

The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies is offering one position as:

PhD Student

PERIOD OF CONTRACT: 3 years from 1 September 2019 (1-year contracts, renewable subject to satisfactory performance and student status)

ACTIVITY RATE: Full-time (100%) (see SNF regulations)

GROSS SALARY: CHF 47,000 – 49,000 per annum (see SNF regulations)

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: 31 January 2019

General description of the position

The position is being offered in the context of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF)/the French *Agence nationale de la recherche* (ANR) co-funded project, “Self-Accomplishment and Local Moralities in East Africa” (SALMEA). The successful candidate will complete a PhD at the Graduate Institute, will be core member of the SALMEA team, and will also be fully integrated in the life of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the Graduate Institute. Committed to theoretical innovation, robust empirical research, and fine-grained ethnographic fieldwork, the department and its doctoral programme foster the study of contemporary issues in global and transnational terms.

Short description of Project SALMEA

In East Africa, fast-changing social realities informed by structural change—like population growth, climate change, lack of available land, urbanisation, and increased exposure to new worldviews—have fundamentally affected authority, ownership, inheritance and kinship. This has transformed representations and practices of social roles, moral attitudes, and self-accomplishment, that is, shared ideas about a well-led and successful life and ways to realise it. Among the characteristics that define self-accomplishment and intersect with ethnicity, religion, gender, class, and generation, we mainly find access to wealth, respectability, authority, honour, fame, and posterity. This project aims to study the ways in which people in East Africa shape their lives to access and transmit wealth, obtain authority and power, and gain respectability and social influence using different repertoires of principles and values. In other words, its main objective is to understand the dynamic relations between self-accomplishment and morality.

To do so, we will scrutinise four areas: wealth, violence, religion and kinship, which constitute both repertoires of morality and paths to self-accomplishment. Indeed, narratives on a life well-led link up aspects of wealth and kinship. Ethnicity and religion also offer their specific answers as to how to lead one’s life. What happens when aspirations putting wealth and family at the centre of one’s life are unattainable? Violence and religion translate into new forms of self-accomplishment. Although analytically distinct, the economic, political, social, and symbolic facets of

self-accomplishment cannot be studied independently: e.g. wealth commands respect, while respect can facilitate wealth. In other words, self-accomplishment is a “total social fact” whose compound arrangement needs to be disentangled with care through research into people’s words and actions.

Thanks to the availability of significant historical records and academic literature about the dynamic relations between self-accomplishment and morality, East Africa—Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda—is a pertinent case through which to study current dynamics of self-accomplishment as fulfilling the expectations rooted in local moralities. Earlier literature on Central Kenya show, for instance, that self-accomplishment for men had long been obtained through access to land for cultivation, and through marriage and children; yet, men who failed in these dominant trajectories of self-accomplishment could turn to other paths, for example relocating to new territories where ‘virgin’ land could be cleared, or raiding neighbouring communities for cattle, women, and children. In East Africa today, achieving self-accomplishment through the acquisition and cultivation of land is increasingly out of reach for both men and women, resulting in testing or even invention of alternative ways to access wealth, obtain social influence, and gain respect. These alternative ways combine historical models with new representations and practices, drawing from religious, ethnic, national or globalised repertoires of references. Men, women, and youth create and use different ways to reach a life well-led.

Renewing the scholarly literature on morality and self-accomplishment specific to East Africa and opening it to international scholarly debates in the social sciences about the link between values and action, this project will capture, through research in the field and theoretical insights, changes in morality and self-accomplishment in East Africa today, notably by breaking down in refined ways how social categories within which people are located (ethnicity, race, generation, gender, religion, etc.) intersect in the conception and construction of a self-accomplished life. The project will have wide-ranging implications for the ability of governments, civil society actors and development organisations to facilitate interventions that benefit people and help them live better lives.

Mission and activities

- Participate in Project SALMEA’s activities as determined by the project’s PIs;
- Conduct a total of 12 months of ethnographic research in Kenya, Tanzania, or Uganda;
- Present the findings at conferences and workshops;
- Prepare academic publications and dissemination materials;
- Meet Project SALMEA’s interim goals and strictly adhere to project timelines;
- Contribute to research, administrative and coordination duties associated with Project SALMEA, including interim reporting to the SNSF and the ANR and involvement in the preparation of project-related events (conference, workshop, round table, summer school);
- Complete a PhD thesis on a closely related topic.

Candidate profile

- Have, or be close to obtaining, an MA in Anthropology or Sociology or a closely related discipline (e.g. Geography, History, International Development Studies);
- Demonstrated ability to carry out empirical research;
- Highly organised and capable of working independently;

- Excellent interpersonal skills, and ability to work in an international team (previous experience of empirical research in East Africa is an asset);
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English, as well as a good knowledge of French (knowledge of several languages is an asset);
- Knowledge of Swahili or other relevant languages for field work purposes would be an advantage
- Expertise in one or more of the projects' main areas of enquiry is an asset (wealth, violence, religion and kinship).

Application Procedure:

Applications should include: (1) a CV; (2) a letter of motivation; (3) two support letters by referees; (4) a three-page PhD project proposal closely related to Project SALMEA; and (5) wherever available, diplomas and grade transcripts of past higher education degrees (BA and MA). Applicants who have not completed their MA degree by the time of application should include a statement from their supervisor confirming the expected date for the completion of their degree. Application must be submitted online by 31 January 2019 via

https://erecruit.graduateinstitute.ch/recrutement/?page=advertisement_display&id=208.

Interviews (either in person in Geneva or via Skype) will be scheduled for early February.

The position will need to be validated by the Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO) at the Graduate Institute through an additional procedure. Details will be provided to successful candidates.

Informal inquiries and requests for further information should be addressed to:

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