

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

Advertisement of Positions

Call for Individual Applications



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Fellow 3

Project Title: “The *Kitāb al-Tajārib* and the genre of Medical Collections: The Medical Case Story in the Greek, Arabic and/or Latin traditions”

Recruiting Organisation: Lund University (ULUND)

We are offering a 4-year PhD position with a generous research allowance in an international, multi-partner EU project. This subproject will examine the medical case story in its use as instruction to other practitioners and its possible function as part of patient treatment. A point of departure will be the *Kitāb al-Tajārib* by Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Zakarīyā’ al-Rāzī (c. 865–925 CE), but the project may cover any sequence and interconnection within the ancient/medieval Greek, Arabic, or Latin tradition of medical case stories, with a preference for projects that take an intercultural perspective. Case stories formed an important narrative genre in all pre-modern medicine but have in scholarship mostly been studied as conveying information from one doctor to the next. This subproject 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 employed at Lund University in August 2025 and 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

Fellow 3 will aim at achieving the following results: (1) illuminate the rhetorical and narrative strategies employed by medieval (Greek/Arabic/Latin) physicians to establish their medical authority and power; (2) show how the doctor-patient interaction is staged in these narratives; (3) establish the case story as a literary genre with its own conventions and characteristics.

Specific Requirements

A Master's Degree in Classics, Greek, Latin, or Arabic is required, fulfilling the entry requirements stated in the respective syllabus (see

https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Greek.pdf or

https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Semitic_languages.pdf or

https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Latin.pdf). Depending on project description, the employed doctoral fellow may be

obliged to take some language training in a complementing language (either Ancient/Byzantine Greek, Classical Arabic, or Latin).

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 Project

- Induction Week (University of Cyprus; UCY)
- Training in Critical Discourse Analysis (Lund University)
- Training in Narrative and in Literary Criticism (University of Salerno)
- 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 candidate will have to fulfil the requirements of the PhD programme in either Ancient/Byzantine Greek, Arabic or Latin (see

https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Greek.pdf or

https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Semitic_languages.pdf or

https://www.ht.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/ht/filserver/doktorand/studieplaner-engelska-2023/Latin.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 candidate 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).

The Application

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 candidates make their best effort toward making the document reflective of their true abilities.

When composing the text, Fellow 3 may wish to consider:

- What were the generic features governing tales of doctor-patient interaction in the (ancient/medieval) Greek, Arabic, or Latin 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.

Burnett, C. 2001. "The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation 'Programme in Toledo in the Twelfth Century," *Science in Context* 14, 249-88.

Green, M.H. 2005. "Constantine the African" in T.F. Glick et al. (eds.), *Medieval Science, Technology and Medicine: An Encyclopedia*. New York: Routledge, 145-47.

Pormann P.E. & E. Savage-Smith. 2007. *Medieval islamic medicine*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

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.

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