

## 4.4. Alcuin the Parrhesiast

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The largesse of the Wittgensteinprojekt enabled me to pursue my research on Alcuin of York as a Parrhesiast and included a most stimulating visit to Vienna.

Alcuin's predilection for outspoken letters of admonition to the most diverse group of addressees has led to him being characterized as a meddling busybody. When this activity and discourse is analysed against the background of classical rhetoricians statements about parrhesia it can be evaluated in a new light. I first began to explore this avenue in 2004; the Ego Trouble volume on Authors and their Identities offered me a place to pursue the matter in depth and the Wittgensteinprojekt's sponsorship enabled me to add a chapter on the topic to my forthcoming monograph about Alcuin.

A colleague once said that for medieval studies, 'Wien is Mecca'. This is most true in every respect. Marvelous libraries combined with congenial colleagues, lively dialogue, and an intellectual world where philological exactness and awareness of text history walk hand-in-hand with equally exacting modern conceptual and theoretical engagement make Vienna and the Institut für Mittelalterforschung the ideal place to think and write. I am most grateful for the chance to benefit from this unparalleled intellectual hospitality.