

Storytelling as *Pharmakon* in Premodernity and Beyond: Training the New Generation of Researchers in Health Humanities (StoryPharm)

Advertisement of Three PhD Positions

Call for Individual Applications



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Recruiting Organisation: Lund University (ULUND)

The University of Lund (Sweden) is offering three four-year PhD positions with a generous research allowance in an international, multi-partner EU project, employment beginning in August 2025.

The StoryPharm project, which is funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action – Doctoral Networks, announces a total of 19 PhD fellowships within the training programme “Storytelling as *Pharmakon* in Premodernity and Beyond: Training the New Generation of Researchers in Health Humanities” (<https://www.ucy.ac.cy/storypharm/>). The focus of the project will be on premodern narratives involving medicine, health, and healing. These will be studied from a transdisciplinary and comparative perspective, across linguistic and cultural borders. The three PhD candidates at ULUND will together form a study group working on the exchanges between the Greek and the Arabic world of medicine and narratives.

The following three project descriptions form a catalogue within which applicants may form their own research proposal. When applying, all applicants must state which research field is their primary – either Ancient/Byzantine Greek or (Classical) Arabic – and which of the three project descriptions their own belongs/conforms to. Depending on project description, the

employed doctoral fellow may be obliged to take some language training in the complementing language (either Ancient/Byzantine Greek or Classical Arabic).

Project 1: “The Medical Case Story in the *Kitāb al-mujarrabāt* and Other Arabic Medical Collections” (StoryPharm Fellow 3)

This project will examine the medical case story in its use as instruction to other practitioners and its possible function as part of patient treatment. It will focus on the *Kitāb al-mujarrabāt* of Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Zakarīyā’ al-Rāzī (c. 865–925 CE). Other collections of Arabic medical case stories will also be investigated. Case stories formed an important narrative genre in all early medicine, but they have been studied almost exclusively as conveying information from one doctor to the next. This project will examine the case story’s narrative elements, the strategies promoting the physician’s authority and reliability, and doctor–patient interactions.

The successful candidate will be enrolled in the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology. The training includes a three-month academic secondment at the University of Bamberg (UNI BA) and a one-month non-academic secondment at David Collection (Copenhagen). At ULUND the PhD candidate will work under the supervision of Christian Høgel while Christoph Werner will act as a supervisor at UNI BA.

Objectives

The fellow will aim at achieving the following results: (1) illuminate the rhetorical and narrative strategies employed by Islamic physicians to establish their medical authority and power; (2) show how the doctor-patient interaction is manipulated in these narratives to further confirm the physician’s authority; (3) establish the case story as a literary genre with its own conventions and characteristics.

The application package should contain a short document (max 2 pages) describing how Fellow 3 would approach the research. This is a crucial part of the evaluation as it is meant to reflect writing ability, creativity and grasp of theory and research. It is therefore crucial that all fellows make their best effort toward making the document reflective of their true abilities.

When composing their text regarding Project 1, Fellow 3 may wish to consider:

- What were the generic features governing tales of doctor-patient interaction in the Greco-Roman medical tradition?

- How did these narratives translate across language and cultural borders?
- How do the stories underpin the authority of physicians (in various ages/regions)?
- Were tales told to convince other physicians or to be reused in clinical situations, either as guidelines or as tales to be retold to patients?

Short Bibliography

Álvarez-Millán, Cristina. 2010. “The Case History in Medieval Islamic Medical Literature: Tajarib and Mujarrabat as Source,” *Medical History* 54, 195–214.

Bouras-Vallianatos, Petros and Sophia Xenophontos (eds) 2018. *Greek Medical Literature and its Readers: From Hippocrates to Islam and Byzantium*. London.

Pietrobelli, Antoine and Marie Cronier 2022. “Arabic Galeanism from Antioch to Byzantium: Ibn Butlan and Symeon Seth,” *Mediterranea: International Journal on the Transfer of Knowledge* 7, 281–315.

Project 2: “The Pictorial Narratives of Herbal Medicine in Dioskorides’ *De materia medica*” (StoryPharm Fellow 11)

This project will study the pictorial programmes accompanying the *De materia medica* of Pedanios Dioskorides (c. 40–90 CE) in its various traditions (mainly Greek and Arabic) in search of their narrative functions. The herbal medicine of Dioskorides (and other early medical writers) often prompted imaginative pictorial representation, including much more than the specific herb that was to be visually identified. Animals would be included in the images or even scenes of human action. These narrative extensions could in many cases reflect stories told and convey treatment or medical explanation. It is this narrative universe that this subproject will attempt to trace.

The successful candidate will be enrolled in the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology. The training includes a three-month academic secondment at the University of Bamberg (UNI BA) and a one-month non-academic secondment at the Bamberg State Library. At ULUND, the PhD candidate will work under the supervision of Christian Høgel while Katharina Schüppel will act as a supervisor at UNI BA.

Objectives

The fellow will aim at achieving the following results: (1) reveal continuities and differences among Dioskorides manuscripts from diverse traditions; (2) illustrate the function of images in medieval understanding of herbal medicine; and (3) show the interaction of text and image in medieval medical practices.

The application package should contain a short document (max 2 pages) describing how Fellow 11 would approach the research. This is a crucial part of the evaluation as it is meant to reflect writing ability, creativity and grasp of theory and research. It is therefore crucial that all fellows make their best effort toward making the document reflective of their true abilities.

When composing their text regarding Project 2, Fellow 11 may wish to consider:

- What may be known about the interchange of Dioscorides illumination traditions between Greek, Arabic, and other traditions?
- What narrative features do we observe in the illumination tradition of Dioskorides, and what changes through time?
- To which narrative worlds and genres do the Dioscorides illuminations refer to?

Short Bibliography

Saliba, George and Linda Komaroff. 2008. “Illustrated Books May Be Hazardous to Your Health: A New Reading of the Arabic Reception and Rendition of the ‘Materia Medica’ of Dioscorides,” *Ars Orientalis* 35, 6–65.

Gutas, Dimitri. 2012. “The Arabic Transmission of Dioskurides: Philology Triumphant,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 132 (3), 457–462.

Mavroudi, Maria. 2015. “Translations from Greek into Latin and Arabic during the Middle Ages: Searching for the Classical Tradition,” *Speculum* 90 (1), 25–59.

Project 3: “The Kyranides and the Tradition of Medical Magic” (StoryPharm Fellow 12)

This project concerns magic texts which operate as healing means including a multitude of voices. Sometimes numinous powers are voicing the therapeutic knowledge, other times it is

a science-like voice speaking, referring to the knowledge of all and imparting empirically based recipes. The recipient is equally a blend of general “you” and a more particular “soul”, also imparting the reader or listener a status within semi-divine categories. The subproject will try to understand the function of magic as *pharmakon* by analysing the authoritative voices and exalted recipients, the narrators and narratees, of the Kyranides (probably 4th c. CE) and other similar magic texts. The Kyranides will be studied both in its Greek original, in its various editions, and in a selection of its Latin and Arabic translations and reworkings.

The successful candidate will be enrolled in the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology. The training includes a three-month academic secondment at the University of Cyprus (UCY) and a one-month non-academic secondment at Dr. Pflieger. At ULUND, the PhD candidate will work under the supervision of Christian Høgel while Dionysios Stathakopoulos will act as a supervisor at UCY.

Objectives

Fellow 12 will aim at achieving the following results: (1) give a more blended understanding of the vast popularity of magic and its literary modes; (2) a first rhetorical and narrative analysis of influential magic texts; (3) contribute to a better understanding of the ways in which practitioners of magic crafted their words and recipes as healing artefacts; (4) show the similarities and differences between different linguistic traditions of Kyranides.

The application package should contain a short document (max 2 pages) describing how Fellow 12 would approach the research. This is a crucial part of the evaluation as it is meant to reflect writing ability, creativity and grasp of theory and research. It is therefore crucial that all fellows make their best effort toward making the document reflective of their true abilities.

When composing their text regarding Project 3, Fellow 12 may wish to consider:

- What narrative features characterize magical texts and practices, and which are particular to the Greek and Arabic traditions?
- What place do texts like the Kyranides hold in the transmission and practice of magic?
- Is it possible to develop a literary history of the Kyranides or similar medieval magical texts, based on its narrative or other features?

Short bibliography

Magdalino, Paul and Maria Mavroudi (eds) 2006. *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, Geneva.

Ullmann, Manfred. 2020. “Die arabischen Fragmente der Bücher II bis IV der Kyraniden,”
Studia Graeco-arabica 10, 49–58.

Bain, David. 1995. “περιγίνεσθαι as a Medical Term and a Conjecture in the *Cyranides*,” in
Donald Andrew Russell et al. (eds), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald
Russell on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*. Oxford, 281–286.

Specific Requirements

A Master’s Degree in Classics, Medieval Studies, or Arabic is required. Depending on project description, the employed doctoral fellow may be obliged to take some language training in the complementing language (either Ancient/Byzantine Greek or Classical Arabic).

For candidates applying for a project in Ancient/Byzantine Greek, they must have

- been awarded a second-cycle qualification specialising in Greek
- passed a degree project in Greek comprising at least 15 second-cycle credits
- completed 30 credits in a subject of relevance to third-cycle studies, such as Modern Greek, Latin, literary studies or the history of ideas.

For candidates applying for a project in Semitic languages, they must have:

- been awarded a second-cycle qualification specialising in Arabic, Hebrew or Syriac
- passed a paper specialising in Arabic, Hebrew or Syriac comprising at least 15 second-cycle credits
- completed second-cycle courses specialising in Arabic, Hebrew or Syriac texts comprising at least 15 second-cycle credits
- the ability to assimilate scholarly texts in French or German.

The University wishes our staff to reflect the diversity of society and thus welcomes applications from all qualified candidates regardless of personal background.

Main Training Activities Specific to the StoryPharm Project

- Induction Week (University of Cyprus; UCY)

- Training in Critical Discourse Analysis (Lund University)
- Training in Narrative and in Literary Criticism (UCY)
- Training in Intersectionality, Sexuality, and Gender (UCY)
- Summer School (University of Bamberg)
- Training in Obtaining Funding in Project Management (online)
- Training in Entrepreneurship (online)
- Training in Publishing Industry (Bamberg State Library)

Expectations

The PhD candidates will fulfil the requirements of the PhD programme in either Ancient/Byzantine Greek or Arabic (see https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Greek.pdf and/or https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Semitic_languages.pdf), lead their research under the guidance of the supervisors, and present their work at international conferences, in accordance with the consortium's communication and dissemination plan. Furthermore, they will cooperate with other fellow PhD students to fulfill the StoryPharm's training and other objectives. Participation in StoryPharm's training and other activities is compulsory.

Salary

The successful candidates will be employed full-time. The gross salary before taxes will be 31,500 SEK/month plus mobility allowance (3,000 SEK) and, only if applicable, family allowance (4,500 SEK).

For more information about the three fellowships, contact Prof. Christian Høgel (christian.hogel@klass.lu.se).

All recruited doctoral fellows will become highly skilled cultural historians specialising in premodern intellectual and healthcare worlds. At the same time, they will acquire transferable skills allowing them to use, develop, and deploy cutting-edge approaches to storytelling and its ethical ramifications for scientific, professional, business, healthcare, and social purposes. After the offered doctoral training, the fellows will be ideally positioned to (1) achieve ground-breaking research results; (2) meet current trends and needs in the job market; (3)

work towards establishing a human-centred medical system; and (4) create better and more resilient societies.

StoryPharm welcomes highly-motivated applicants. The call is open to applicants of any age and nationality who meet the following requirements at the recruitment date:

- Prior to the starting date of the PhD programme they must hold or be due to hold a Master's Degree in relevant fields mentioned above.
- Must not already hold a doctoral title.
- Must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date (mobility Rule). Any time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention (1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol), compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays do not count towards the total.

Additional requirements can apply for specific positions. For further information, please consult the detailed information for each position.

If any of the above prerequisites is not satisfied, the StoryPharm consortium reserves the right to exclude applicants from the selection procedure at any time, even after the selection procedure has taken place.

Application Procedures

Applications for the first round will be accepted from **15/10/2024** until **15/12/2024** at **14:00** (Central European Time).

Applications must be submitted electronically to the email address: **cemar@ucy.ac.cy**

Applicants may apply for one or more positions, up to three positions in total. In case of multiple applications, applicants should submit one application with a separate research statement for each position **and specify the priority order** in their personal statement.

The following documents must be provided:

- Personal statement (max 2 pages) detailing the applicant's motivations and goals within the StoryPharm programme
- CV (max 2 pages) with emphasis on prior academic achievements

- Research statement (max 2 pages, 1,000 words) detailing how the applicant will approach the research project and how the StoryPharm training goals fit into the applicant's career plans. Please consider the research questions included in each position's description.
- Copy of Bachelor's and Master's Degree certificates and transcript of records
- Copy of Master's Thesis
- A reference letter by the MA supervisor and one other academic reference.
- Copy of an ID document valid at the time of the interview.

All application documents **must be drafted** in English. For **certificates and other official documents** official translations in English are preferable. We, however, accept documents in the following languages: Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish.

Applications must be submitted by the call deadline.

The applications must be complete in all their parts and must include all required material in PDF format without any protection that prevents printing.

Evaluation

A specific Evaluation Committee will be established to assess each topic's applicants. Each Committee will be composed of the main supervisors, an external member from the Supervisory Board, and possibly other faculty members of the recruiting university.

The evaluation process will include two stages.

1st Stage: Application Assessment

Application materials will be assessed based on the criteria specified in Table 2.

The score will be calculated on a scale of 0 to 100 points. Candidates with a score of at least 60 over 100 will pass to the second step and will be invited to an interview. We expect to notify shortlisted candidates in December 2024.

Table 2: Evaluation Criteria for the Preliminary Selection

Criteria	Percentage
Criterion 1: Excellence of the applicant’s CV, skills and track record (see Application Procedures), fulfilment of the relevant requirements related to the position applied for	80%
Criterion 2: Potential impact on the applicant’s career and motivations to participate in the StoryPharm training programme	20%
Global score	100% (threshold 60%)

2nd Stage: Interview

Individual interviews will have the purpose of gaining a better sense of the applicants’ academic background and their approach to the proposed PhD research project as well as the vision of their role within the network and of their future career. If a candidate has applied for more than one fellowship, the interview will test the fulfilment of the requirements for all of them.

The interviews will last approximately 30 minutes. Candidates will be interviewed on-line via Zoom or Teams.

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate the interviewees based on the criteria specified in the table below. It will produce an evaluation summary report for each applicant, with scores and detailed motivations.

All interviews will be conducted in English.

Table 3: Evaluation criteria for the interview

Criteria	Percentage
Criterion 1: Excellence of the applicant’s presentation: Argumentation, communication, and evidence of knowledge of the ancient/medieval/modern languages when relevant	35%

Criterion 2: Excellence of the research statement, originality, understanding of the different facets of research demonstrated during discussion	65%
Global score	100%

The Evaluation Committee will produce a ranking list for each position.

Ranking List

All applicants invited to the interview will be informed of the outcome of the selection process with an Evaluation Summary Report.

Applicants with Disabilities or Specific Learning Difficulties

StoryPharm will take specific measures for applicants with disabilities (e.g. blind or deaf applicants or those suffering from any other relevant disability) or with specific learning difficulties (e.g. applicants diagnosed with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia or dysorthography) to guarantee equal treatment.

Admission to the PhD Programmes

Successful applicants are admitted to their selected PhD programme following the order of the ranking list. The selected applicants must confirm by email their acceptance of the position within 15 days.

Applicants who fail to meet this deadline will be replaced by the next applicant on the ranking list, who will be informed by email and must enroll within 15 days following the same procedure.

If no other applicant is available in the ranking list for the position, StoryPharm may decide to assign the position to a qualified applicant for a different PhD position or launch an extra call for applications for the vacant position.

PhD Fellows' Rights, Obligations and Incompatibilities

It is not possible to be simultaneously enrolled in more than one study programme leading to the awarding of a degree (e.g. Bachelor, Masters, Postgraduate Specialisation, short/executive Masters or PhD).

In the case of enrolment in the StoryPharm PhD programme successful applicants will be required to suspend or, if not possible, discontinue any enrolment in their other degree programme before the commencement of the PhD programme in order not to be excluded.

Confidentiality

Personal data will be collected, used and processed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR).

StoryPharm commits to using personal information for the purposes of the selection process alone.

The participation in the selection process implies the applicant's consent to the collection, use and process of their personal data by the StoryPharm consortium.

For more information about the StoryPharm project, visit our website

<https://www.ucy.ac.cy/storypharm/>. For any questions contact Dr Andria Andreou, contact the StoryPharm Scientific Project Manager, Dr Andria Androu andreou.andria@ucy.ac.cy.