



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

PhD Studentship: **Appropriating a Conqueror: The Legend of Alexander the Great in Late Antique and Medieval Literary Culture**

Durham University, in partnership with the British Library, is delighted to offer a fully-funded full-time or part-time PhD studentship via the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership scheme. The successful applicant will be supervised by Dr Venetia Bridges (Durham) and Dr Peter Toth (British Library).

Description

In the last two millennia, Alexander the Great has been represented as a magician, scientist, statesman, philosopher and one of the greatest explorers of humankind. The British Library's collection of materials relating to the legend of Alexander provides an exceptional opportunity for PhD research into his immense impact on European literary culture from a transnational and multilingual perspective. As a student at Durham but working on the British Library's collections, the successful applicant will be involved in the development and curation of a major new exhibition at the Library focusing on the stories and legends around Alexander.

Applicants are invited to propose a multilingual and comparative project on Alexander's reception from Late Antiquity to the close of the Middle Ages (300BC-1500AD) in European contexts, with a particular focus on the well-known Alexander Romance. Projects should make use of material in more than one language, and of the Library's collections. Suggested projects include, but are not limited to, the following:

- the Romance's influence upon high medieval literature (11-13th centuries);
- the Romance's influence on travel and scientific literature and geographical exploration
- the Romance's dissemination in the later Middle Ages (14th-15th centuries) in translations, adaptations and material witnesses
- a comparative study of the Romance in Western (European) and Eastern (Byzantine and Slavonic) versions
- the role of Alexander in royal and religious propaganda, including 'nationalist' historiographies and Crusader literature
- a study of key medieval manuscripts and/or texts related to the Romance that demonstrate aspects of Alexander's appropriation
- the late antique beginnings of the Romance's textual histories.

The overall aim is to illuminate the Romance's significant transnational influence upon European cultures, and to disseminate knowledge of the British Library's collections.

Applicants

We are looking for someone with multilingual interests in medieval and/or late antique literature and culture. Applicants should have a first or high upper-second class honours degree and a master's

either achieved or expected to be complete by the time of taking up PhD study, both in a relevant discipline, and reading fluency in two European languages (see further particulars for details).

Applicants must satisfy the standard UKRI eligibility criteria.

Stipend

For the academic year 2020-21 this will be **£16,885**, consisting of £15,285 basic stipend, a CDA maintenance payment of £600 and an additional allowance of £1,000. The British Library will also provide a research allowance to the student for agreed research-related costs of up to £1,000 a year.

Duration

The studentship is fully funded for 3 years and 9 months full-time or part-time equivalent, with the potential to be extended by a further 3 months to provide additional professional development opportunities.

For full details and how to apply, please visit

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/english.studies/postgrad/support/>.