

Call for Applications

Postdoctoral research position (38hrs/week – 2 years maximum)

Within the research project

'Beyond Utopia: New Politics, the Politics of Knowledge, and the Science Fictional Field of Japan'

The Modern East Asia Research Centre (MEARC) at the Leiden Institute for Area Studies at Leiden University, the Netherlands, invites applications for one 2-year postdoc position within the VICI research project '*Beyond Utopia: New Politics, the Politics of Knowledge, and the Science Fictional Field of Japan*'. The position carries a one-year probationary period, successful completion of which will make the post 2 years in total. The principle researcher is Prof. dr. Chris Goto-Jones, Professor of Comparative Philosophy & Political Thought, Leiden University.

Successful candidates will begin their position no later than January 2012.

Project description

Recognizing that, since the end of the Cold War, political theorists around the world have embarked upon a deliberate quest for difference and innovation in their discipline, triggered by the apparently 'world historic' victory of liberal capitalism, this project aims to uncover a series of sites of difference and innovation. In particular, it locates itself in two kinds of distancing: geo-cultural (ie. in the non-European space of Japan) and medial (ie. in innovative expressive media). Utilizing the 'techno-media' of anime, manga and video games, and focusing on the radical potentials of the genre of speculative science fiction, this project aims to analyze and model a series of political visions as potential alternatives to liberal capitalism, hence contributing to the field of political thought.

Furthermore, acknowledging that these widely popular techno-medial products utilize different grammars of expression from conventional, text-based media, this project seeks to formulate a research methodology for scholars to employ for critical interventions into these fields. Accepting that the dimensions of the public sphere change with time and technological developments, and hypothesizing that the public sphere in many contemporary societies is now informed by this techno-politics, at stake is the ability of scholars to remain in touch with (and persuasive in) political realities: new forms of literacy are required if scholars seek to remain involved in the new public sphere. This project attempts to outline those forms of literacy, as implied by the rapidly globalizing force of Japanese anime, manga and video games.

Postdoc subproject

The postdoc will be tasked with selecting a particular mechanism, idea, or narrative theme from the science fictional field and tracking it across different technologies and media in order to investigate the ways in which particular media influence political meanings. The project's focus is on the function and translation of political rhetoric between techno-medial expressions of comparable units.

Tasks:

- one monograph
- one conference paper (final conference)
- contribution to a teaching programme in an appropriate field
- teamwork with the other researchers on this project (PhD candidates and the principal researcher)

Requirements

Candidates should hold a PhD degree. Preference will be given to candidates with:

- a PhD in Political Science/Thought or Philosophy;
- a PhD in Media Studies, with demonstrable expertise in Political Thought or Philosophy;
- a PhD in Japanese Studies and a demonstrable specialization in Political Thought or Philosophy;
- outstanding research qualities manifested in a high-quality dissertation and articles published in peer reviewed journal;
- Excellent command of English'

In general, knowledge of Japanese is preferred but not essential; where a project requires use of sources in the vernacular, Japanese will be essential.

Offer

MEARC offers one fulltime (38hrs/week) Postdoc position for a period of 1 year in the first instance, extendable to 2 years on the basis of performance. The salary will be according to education and experience, and will range between Euro 3.195 and Euro 3.315 gross per month in the first year based on fulltime employment (in accordance with current salary scales as set out in the collective labour agreement for Dutch Universities).

Candidates from outside the Netherlands may be eligible for a substantial tax break.

How to apply

Applications should be emailed in PDF format to the following email address: info@mearc.eu.

The deadline for applications is 1 September 2011.

Only applications emailed on or before this date will be accepted.

In order to apply, the applicant must submit the following:

- a curriculum vitae;
- a letter of motivation;
- a research proposal of up to 2500 words;
- a maximum of three sample publications (thesis, refereed journal articles, edited volume chapters, monograph);
- list of courses taught;
- name and contact details of three referees.

Further inquiries

For further inquiries, please contact Esther TRUIJEN, info@mearc.eu