

Two Fully Funded PhD Positions (3 Years)

Jewish and Islamic Political Thought after 1945

University of Lille – ANR Project REPOLIJIS

The University of Lille invites applications for **two fully funded three-year doctoral positions (PhD)** starting **October 1, 2026**, within the ANR-funded research project:

REPOLIJIS – Rethinking Modern Politics through Jewish and Islamic Sources

REPOLIJIS is a collaborative project between CECILLE (University of Lille) and the Centre Jean Pépin (ENS–PSL–CNRS, Paris). It develops a comparative framework for studying post-1945 efforts to rethink modern political concepts through Jewish and Islamic intellectual traditions.

The Project

REPOLIJIS examines how Jewish and Muslim thinkers engaged with the major transformations of the postwar era — including the Holocaust, decolonization, the crisis of European universalism, and post-1989 reconfigurations of sovereignty and political identity — by turning to their respective religious and intellectual traditions.

The project focuses on three core political notions:

- Sovereignty
- Nation
- Law

The two doctoral positions correspond to the research strands on **Nation (WP2)** and **Law (WP3)**.

Doctoral Research Axes

Work Package 2 – Nation and Political Collectivity

This doctoral project will examine concepts of nation and collective identity in post-1945 Jewish and Islamic political thought.

Research may explore:

- Reinterpretations of the Jewish people (‘am / chosen people)

- Modern reconfigurations of the umma
- Interactions between traditional notions of collectivity and modern nationalism
- Postwar critiques of nationalism
- Postcolonial transformations of political identity
- Post-1989 rearticulations of nationhood

Particular attention should be given to Jewish and Muslim thinkers who sought ethical or normative foundations for political collectivity in response to perceived crises in modern nation theory after WWII.

Work Package 3 – Law and Normative Order

This doctoral project will examine conceptions of law in post-1945 Jewish and Islamic political thought.

Research may explore:

- Interactions between divine law (Halakha / Sharia) and modern secular law
- Constitutional thought in Jewish and Muslim contexts
- Legal pluralism and state authority
- The impact of international law after WWII
- Democratization and legitimacy
- Competing internal interpretations of legal tradition

The dissertation should investigate how Jewish and Muslim thinkers negotiated tensions between religious legal traditions and modern democratic and constitutional frameworks.

Flexibility of Allocation

Applicants are invited to submit a proposal that engages primarily with either **WP2 (Nation)** or **WP3 (Law)**. However, given the conceptual proximity between the two strands and the integrated structure of REPOLIJIS, the selection committee reserves the possibility of allocating successful candidates to either work package in order to ensure the strongest overall intellectual coherence of the project. Applicants should indicate clearly in their cover letter whether they are applying for: WP2 (Nation) or WP3 (Law).

Intellectual Environment

The doctoral researchers will join an international and interdisciplinary network including scholars from France, Germany, the United States, Israel, and the Middle East.

The project includes:

- A regular interdisciplinary research seminar
- International workshops and conferences
- Collective publications
- Public intellectual events
- Collaboration with institutions such as ENS–PSL–CNRS, Institut français d’islamologie, and research partners in Berlin

Supervision:

- Elad Lapidot (University of Lille)
- Co-supervision: Anoush Ganjipour (ENS–CNRS)
- WP3 will involve collaboration with specialists in Jewish and Islamic legal thought.

Responsibilities

The doctoral researchers are expected to:

- Complete an original doctoral dissertation within three years
- Participate actively in seminars and research meetings
- Present research at international conferences
- Contribute to collective publications
- Assist in the organization of scientific events and the online forum

Requirements

- MA degree (or equivalent) completed by July 2026
- Background in Philosophy, Political Theory, Jewish Studies, Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, Law, or related fields
- Strong research and writing skills
- Knowledge of Hebrew and/or Arabic is highly desirable

Candidates lacking proficiency in both languages should demonstrate a realistic plan for language acquisition during the doctoral period.

Employment Conditions

- Fully funded 3-year doctoral contract (contrat doctoral)
- Salary according to French national doctoral regulations
- Affiliation with CECILLE and the Doctoral School for Humanities and Social Sciences
- Regular participation in project activities (in person and online) is expected

Application Documents

Applications must be submitted as one single PDF file and include:

1. Cover letter (max. 1 page), indicating preferred WP
2. Curriculum Vitae (max. 2 pages)
3. Research proposal (4–5 pages), including:
 - Research question
 - State of the art
 - Corpus
 - Methodology
 - Original contribution
 - Bibliography
4. One letter of reference

Deadline: April 30, 2026

Applications to: elad.lapidot@univ-lille.fr

Interviews: May 2026

The University of Lille is committed to equality and diversity in recruitment.