

On the Project “Significations of Oil and Social Change in Niger and Chad” the

The Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Göttingen,
the Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Halle-Wittenberg,
LASDEL, Niamey and
CRASH, N’Djamena
are offering



2 PhD scholarships

One year (with an option to extend) at 12,000€ p.a., starting 01.12.2013
on:

“Social Change and Political Struggle in the Sahelien oil zone of Niger and Chad”

“Significations of Oil and Social Change in Niger and Chad” is an anthropological cooperative research project on technologies, signification and processes of creative adaption in relation to African oil production that consists of close organizational collaboration and exchange between three German institutes of Africa-oriented anthropology (Göttingen, Halle and Mainz) and partners from Niger and Chad. The positions cannot be shared. Main place of service is Niger or Chad and Göttingen, Germany. Long-term field work in the Sahelien oil zone will be required. Fitness for service in the tropics and under rural living conditions is therefore mandatory.

The research project aims at developing a distinctly anthropological perspective on the social transformations that can currently be observed in the newly emerging oil states of Africa. This includes studies on the social impact of oil in local, regional and national settings, particularly concerning social, political, economical and environmental transformations. Two key elements should characterize the research setup: First, a methodological focus on real-time observation of social situations and events as they unfold during the early phase of the formation of an oil state and its industry; therefore the choice of Niger and Chad as young African oil states; and second, a theoretical focus on processes of social and political interaction between various social categories and groups through which order and significations are produced. We furthermore encourage applicants to get acquainted with the theoretical focus and the core concepts of the DFG-funded SPP 1448 “Adaptation and Creativity in Africa”. Please consult the following link for more information:
<http://www.spp1448.de/projects/oil-and-social-change/>.

Your responsibilities

- Draft of detailed research plan for a PhD project
- Long-term fieldwork stay in rural areas
- Drafting of regular reports during the fieldwork stay
- Assistance in organising workshops and conferences
- Assistance in compiling publications of the research team
- Writing of a doctoral thesis
- Organizing and upholding a close dialogue with the project team in close cooperation with partner institutes

Possible research themes include:

- Research on emerging oil zone working relations and cultures. Here, the focus could be on new employment possibilities, expectations and perceptions of oil workers, handling of conflicts in working relations and transformations of social institutions and relations through the influx of oil money.
- Research on transformation of rural livelihoods triggered by oil production. Possible research questions could include the changes in the population’s social and political environment and the resulting competition for power and regional influence.
- Research on the local Nigerien or Chadian economy that make use of opportunities provided by the presence of the oil industry (in particular the Chinese). Research questions could relate to ways of cooperation between Africans and Chinese, the delivery of goods and services or bureaucratic and technological exigencies of Chinese-African economic relations.
- Research on security, transport and sabotage within the oil zone that accompany the production of oil. The research focus could include feared or real processes of looting, sabotage and theft and the (adapted) technologies of handling, securing and transporting oil.

Your profile

- Master or equivalent degree in social/cultural anthropology, sociology, rural sociology or related fields
- Experiences with anthropological fieldwork
- Knowledge of fieldwork methods and ability and willingness to do long-term anthropological fieldwork in Niger or Chad
- Knowledge or willingness to achieve knowledge in these theoretical domains: anthropology of oil, political anthropology, science and technology studies
- Good knowledge of French. Good English reading and writing skills would be an asset.
- Willingness to learn a local language.
- Ability and willingness to work in a dedicated team with an international and intercultural background

Application deadline: 31 October, 2013

Applications shall contain a letter of interest, a CV, copies of all university degrees and contact details of two referees (full address including email). Both, a hard copy and digital version of the application are required! The hard copy should be sent to Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Schareika, Institut für Ethnologie, Theaterplatz 15, 37073 Göttingen, Germany. The digital version (acceptable only as single pdf file!) should be sent to ethno.hiwi@gwdg.de. For further information on the project refer to Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Schareika (<http://schareika.uni-goettingen.de/>) Tel.: +49 (0)551 39-7893, Email: nschare@gwdg.de