

# Zukunft nftsphil ologie

## Call for applications

3 postdoctoral fellowships for the academic year 2010/2011 for the project  
**ZUKUNFTSPHILOGIE: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship**  
(from 1. 10. 2010.—1. 1. 2011 to 31. 07. 2011)  
Closing date: **9th of August 2010**

Forum  
Transregionale  
Studien

The Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien invites scholars to apply for three postdoctoral fellowships for the research project “ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship”.

The project ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE endeavors to promote and emphasize primary textual scholarship beyond the classical humanistic canon. In an age of advanced communication, intellectual specialization, and unprecedented migration of knowledge and people, the discipline of philology assumes new relevance. ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE aspires to support research in marginalized, undocumented and displaced varieties of philology by revisiting pre-colonial texts and scholarly traditions in Asia, Africa, the Middle East as well as in Europe.

The title “ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE” is inspired by the 1872 polemic between the classicist Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff and Friedrich Nietzsche on the method and meaning of classical studies. The project draws on recent calls for a return to philology as particularly emphasized by Sheldon Pollock in his essay “Future Philology?” and the late Edward Said’s essay “The Return to Philology”.

In order to promote historically-conscious philology, the project will foster research in the following areas: the genealogy and transformations of philological practice, philology’s place in the system of knowledge (e.g. its relation to science, theology, and jurisprudence), philology and the university, and philology and empire. ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE aims to examine the role mobility, calamities, expulsions, and natural catastrophes play in the dissemination and globalization of knowledge. How does the mobility of scholars, books, and manuscripts bring about scientific innovation (e.g. in tenth-century Baghdad, during the European Renaissance, or during the Ming dynasty)? What kind of knowledge systems are also displaced by these processes of reorganization? What transformations and translations accompany such mobilizations?

In addition, ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE aims to support critical reviews of historical and philological practice. In revisiting important philological debates, the goal is not to merely evaluate the argumentative worth of these debates, but to reflect on the wider cultural and political context in which these debates emerged and how they have shaped our knowledge of the past.

ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE is an initiative of the Seminar for Semitistik and Arabistik at the Freie Universität Berlin and envisages the establishment of a Berlin-based research group of philologists. The project is coordinated by Angelika Neuwirth and Islam Dayeh (both Freie Universität Berlin), funded and hosted by the Forum Transregionale Studien.

## Candidates

The fellowships are intended primarily for scholars of Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Persian, Sanskrit, Syriac, Turkish, and other linguistic and philological traditions from Africa, Asia and Europe, as well as for scholars of intellectual and literary history, of comparative linguistics, philology, religion and the history of science from outside Berlin, who wish to carry out their research projects in the framework of the initiative Zukunftsphilologie in Berlin. Applicants should be at the postdoctoral level and should have obtained their doctorate within the last five years. Fellows are given the opportunity to pursue research projects of their own choice, provided the topic falls within the research agenda of the project. During the fellowship in Berlin they will be integrated into a university or extra-university research institute. In the overall context of the project Zukunftsphilologie, they will participate in regular working meetings of the project group as well as in lectures, conferences and summer and winter academies, organized by the project and by the Forum Transregionale Studien.

## Projects

Individual research projects should fall within one of the themes of the project Zukunftsphilologie. Projects should have a comparative perspective, whereby the plurality of textual practices, polyphonic textuality, and the trajectories and genealogies of philological traditions in early modernity are examined.

For the year 2010/2011, research projects focusing on intellectual debates, polemics, correspondences, and transregional encounters are especially welcome. A revisiting of major philological debates will enable us to explore the significance of philology in the cultural and political transformations beyond the modern/pre-modern divide. Moreover, an examination of philological debates will shed light on marginal philological traditions and undocumented intellectual positions as well as the way in which the canonical positions were consolidated and normalized.

## Fellowships

Fellowships may start anytime in the period between October 1, 2010 and January 1, 2011 and will end on July 31, 2011. Shorter fellowship terms can be considered. Postdoctoral fellows will receive a monthly stipend of € 2.025 plus supplements depending on their personal situation. Organizational support regarding visa, insurances, housing, etc. will be provided. Successful applicants will be fellows of the project Zukunftsphilologie at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

## Application procedure

To apply, please send the following documents in English exclusively by e-mail as single word or PDF file. The letter of recommendation can be sent directly by e-mail.

- a curriculum vitae
- a project description (no longer than five pages) stating what the scholar will work on in Berlin if granted a fellowship
- a sample of scholarly work (maximum 20 pages, article, book chapter, conference contribution)
- a letter of recommendation from one academic faculty

The application should be submitted in English and should be received by **August 9, 2010**, addressed to **office@trafo-berlin.de**

## Institutional framework

The Forum Transregionale Studien is a new research platform of the Land of Berlin designed to promote research that connects systematic and region-specific questions in a perspective that addresses entanglements and interactions beyond national, cultural or regional frames. The Forum works in tandem with established institutions and networks engaged in transregional studies and is supported by an association of the directors of research institutes and networks mainly based in Berlin. It started its activities in 2010 by supporting three research projects in the fields of law, philology, and urban sociology. The Forum Transregionale Studien is funded by the Senate of Berlin.

## Contact

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