



Job opening

The Department of Philosophy (Chair of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy) at Albert Ludwig University Freiburg (Germany) invites applications for a **PhD position (80% E13)** in the **ERC Consolidator Grant MEMOPHI** (see Project Summary below), with the starting date of **July 1st 2014**. The research project lasts for 5 years. MEMOPHI team is composed of 4 members, the Principal Investigator, a Postdoc, and two PhD students. The successful applicant for the open PhD position is initially appointed for a period of 18 months, renewable for three and a half years (42 months) upon successful review. In the broader context of MEMOPHI, she/he will investigate the **Discovery of Medieval Philosophical Mysticism in the 18th-19th Centuries** (see Work Project Description below).

The successful candidate will hold a Master's degree in medieval philosophy or medieval history and will have good skills in Medieval Latin. She/he will have a good command of German. A good command of French would be an advantage. By the end of the programme, she/he will have completed and defended her/his dissertation. Intermediate results will be presented at MEMOPHI's conferences and workshops. During the five years of MEMOPHI, the PhD student will submit at least three papers to international peer-reviewed journals. She/he will co-organize workshops and two international conferences together with the principal investigator and the other team members.

Please submit your **application** letter, CV and recommendation letter by **5 March 2014**, with the following appendices: MA degree certificate, MA thesis and/or writing sample, and a short proposal (statement) concerning the topic of the Work Project. Please send your application to Catherine König-Pralong, Philosophisches Seminar, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Platz der Universität 3, 79085 Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. Selected candidates will be invited for an interview in Freiburg. **Interviews** are scheduled to take place **3-4 April 2014**.

Project Summary: Medieval Philosophy in Modern History of Philosophy
MEMOPHI plans the first comprehensive study of how eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historians of philosophy reconstructed medieval thought. Associating intellectual and cultural approaches, it investigates to what ends and how the history of philosophy has been written, used and institutionalised in European institutions of knowledge. In the 18th and 19th centuries, history and philosophy were at the center of the scientific endeavour. Philosophy gave itself a history in the scientific sense of the word, and the scientific practice of philosophy was secularized in the new academies and universities. Writing the history of philosophy was a process of introspection and discrimination, putting into play the self-conception of the discipline, a selection of its objective relevance and a legitimization of its scientificity. For this purpose, the Middle Ages occupied a central place: the first university was founded around 1200 and institutionalized the future practices of Western science. The scholastic Middle Ages and the modern period constitute indeed the two inaugural moments in the history of university thought. These two moments came

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precisely into contact in modern histories of medieval philosophy. While modern philosophers developed new scientific devices and defined new goals and methodologies for the discipline of philosophy, modern historians of philosophy reconstructed, evaluated and criticized the scientific practices of medieval authors whom they considered as medieval “philosophers” and thus as the first university philosophers. Furthermore, these modern reconstructions of medieval philosophy distinguished and described various medieval “cultures” – Jewish, Arabic, Neo-pagan, Byzantine Christian and Latin Christian – for the purposes of defining the cultural identity of modern Europe and of modern European nations. Thus, in a broader context, MEMOPHI addresses the intersection between cultural politics (notably the creations of national cultural identities) and reconstructions of philosophy’s past. It will bring to light not only the role played by the history of philosophy in the Social Sciences and Humanities, but also civil society’s expectations from the SSH, in the period running from the formation of the SSH to the present.

Work Project Description: The Discovery of Medieval Philosophical Mysticism in the 18th-19th Centuries

This work project investigates the discovery of medieval mysticism by modern historians of philosophy. The inquiry is principally (but not exclusively) confined to the German area and the period stretching from Jacob Brucker (1730-1750) to the extensive history of German mysticism published by Wilhelm Preger between 1874 and 1893. In medieval mysticism, modern German historiography discovered a philosophical heritage proper not only to German philosophy, but also to the so-called German “spirit” (*Geist*). These historiographical constructions invented the culture of the North and established it as an essential constituent of Christian Europe. Modern history of medieval philosophy established a tension between the Latin culture of the South, identified with medieval scholastic philosophy and its dialectical subtleties, and the mystical culture of the North, where the *Geist* played the primary role. In these historical reconstructions, mysticism often prefigured Protestantism, but also sometimes Hegelian philosophy and, more generally, all spiritualist systems.

For more information, please contact:

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