

## **Postdoctoral Fellowship für Dr. Shalva Dzebisashvili "Democratization through de-securitization: Illustration practices and the nexus to democratic governance in Armenia and Georgia"**

Initiative: Zwischen Europa und Orient - Mittelasien/Kaukasus im Fokus der Wissenschaft

Ausschreibung: Postdocs: Institutional Change and Social Practice. Research on the Political System, the Economy and Society in Central Asia and the Caucasus

Bewilligung: 17.12.2019

Laufzeit: 3 Jahre

The research project can be clearly located at the intersection of some broader theoretical mainstreams such as democratic transition and institutionalism. Either one offers valuable insights and framework that are often so closely interlinked, that a clear separation and allegiance to the single or narrow theoretical frames appears simply impossible. Conceptually, the project will concentrate on the factor of continuity and discontinuity in bureaucracy and governance, where the holders of the entire mid-to senior level administrative positions had been replaced (discontinuity), partially (selectively) released or largely kept intact (continuity). The role of new/old elites and the scale of the administrative "purging", especially in repressive state institutions (secret services, police and judiciary) critical for the survival of communist regimes, is the core element of the inquiry. Namely, the goal of administrative/bureaucratic "purge", which could be boiled down either to ensuring its loyalty to an individual (new political leader or elite/"vanguard") or the commitment to the democratic principles of governance (political neutrality, administrative autonomy and public accountability), that stands in the direct conflict with the former one. Expected findings would certainly stimulate academic scholarship for intensifying its research and grant more attention to the influence of security services in organizing a systemic resistance to democratic change and effective institutional performance. In fact, project findings would ideally contribute to a kind of textbook of how to avoid the systemic resistance of security agencies and related built in/implanted "control elements" and how to identify sources of risks and their negative impact while dealing with the different strategies of de-securitization.

### **Projektbeteiligte**

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