



FREISING AND THE SLAVS UNDER BISHOP ABRAHAM

A SENIOR LEAD AGENCY PROJECT WITH SLOVENIA



THE CURRENT PROJECT – DATES

- Submission APR 2020
- Feedback SEP 2020
- Granted DEC 2020
- Effective start JAN 1, 2021
- Requested period – 4 yrs (January 1, 2021- December 31, 2024)
- Lead Agency FWO (Belgium)
- Partner ARRS (Slovenia)

THE PROJECT – TOPIC

- Field of research: humanities
- Topic: unsolved issues of the missionary history of Slovenia
- Goals:
 - (1) to elucidate the role of the See of Freising in the mission among the Alpine Slavs
 - (2) to settle the position of the so-called Freising Texts within Slavic missions of the time
 - Larger framework of the Irish and Anglo-Saxon (later Frankish) mission in Central Europe, 8th-10th centuries
- Pre-existing research:
 - (1) predominant philological focus on the texts
 - (2) occasional attempts to approach the topic historically
 - (3) almost complete lack of cultural historical / ethnographical studies into text and manuscript traditions of Freising

THE PROJECT – INTERDISCIPLINARITY

- Three disciplines involved:
 - (1) History, esp. Missionary history (possibly also theology)
 - (2) Philology + linguistics
 - (3) Text & manuscript studies (ethnographic approach)

BEFORE THE PROJECT

- MA thesis specifically addressing aspect (3) text & manuscript studies
- Analysis of the manuscript context into which the Freising texts are embedded
- Idea for further extension: looking into the larger context of manuscripts related to Freising, especially Abraham of Freising
- Ph.D. project, requiring interdisciplinary supervision
- Restriction to disciplinary approach (3) out of the question
- Doing a good text study implies dealing with all other aspects as well (history, theology, linguistics, philology)
- I could stand in for philology/linguistics and for text studies, but not for the other aspects

THE USUAL THING TO DO

- Interdisciplinarity is a common problem in humanities research
- Finding and binding outside expertise from various disciplines is key
- Co-supervision
 - (a) within classical FWO senior research projects
 - (b) within the lead agency framework
- (a) cooperation more of a non-committal character; co-supervisor gets little in return; no channels for cofunding/remuneration of specific tasks
- (b) this is where the lead agency approach comes in handy

WHY SLOVENIA (ARRS)? WHY NOT GERMANY OR AUSTRIA?

- The relevant manuscripts are in fact all German archives (München), as some in Austria
- But presently no specific expertise, neither in Germany nor Austria
- To Slovenia the topic is of central national significance
- Expertise round the Freising Texts is ever present, in this case
- Matija Ogrin and Monika Deželak Trojar, both doing text studies and philology at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences
- Aleš Maver (University of Maribor), at present the foremost historian of the Slovenian Middle Ages

THE SPECIFIC SLOVENIAN INTEREST

- Comparative approach to the missionary history of the Carinthians may help to better understand the motivation of the actors of Christianization and thus cast new light on specific aspects of the Freising texts
- Introduction of a broader methodological framework for research (integrating ecclesiastical historical and ethnographic aspects in addition to textual ones)
 - Against the backdrop of prior research within the narrow boundaries of philological studies. The deeper significance of this new research for Slovenian scholarship lies in the placement of the oldest Old Slovenian texts in the broad cultural and historical context of their creation.
- research on the extensive manuscript material that will be incorporated into the research is hoped to elucidate the relation of the 10th century Freising mission, that brought forth the Freising texts, and the first Carantanian mission of the 8th century.

FORMS OF COOPERATION

- The project is basically a one-woman enterprise (doctoral dissertation)
- We want it to turn into something more interactive
- Plans for workshops beyond dbc-meetings
 - (1) summer 2023 at Ghent
 - (2) spring-summer 2024 at Ljubljana