NORTH WEST CONSORTIUM DOCTORAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

UKRI — Arts and Humanities Research Council

Standard Application form for students applying for a +2 or +3 studentship in the Arts and Humanities

(September 2021 entry)

1. Studentship applied for (please tick):

☐ +2 (PhD - current students)
☒ +3 (PhD)

Pathway:	History
Institution:	University of Liverpool

Project title (+2/+3):	Ideal and moral rulership between Insular and Carolingian worlds

6. PhD Proposal (to be completed by all students):

6a) Please provide between 6 and 10 keywords that describe your research

speculum	advice literature
insular	transnational
Alcuin	intellectual
kingship	exchange

Carolingian	rulership

6b) Please describe the proposed research using <u>up to 1,500 words</u>, referring to the guidance. Include a word count.

The qualities of a good leader have been in debate ever since the beginning of political leadership and communities, but have arguably never been more important than in the current political context. My project 'Ideal and moral leadership between insular and Carolingian worlds' arises from the belief that societies in which the language of leadership was more explicitly moral may provide insights that retain their value in eras of more cynical political discourse. Although there is a long tradition of literature addressing advice to political leaders in the West, one important period of this tradition is understudied. During classical antiquity, political counsel and advice literature was common, but the introduction of Christianity to Rome introduced a significant new religious-moral element. Ultimately, from the late eighth century onwards, scholars working under Carolingian auspices would elaborate ideas of Christian rulership and pass them onto the later Middle Ages and beyond. However, the transition between the two, between the fourth and eighth centuries, is still poorly understood, principally because the works that occupy it have been studied purely within their own geographical milieux. By far the most notable 'Mirrors of Princes' from this period were written in Ireland, and although these texts' wide dissemination and influence has been acknowledged, modern scholars have given them detailed attention only in their domestic context. Yet the environment in which they were produced is increasingly recognized as one that transcended geographical milieux. In a current historiographical context that emphasizes transnational and comparative perspectives, the time is right to study the development of these ideas in their actual, diffusive environment. Furthermore, it is also important to understand the degree to which early medieval leaders sought or were able to transform moral ideals into ideological frameworks for government, or even into practical governing. In this project I will seek to answer these questions by analysing specific texts, having acquired the required skills to do so.

There are two major areas of primary source material: explicit *speculum* literature, and other texts that contain relevant material, such as universal histories. My research project will begin with Carolingian-era works, principally those by authors like Alcuin, Fridugisus, Walahfrid, and Sedulius Scottus. Beginning with the Carolingian culmination of early medieval ideas of Christian rulership will allow me to identify concepts of ideal leadership and work backwards to identify their ancestors. Although these Carolingian works have been fairly well studied individually, there is still a need to integrate those studies into a coherent picture of Carolingian ideals about rulership. Alcuin is particularly important in this respect, as he was educated in York and therefore embodied the connections between the Insular and Carolingian scholarly traditions. Beyond Alcuin, works by his pupils Fridugisus and Walahfrid indicate how his ideas were taken up by a new generation. Sedulius Scottus contributed significantly to later and post-Carolingian discourse around ideal leadership. My project will not consider his chronological successor, Hincmar of Rheims, whose substantial body of political literature has been the subject of a recent study by Sophia Mösch, and evidently belongs to a different strand of thought than the scholarship connected with insular texts (Mösch, 2020). Based on this analysis of Carolingian texts, I will create a glossary of concepts related to ideal leadership, which will then be used to analyse the notional sources of these ideas.

From the Early English milieu, the letter of Cathwulf to Charlemagne from the Saint-Denis monastic collection is particularly significant. It is addressed to Charlemagne himself, making it a significant connection between Insular and Carolingian worlds. Furthermore, it makes reference to numerological and other scholarly ideas from Irish scholars, and to Late Antique ideas such as those of the Ambrosiaster, making it even more significant as a 'bridge' to the Carolingian ideology of kingship (Story, 1999). Of particular importance to Alcuin were the writings of Bede who, like some Carolingian authors, did not write explicit advice literature, but instead contained these ideas within other works. As Bede has been heavily studied, his work will be treated largely as part of a commerce between the Insular and Carolingian worlds. That circulation of ideas may also be evident in the corpus of works associated with king Alfred 'the Great', which will also come under scrutiny.

Finally, Irish literature will be assessed, once I am in a position to deal fully with Irish language texts, as the notional sources of the ideas about leadership that the later texts develop. These include Hiberno-Latin pieces like *De XII abusivis* and vernacular pieces like *Tecosca Cormaic* and *Audacht Morainn*. *De XII abusivis* is particularly significant, as it was widely circulated and copied on the continent, with varying degrees of accuracy and completeness. The project will also look at less studied Irish vernacular texts, such as *Bríatharthecosc Con Cullain,* which will be crucial to developing an original and broad interpretation of the extant source material. Most recent studies, such as those by McQuaid, Fomin, and Breen have focused only on the Irish milieu, rather than the broader Latin tradition (Breen, 2002; Fomin, 2009; McQuaid, 2017). However, the Irish literature brings the native Irish tradition of kingship into conversation with the developing Christian tradition in the Latin West, as is demonstrated by the firm biblical connections noted by scholars such as Juliana Grigg (Grigg, 2010). Many Irish language texts are available in translation, but some of the less well studied texts, such as *Tecosc Cuscraid,* are only available in Old Irish. As such, learning Old Irish will be part of my research development.

The best approach to the evidence base for this project is one that combines conceptual and philological analysis. This methodology is similar to that used recently and successfully by Mösch in her study of the Augustinian inheritance of Alcuin and Hincmar. Onomasiology allows us to compare concepts across linguistic barriers and to trace their transmission. The sacralisation of rulership and the increased responsibility that followed can then be positioned in terms of an exchange of ideas and concepts between the continental and insular milieux. This exchange of concepts was a key part of intellectual life in western Europe, but can be obscured by linguistic factors, necessitating a transnational approach. While the comparative approach proposed here would draw connections between 'Anglo-Saxon' and 'Irish' milieux, I aim also to connect these with Western Europe in a way that aligns with the recent emphasis among historians on transnational history. Identification of sources and influences on my target texts is also a crucial part of my methodology. Sources may display themselves through direct citations, which have mostly been identified by previous scholarship. However, they may also emerge as indirect influences on the authors in question, and thus the glossary is crucial for analysis of these. Finally, my project will for the first time investigate the extent to which these ideas influenced practical politics, through examining the capitulary legislation of the Carolingians and the Anglo-Saxon laws of Alfred and successors, which have already been shown to have Carolingian influences and, recently, Irish influences (Pratt, 2007).

This project offers a significant opportunity to explore the development of moral and ideal leadership in a new way. The claims to authority and legitimacy elaborated from the 10th century onwards, along with the responsibilities of the governor, have their roots in this post-Roman early medieval period. A comparative study of this development is therefore needed to understand the creation of this ideology. In addition, this project offers the opportunity to understand and compare how far these ideas seriously affected practical contemporary politics. Beyond this, the idea of the governor as moral exemplar to the governed is one that is particularly relevant today. Much criticism of modern governments comes from this as a basis, and it is a topic that remains frequently debated in both democratic and illiberal authoritarian countries. Thus, while this project will be relevant to medievalists for expanding our understanding of the development of leadership ideology, it also has significant resonances outside of the academy.

Works Cited

Breen, A. (2002) 'De XII abusivis: text and transmission', in Ní Chatháin, P. and Richter, M. (eds) Ireland and Europe in the early Middle Ages: texts and transmission, Dublin: Four Courts Press.
Fomin, M. (2009) 'Wisdom-texts from Early Christian Ireland: Aspects of Style, Syntax and Semantics', in Bloch-Trojnar, M. (ed.) Perspectives on Celtic languages. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego (Lublin Studies in Celtic Languages, 6).
Grigg, J. (2010) 'The Just King and De Duodecim Abusiuis Saeculi', Parergon, 27(1), pp. 27–51.

McQuaid, A. (2017) Advice for Kings: An Investigation into a Subdivision of Early Irish Wisdom Literature. Ph.D. thesis. University of Glasgow. Available at: https://theses.gla.ac.uk/8519 (Accessed: 6 December 2020).

Mösch, S. (2020) Augustine and the art of ruling in the Carolingian imperial period: Political Discourse in Alcuin of York and Hincmar of Rheims. Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge.

Pratt, D. (2007) The political thought of King Alfred the Great. Cambridge [UK]; New York: Cambridge University Press. Available at: http://site.ebrary.com/id/10182325 (Accessed: 1 February 2021).

Word Count = 1,489 words

6c) Please provide information on how the proposed research and postgraduate training will contribute to your career development (max 250 words)

For an aspiring historian, the NWCDTP offers a cutting-edge environment for doctoral study. The combination of regional expertise in medieval studies accessible through Liverpool will enable me to develop further the skills necessary for a continuing career as a researcher in this field, including in palaeography, Latin, and modern foreign languages.

The support the History department provides to its PhD students, and the opportunities that it and the Liverpool Doctoral College provide to develop my communication, presentation, and co-operation skills, greatly informed my decision to apply.

Through Liverpool's Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and the north-west regional 'M6' Medieval seminar, I will be able to participate in active seminar programmes and reading groups to help me develop as a cross-disciplinary academic researcher. Liverpool uses the VITAE Researcher Development Framework and provides assistance to PhD students in engaging with all four RDF domains.

In terms of supervision, ████████████████ is a leading authority on the period, and the author of a standard textbook on the Carolingian world as well as works specifically on Alcuin, one of the key writers in my project. ███████████ is similarly internationally recognised for her work on *Early Medieval Ireland* and has engaged with some of the texts that I intend to study. Her expertise in Old Irish will be especially valuable when I turn in that direction. ██████████ brings further expertise in Carolingian legal and ideological texts, and my project links directly to her current work on virtue signalling.

6d) Please provide information on how the proposed research engages with issues relating to Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and Sustainability (max 100 words)

My project engages with medieval *speculum* literature in a transnational way. As such, the project goes beyond national boundaries and looks at the literature in a more inclusive way, that studies how different intellectual cultures interacted in the development of rulership ideology. This contrasts with previous studies that have focused largely on national milieux.

6e) Please provide information on how the proposed research might be undertaken should the COVID-19 pandemic continue (max 100 words)

All the texts I will study exist in printed editions, most of which are in the Sydney Jones Library at Liverpool; a large majority are also available online. In a few cases I will need to make use of inter-library loan services. Other training will not require travel, as Liverpool offers classes in Latin and in modern languages, and has teaching staff who can instruct in Old Irish. My project deals with the paleography of the relevant manuscripts in a way that does not require comprehensiveness. The vast

majority have been digitised through initiatives such as *Irish Script on Screen* at www.isos.dias.ie.

9. Supervision

Please propose up to 3 prospective supervisors for your PhD:

Institution	Supervisor
University of Liverpool	███████████████████
University of Liverpool	███████████████
University of Manchester	██████████████

10. Research Training previously undertaken (max 250 words)

10a) Please give details of the Masters programme and research training undertaken previously:

I am currently undertaking the MA in Medieval & Renaissance Studies at Liverpool, which includes Latin and palaeography training. In addition, the programme includes historical research training through theoretical modules discussing various research methodologies at a higher level. These theories are applied through the dissertation, which engages with primary and secondary sources as similar to those involved in my proposed PhD project. My undergraduate degree also included relevant training through both academic classes and work experience in the use of special collections and archives.

10b) Relevance of Masters and other previous training to your PhD project (up to 100 words):

My MA programme is directly relevant as it provides me with the required skills to begin to pursue this PhD project. Palaeography and advanced historical research training is crucial for this project, as it will engage directly with primary sources in manuscript form. In addition, the exploration of recent application of historical methods such as conceptual history will be very relevant to this research project. Linguistic skills including Latin are also directly relevant to my research, as a significant amount of primary sources and secondary literature are not available in my native English.

11. Research Training needs (max 250 words)

11a) Please give details of the anticipated research training needed for your PhD project, including difficult language training:

The project will rquire additional advanced languages training. In terms of primary sources, I will need to continue to develop my Latin and will also need to engage with Old Irish sources. University staff, including ██████████████ and ███████████ (Irish Studies) have the competence to instruct in Old and Middle as well as Modern Irish, and to help develop the necessary palaeographical skills. I will also need to improve my French and German to read relevant secondary literature, with the help of Liverpool's 'Open Languages' programme. Furthermore, I will continue to develop my other research skills through engagement with the Liverpool Doctoral College and other programmes in Liverpool and elsewhere.

11b) Please give details of the kind of resources you will potentially need during your PhD. Please also indicate whether your research project will require you to undertake research abroad.

All the texts I will study exist in printed editions, most of which are in the Sydney Jones Library at the University of Liverpool; a large majority are also available online. In a few cases I will need to make use of Inter-Library Loan. The vast majority of relevant manuscripts have been digitized through initiatives such as Irish Script on Screen: www.isos.dias.ie. I am unlikely to need to travel to archives, either in the UK or abroad.

14. References / Transcripts

☐ Your institution will need to attach two references and your transcript(s) from your programme application to this application form.

15. How did you hear about us?

Please let us know how you have heard about the NWCDTP and its studentships:

Through the University of Liverpool's PhD events and my proposed supervisor ███████████████