

28th February 2017

Department of the Study of
Religion, Institute of Culture
and Society

Luke John Murphy
PhD Fellow

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I am writing to you in application for the position of Assistant Professor in European Medieval History 700-1500 AD as advertised on the university's website.

I believe I am a strong candidate for this position, as I have an emerging research profile in the medieval history of the Nordic region, both within Denmark and internationally; have recently submitted a PhD dissertation on early medieval Nordic culture at the University of Aarhus (which I anticipate defending in April 2017); and have extensive project and teaching experience.

My research to date has focused on a range of issues in religious and social history – including social structures, cultural variation, and landscape usage – within the Nordic region c. 500-1500 AD, and has been (or is in the process of being) published in both Danish and English in a range of international academic journals and edited volumes. I have also been a dynamic contributor to scholarly discourse in the field, presenting over 30 papers, talks, and presentations at academic conferences both in Denmark and abroad. I am particularly attracted to the opportunity to work at Aarhus due to the university's strong medieval milieu, and would anticipate continuing to contribute to organisations like the *Forskningsenhed for Europæisk Middelalder*, the *Viking Age Reading Group* and the *Aarhus Student Symposium on Old Norse Topics*.

The chance to collaborate with colleagues on large-scale, collective research projects is also highly attractive, and I believe my experience as *Project Coordinator* on the international *Pre-Christian Religions of the North* project, where I was responsible for budgeting and funding applications, would serve me in good stead. I have previously utilised the skills I gained in this position to secure myself a range of funding (as detailed in my attached CV), and look forward to the opportunity to employ them further on behalf of my colleagues on future collective projects.

I believe my broad teaching and supervisory experience (as outlined in the attached Teaching Portfolio) qualify me for the educational duties of the position. I have supervised individual student projects at all levels and in multiple languages (including Danish and English), have taught on a range of topics in European, Nordic and Danish medieval history in a range of settings and to students of varying national and disciplinary backgrounds, and have been actively involved in the design and planning of both individual courses and

larger programmes, such as the *Viking Studies* supplementary subject offered at Aarhus University. I have also collaborated closely with and co-taught alongside colleagues from a range of disciplines (including History, the Study of Religion, Literary Studies, Archaeology, and Folklore). Were I offered the position, I would seek to further the ongoing cooperation in teaching between departments at Aarhus University in supplementary subjects, interdisciplinary programmes, and summer schools. My experience also includes the teaching of method and theory (notably at MA level in the *Seminar i Religionshistorie*), and I would be keen to contribute to courses at The Department of History such as *Historisk metode 1 and 2* (at BA level), and *Kulturhistoriens teori og metode* and the *Kulturhistorisk project* (at MA level). As part of my duties as an *External Lecturer* at the *University of Iceland*, I have recently piloted the use of new online-learning and assessment tools, and I anticipate building on this success in the future.

Beyond publication and teaching, the dissemination of academic knowledge to the interested public is a vital (and increasingly important) aspect of any scholarly work. My previous outreach has included both in-person lectures to the Danish-speaking public at the Folkeuniversitet, and contribution to online projects such as the *Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse* and the youtube.com documentary *Hail Odin!* The position of Assistant Professor in European Medieval History 700-1500 AD would allow me to continue my efforts in this area, as well as offering me the opportunity to contribute to a thriving medieval milieu and internationally-recognised degree programme.

Please find the required application documents submitted alongside this letter. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to discuss the position with you in person, and should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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