

## Your profile:

MA in history and/or Middle Eastern studies

Solid knowledge of English, French and Arabic (Algerian dialect and/ or Amazigh language a plus)

The selected candidate will actively participate in the discussions and events organized within the programme in Basel and abroad.

Background and/or interests include (but are not limited to): political, social history or intellectual history of the modern Arab world, colonial history, the late Ottoman Empire, transition between Empire and nation-states, non-elite agency, belonging, coexistence, citizenship, Algerian history.

**We offer you:**

A joint research project of the University of Basel

Membership in Graduate School of Social Sciences (G3S)

An international research environment

A competitive salary according to the pay scale of the University of Basel

Contract Duration: 4 years (2024–2028)

Working Time: 100% (full time)

The employment conditions follow the guidelines of the university.

**Application:**

Submissions must include: a letter of application (cover letter, 1 page) explaining your background and motivations for the project, a curriculum vitae including any relevant publications, a project proposal (2 pages), scanned copies of relevant diplomas and certificates, and contact information (e-mail addresses and phone numbers) for two academic references for recommendations.

Please send your application documents via the e-recruitment tool of the University of Basel from the 8<sup>th</sup> of April onwards: <https://www.unibas.ch/de/Arbeiten-an-der-Universitaet-Basel/Offene-Stellen.html>

Deadline for submission: April 30, 2024

Short-listed candidates will be interviewed in the first half of June either in Basel or by video-conference.

For further information or questions, please contact Prof. Dr. Falestin Naïli ([falestin.naili@unibas.ch](mailto:falestin.naili@unibas.ch)).