Position:
Postdoc project, 1.5 years (1.0fte, with possible extension of 6 months), start date: 1 March 2018

Title:
The psychology of the ancient world: cognition, social psychology, emotions (Anchoring Work Package B)

Salary:
€3,238 to max. €4,757 gross per month (based on 38 hours a week, depending on previous experience)

Supervisor:
Prof. Dr. I. Sluiter (UL)

Organisational unit:
Leiden University - Center for the Arts in Society (LUCAS) / Classics Department

Job description:
The concept that is central in ‘Anchoring Innovation’ is ‘anchoring’, connecting what is perceived as new to what is deemed already familiar.

‘Anchoring’ has a substantial social-psychological component. It may depend on the way in which relevant social groups categorize conceptually and linguistically what they perceive as new; it relates to the way in which new input (of whichever nature) is processed cognitively, including what emotional reactions such input elicits; and to the way in which ‘the new’ fits into the value systems of such groups (this includes the ways in which they relate to the past).

These are questions also addressed by modern students of psychology and cognition, but in the OIKOS research agenda ‘Anchoring Innovation’ we apply them to a historical period. For each of the questions mentioned above, there is a track record of research in Classics.

The postdoc will be part of the further development of the theoretical framework of ‘anchoring’. S/he will coorganize (with Ineke Sluiter) a conference devoted to the challenges of doing psychological and cognitive research focused on a historical period. The conference is intended not just for classicists, but also for students of other historical periods, and emphatically also for modern social psychologists and students of human cognition. The methods used by psychologists and historians are necessarily very different (e.g. questionnaires and experiments, vs
analysis of texts and other cultural artefacts). We hope to create a dialogue between different practitioners that is useful in evaluating strengths and weaknesses of different approaches. The postdoc will also be the co-editor of the volume that will result from the conference.

Apart from this collaborative work, we invite candidates to submit their own project in this area. This should result in two or three papers (one of which potentially in the joint volume). Topics should be informed by a theoretical knowledge of cognition studies or social psychology. Research questions may address topics such as the emotions, ancient values, the role of language and metaphor, presuppositions, stereotyping, mindreading, embodied cognition etc etc.

More information about the Anchoring Innovation research agenda of OIKOS can be found on the OIKOS website (http://www.ru.nl/oikos/anchoring-innovation/), including an article by Ineke Sluiter, entitled “Anchoring Innovation: a Classical Research Agenda” (http://www.ru.nl/oikos/anchoring-innovation/publications/).

Requirements:
- A PhD, preferably in Classics or in combination with Classics (held 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)

Please submit your complete application to Dr. Roald Dijkstra, the coordinator of the Anchoring programme via anchoring@let.ru.nl before 1 November 2017.

Interviews will take place in the week beginning 4 December 2017. For candidates living abroad interviews may be held via Skype.

More information about this position may be obtained from Prof. Dr. I. Sluiter (i.sluiter@hum.leidenuniv.nl).