



Position:

Postdoc project, 1.5 years (1.0fte), starting date to be agreed, with a preference for 1 March 2019.

Title:

Anchoring in Hellenistic Philosophy (Anchoring Work Package 3: Religion and Philosophy)

Salary:

€ 3,637 to max. € 4,978 gross per month (salary scale 11; based on 38 hours a week, depending on previous experience)

Supervisor:

Prof. Dr T.L. Tieleman (UU)

Organisational unit:

Utrecht University, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

Job description:

From its inception philosophy had to compete for cultural authority and legitimacy with other ways of explaining the world and regulating human behaviour, most notably traditional religion, and with icons of Greek *paideia* such as Homer (cf. e.g. Heraclitus, or Plato's *Republic*). But philosophers also competed among themselves, especially since philosophy ramified into different schools – a development that took definitive shape in early Hellenistic Athens in particular. New schools were founded, most notably the Epicurean Garden and the Stoa, and sought to attract their own followers. An older school, the Platonic Academy, took a new direction by turning sceptical. This project is designed to study the strategies used by these Hellenistic philosophers to make their innovations acceptable and authoritative, both among philosophers and within the polis community at large. A central conceptual tool will be that of 'anchoring' as applied to both successful and unsuccessful cases of philosophical (doctrinal, institutional) innovation. At face value, the strategies involved diverged in striking ways and for reasons that are unclear and merit closer study. On the one hand, Stoics and other philosophers anchored their positions through *reinterpretation* rather than outright rejection. This is true both for their approach to traditional religion, morality and civic institutions and for their relation to philosophical predecessors such as Socrates and the Presocratics. Thus both Stoics

and Academics cast themselves as Socratics. Epicurus, on the other hand, stands out by his rejection of traditional religion and education as well as his criticism of the arts. He and his followers vilified Socrates. Thus Epicurus' approach can be characterized as 'negative anchoring', i.e. one that lays claim to a new and creditable identity by emphasizing what he and his school do *not* stand for. But in his case too it needs to be asked how exactly he went about developing this line, how far he combined it with positive forms of anchoring and, ultimately, why he was so successful in launching his philosophy.

Candidates should write a proposal in which they respond creatively to the ideas developed in the above description of the struggle for cultural authority by and among philosophers in the Hellenistic period as they developed and propagated their innovations.

The results, laid down in at least two substantial articles, are to illuminate vital aspects of this use of philosophical traditions and the possible anchoring processes involved.

More information about the Anchoring Innovation research agenda of OIKOS can be found on the OIKOS website (<http://www.ru.nl/oikos/anchoring-innovation/>) with further references to publications about the Anchoring Innovation program.

Requirements:

- A PhD in Ancient Philosophy, held by time of appointment (if the degree is not yet obtained at the time of application, a statement by the applicant's supervisor should confirm that it will be obtained by time of appointment)
- An excellent research and publication record in relation to stage of career.
- A strong cooperative attitude and willingness to engage in collaborative research.
- Excellent command of English.
- Some organisational experience.

Job application:

In order to be considered, applications must include the following information (in the order stated), in one PDF file (not zipped):

- Cover letter
- CV, including list of publications and contact details of two referees
- Research proposal of 1500 words (excluding bibliography and – if appropriate – appendix containing list of sources: together max. two pages A4)
- Copy of relevant degree certificate(s)
- If necessary (see requirements), statement by supervisor confirming that the applicant will hold the required degree at the time of appointment

Please submit your application to Dr. Roald Dijkstra, the coordinator of the Anchoring programme via anchoring@let.ru.nl before 1 November 2018.

Interviews will take place in the week beginning 3 December 2018. For candidates living abroad interviews may be held via Skype.

More information about this position may be obtained from Prof. Dr T.L. Tieleman (t.l.tieleman@uu.nl)