

STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL

I am applying for a Mellon Faculty Fellowship at Harvard for 1987-88 in order to complete my first book: Carolingian Baptismal Instructions and the Carolingian Reform, a study of the liturgy and interpretation of baptism in the late eighth and ninth centuries in relation to Charlemagne and the Carolingian Reform. The topic grew out of my doctoral dissertation and I have been researching this book and collecting the materials for its publication since 1981. I have spent every summer and as much spare time as the academic year permits in Europe collecting manuscript data and at Cal Tech in Pasadena and Davidson College in NC ordering microfilm and storing data on computer. I have now finished the manuscript investigation I planned and need an uninterrupted block of time at a major research library to complete the writing of the book.

Davidson College, where I have been since 1983, places heavy emphasis on teaching and student-professor interaction in a taxing trimester calendar. Committee responsibilities and time consumed preparing new courses and lectures have greatly restricted the number of hours left for research and writing. Furthermore, while Davidson is an excellent undergraduate college, it does not have the reference materials and journals, often in foreign languages, that I need for my research. I must depend upon microfilm, xeroxes, and inter-library loans, and my time checking footnotes, etc., could be cut to a tenth at a research library.

I have already published two articles from the book. The first received the Mediaeval Academy of America Van Courtlandt Elliott Prize for 1985. In his review of the article the historian Paul Meyvaert, Executive Secretary Emeritus of the Medieval Academy, expressed his wish that I would publish my dissertation. The Director of the Catholic University of America Press has asked me to consider publishing my "forthcoming book" with them upon its completion. Both of the articles have stimulated scholarly interest in my research in the U. S. and in Germany. For example, I have had numerous exchanges with people at the distinguished Monumenta Germaniae Historica in Munich, where I have worked in person, and have been commissioned by its president, Horst Fuhrman, to write an article on ninth-century baptismal manuscripts.

Thus, this is a critical time in my career, when the publication of my first book would help me to establish contacts with scholars working in my same area of specialization in Carolingian studies. Having come this far in its preparation, and with the expectations of others to encourage me at this point, it is a major frustration to me to give only sporadic time to its completion over several more academic years.

The reason for my own and others' recent interest in liturgical treatises written during the reign of Charlemagne is related to new assessments about the nature and success of the era often known as the "Carolingian Renaissance" or "Carolingian Reform." The traditional view teaches that Charlemagne imposed Roman models in, for example, liturgy, monastic life, law, government, and architecture in order to create the cohesion of the "first Europe." Another traditional view teaches that the Carolingians offered little original thinking or creative writing, but are to be valued only as transmitters of the ideas and works of classical and patristic times.

Baptism, or Christian initiation, played a vital role in the eighth

and ninth century Latin West. Charlemagne forced it upon the defeated heathen as a sign of submission and allegiance; he created political alliances through sponsorship; but, most important, he based his entire program of educational reform of the parish clergy, who were the bridge to the people, on the opportunity for instruction which the occasion of baptism demanded.

Thus, my study of the baptismal instructions written under Charlemagne for parish priests is a way to approach the Carolingian problem from a new source. I show the actual extent to which the Roman rite was imposed, and where, and when, and the large amount of original input by the Carolingians in their explanations of baptism and its role in one's personal salvation. I show, for example, that the removal of original sin and the gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit were not confined to the moment of water immersion, but were in fact a process that occurred in partial amounts over the course of the catechumenate and post-baptismal rites of anointing, confirmation, and Eucharist.

I have planned my book in two parts. The first will describe in detail the manuscripts in which I have found the baptismal instructions, in order to show the clerical context for which the Carolingian compilers themselves planned these tracts. The second will analyze over sixty individual instructions, contrasting their differences and similarities and showing how the Carolingians combined their own ideas with traditional sources. A lengthy appendix will provide critical editions of over half the tracts that have never been published or edited critically.

The reason I have allowed myself a full year is due almost entirely to this appendix. I have recorded on computer the variant readings from most of over 160 manuscripts I have personally examined in European archives so that I am able to offer critical editions with a full apparatus criticus for each baptismal tract. This recording must be completed and meticulously checked, which is a very time-consuming process. However, I feel that the critical editions are well worth the effort, because the variant readings allow us to see links between individual manuscripts and to establish their geographic areas of origin. Thus, the book in its entirety will be useful to historians of the Carolingian era, liturgists, scholars exploring the contents of early medieval manuscripts, and medieval paleographers and linguists.

A year at Harvard would allow me ready access to the reference materials, journals, and books I need, which very few other libraries in the U. S. possess. I am well aware of Harvard's rich resources in my area of study through Roger Reynolds, my thesis director and Professor of Liturgy at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto, who did both his undergraduate and graduate work at Harvard. I have asked Professor Reynolds and also Price Zimmermann, Dean of the Faculty of Davidson College until his retirement this year and who received his Ph. D. from Harvard in Renaissance History, to write letters of recommendation to you evaluating my research and teaching abilities.

I believe emphatically that any serious understanding of the medieval period cannot be achieved through a single disciplinary field. My particular concern is to give increased attention to the study of the liturgy and ritual of the medieval church. If granted a fellowship at Harvard, I would like to offer a seminar in which I can experiment with a new approach to the social history of the early medieval period through a study of its rituals and their popular interpretation. This would involve examination of the physical setting of such rites as baptism, marriage, ordination, coronation, and knighting, as well as instruction and interpretative literature

from the period. Students would be asked to explore iconography, architecture, liturgy, theology, and history in order to deepen their understanding of how early European Christian society perceived itself.