



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHĒ
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Postdoctoral Researcher in Ottoman History

Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS)

Irish Centre for Human Rights

Ref. No. University of Galway 198-23

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for a full-time fixed term position as a Postdoctoral Researcher in Ottoman History for the European Research Council funded project 'Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS)' to work with Professor Roja Fazaeli, Irish Centre for Human Rights at the University of Galway, Ireland.

This position is funded by the European Research Council and is available from 1 February 2024 for 36 months (3 years).

Project Description

Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS) emerges from a critical concern around Muslim women's access to justice in Europe. BILQIS will be driven by methodological advances in Islamic feminism and will be primarily distinguished by its systematic and rigorous inquiries into questions of gender in relation to Islamic family laws (IFL) and IFL-related socio-religious and socio-legal power structures. The project will engage in a comparative study how Muslim women in Europe have navigated agency and authority over time from the long 19th century to the present day across diverse European peripheries, specifically the Ottoman Balkans, the post-Ottoman Balkans, and the territorial spaces that are currently governed by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Norway, and Sweden. BILQIS will interrogate how the gendered development of IFL in each of these peripheral contexts can be better understood in terms agency and authority through studies of legal texts and authorities (e.g., *qadis*, *sijills*, *muftis*, *fatwas*, *istintâk*, national court judgements) and will produce new critical, contextual, conceptual, and constructive knowledge in this regard. As a result BILQIS will break significant epistemic, conceptual and methodological impasses around *shari'a*, conflict of laws, and cultural pluralism in Europe. Finally, BILQIS will aim to use the sum of this new knowledge to construct a new methodological framework to transform the study of gender gaps and power imbalances related to agency and authority. The Post-Doctoral Researcher will be based at the Irish Centre for Human Rights and will work closely with the PI.

Job Description:

The successful candidate will work closely with the principal investigator and other team researchers on the European Research Council funded project 'Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS).'

The Post-Doctoral Researcher will work closely with the PI on the Work Package 1 (WP1) "Women, Qadis, and Muftis in Ottoman Europe in relation to Islamic family law (IFL)." WP1 is based upon archival research and proceeds along critical textual lines of analysis. WP1 aims to understand better how textual bases of authority on IFL-related matters in the Ottoman Balkans either address or reflect the gendered mechanics of agentic negotiation between *qadis*, *muftis* and women.

The Post-Doctoral Researcher will engage in archival studies and investigate Ottoman *fatwa* collections, *Shari'a* court records (*sijill*), as well interrogation records/court testimonies (*istintâk*) in archival sites across



Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, and Bosnia. The successful candidate is required to spend time researching at archival sites in Istanbul, Sarajevo, Sofia, and Thessaloniki.

Duties:

- Conduct historical archival research of Ottoman legal documents, particularly Shari'a courts, using Ottoman language skills and experience in gender-based analysis
- Analyse data and results
- Write and prepare papers for presentation and publication, including single authored and co-authored publications regarding women's agency and Ottoman courts, *muftis* and *ifta* in the Ottoman Balkans
- Prepare a co-edited essay collection
- Contribute to the project website and online dissemination platforms, including social media
- Any associated administrative duties
- Any other duties assigned commensurate to this level of post.

Qualifications/Skills required:

Essential Requirements:

- A PhD in Ottoman History with interest in gender studies and sociology
- Ability to translate archival material from Ottoman to English
- Experience in archival and historical research
- Experience with Ottoman legal documents particularly with Sharia courts
- Excellent writing and communication skills
- Ability to work well both collaboratively and independently
- Highly motivated, with excellent organisational skills
- Proven research skills in Ottoman history and archival work
- Experience in archival studies and gender based analysis
- Ability to read and translate manuscripts from Ottoman into English.

Desirable Requirements:

- Ability and ambition to produce single-authored publications that reflect both the subject and methodologies of the project.
- Experience in the reading/editing of manuscripts.
- Peer-reviewed publication record
- Experience working with databases
- Knowledge of one or more of the following languages: Arabic and Persian
- Computer literacy / IT skills.

Salary: Postdoctoral Researcher salary scale €42,033 - €54,153 per annum, (subject to the project's funding limitations), and pro rata for shorter and/or part-time contracts.

The default position for all new public sector appointments is the 1st point of the salary scale. This may be reviewed, and consideration afforded to appointment at a higher point on the payscale (subject to the



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project's funding limitations), where evidence of prior years' equivalent experience is accepted in determining placement on the scale above point 1, subject to the maximum of the scale.

[Research Salary Scales - University of Galway](#)).

Start date: Position is available from 1st of February 2024

Continuing Professional Development/Training:

Researchers at University of Galway are encouraged to avail of a range of training and development opportunities designed to support their personal career development plans. University of Galway provides continuing professional development supports for all researchers seeking to build their own career pathways either within or beyond academia. Researchers are encouraged to engage with our Researcher Development Centre (RDC) upon commencing employment - see [HERE](#) for further information.

Further information on research and working at University of Galway is available on [Research at University of Galway](#)

For information on moving to Ireland please see www.euraxess.ie

Further information about Irish Centre for Human Rights is available at [Irish Centre for Human Rights - University of Galway](#)

Informal enquiries concerning the post may be made to Professor Roja Fazaeli roja.fazaeli@universityofgalway.ie

To Apply:

Applications to include a covering letter, CV, and the contact details of three referees should be sent, via e-mail (in word or PDF only) to Prof. Roja Fazaeli: roja.fazaeli@universityofgalway.ie

Please put reference number **University of Galway 198-23** in subject line of e-mail application.

Closing date for receipt of applications is 5.00 pm (Irish Time) 12th September 2023

We reserve the right to re-advertise or extend the closing date for this post.

University of Galway is an equal opportunities employer.

All positions are recruited in line with Open, Transparent, Merit (OTM) and Competency based recruitment

