

**OFFERING THE SACRED WORD:
ALCUIN, CHARLEMAGNE, AND THE GOSPELS OF
STA. MARIA AD MARTYRES
(TRIER, STADTBIBLIOTHEK, COD. 23, 122A/B)**

by

Isabelle Lachat

A dissertation submitted to the
Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

Spring 2014

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Lawrence Nees, for his continuous support, encouragement, guidance, generosity of time and scholarship and incomparable patience.

My friends and colleagues, whose support and humor have sustained me throughout this long adventure, with special thanks to my fellow medievalists, Lynley Herbert, Terri Nevins and Kathleen Schowalter, as well as honorary medievalists, Amy Reese and Adam Rudolphi.

My friends and colleagues at the University of Delaware Honors program, for their unwavering support, and for bringing into my life so many wonderful students, with special thanks to my fellow iconoclast, Ray Peters.

Reiner Nolden, and the staff of the Trier Stadtbibliothek.

This manuscript is dedicated to:

My parents, Josette and Raymond Lachat, for their unconditional love and support.

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ABSTRACT

The Gospels of Sta. Maria ad Martyres (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Cod. 23, 122a/b), a Carolingian manuscript of ca. 800, contains a dedication poem mentioning Albinus, the Anglo-Saxon scholar Alcuin, as its author and donor of a two-part gift to a king, traditionally identified as Charlemagne, ruler of the Franks and Alcuin's friend and benefactor. The manuscript's luxurious, albeit decidedly non-classicizing, appearance disrupts the dominant interpretative paradigm, long associating the period of Charlemagne with the longing to revive a lost roman imperial tradition and its distinctive classical mode of visual expression. As such, the Trier manuscript has been relegated to a realm of secondary relevance in the scholarly discourse on Carolingian book production, and presumed to be a copy of the now lost original gift, regardless of the lack of known precedent for this practice.

This dissertation problematizes this marginalization through a systematic investigation of the manuscript's textual and pictorial components, and proposes a likely place and context for its production. The closing years of the eighth century witnessed the Carolingian elite's engagement with complex issues pertaining to Frankish tradition, orthodoxy, and conversion, which unfolded against a rapidly changing political landscape involving the papacy, the declining Roman Empire based in Constantinople, and the

rising Caliphate. It is against this multi-layered backdrop that Alcuin's own anxieties and projected aspirations of Frankish leadership of the *Imperium Christianum* begin to emerge, and necessitate Charlemagne embracing Christ as the sole acceptable model of rulership. Alcuin's promotion of christomimesis allowed for the simultaneous exaltation and admonition of the Carolingian ruler, and provides a compelling filter through which other prominent aspects of Charlemagne's reign can be reassessed, including the design of the Aachen chapel, the imperial coronation of Christmas Day 800, and the Trier codex.

This dissertation makes a strong case for the recognition of the Gospels of Sta. Maria ad Martyres as the gift mentioned in the dedication poem, and not as a later, and lesser copy of this offering. In the process, this study directly engages with, and disrupts interpretative paradigms that have long dominated the scholarship on Carolingian art and thought, highlighting the need for an overdue revision of distorting and anachronistic projections, which fail to account for the totality of the remaining evidence and its undeniable diversity. The approach presented in this dissertation can therefore be productively applied to other works from this period whose appearance, format or contents have long been unsatisfactorily sidelined by modern scholarship, and therefore help paint a truer, more reliable picture of artistic production and patronage at the time of Charlemagne.

Chapter 1

THE GOSPELS OF STA. MARIA AD MARTYRES IN THE SCHOLARLY DISCOURSE ON CAROLINGIAN ART AND THOUGHT

The Gospels of Sta. Maria ad Martyres is a Carolingian manuscript of the four gospels, bound in two volumes, and loosely dated to the first quarter or first third of the ninth century. It is currently housed in Trier's Stadtbibliothek under the shelf mark 23 (122a/b) and will be referenced in this dissertation as Trier 23. The codex features extensive prefatory materials, including canon tables, unusually spread over sixteen folios, and a dedication poem (fol. 4v) appended to a tripartite exegesis on the Hebrew names appearing in the genealogy of Christ presented in Matthew 1:1-18. The poem references the commentary explicitly and mentions 'Albinus', the Anglo-Saxon scholar Alcuin, as its author and as the donor of a two-part gift to a 'venerable king', logically identified as Alcuin's patron, benefactor, and friend, the Frankish ruler Charlemagne (r.768-814). Each gospel is introduced by an elaborate decorative sequence comprising large illuminated initials and frontispieces featuring the four evangelist symbols located in medallions alongside the bust-length figure of the youthful Christ, appearing under an arch. [Fig. 1-4] In the Ottonian period, a full-page depiction of Christ in Majesty

surrounded by the symbols of the evangelists was painted on a previously blank folio (22v).¹ [Fig. 5]

This dissertation provides this fascinating manuscript with the overdue scholarly attention from which it has long been excluded in spite of its luxurious appearance, the connections with key figures of the Carolingian period and its prominent location. The Gospels of Sta. Maria ad Martyres are flanked on the shelf by two masterpieces of early medieval illumination: the Ada Gospels, (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Cod. 22) originating from the court of Charlemagne,² and the Codex Egberti, (Trier Stadtbibliothek, Cod. 24), the extensively illuminated Ottonian production associated with Archbishop Egbert of Trier and one of the most famous early medieval artists, the Gregory Master.³ The sustained scholarly interest in its prestigious shelf mates sharply contrasts with scholarly reservations about Trier 23. As will be shown, the Carolingian renaissance paradigm and its implications and expectations with regard to classicism, taste, and luxury have long

¹ The 1956 exhibition catalog, Werdendes Abendland an Rhein und Ruhr: Ausstellung in Villa Hügel. Essen, 18.Mai bis 15.Sept, 1956, Herausgegeben von Villa Hügel Verein. Mit einem Vorwort von Theodor Heuss und Joseph Cardinal Frings, Essen (Tellus-Verlag, 1959), erroneously claimed in entry number 288, on p.178 that the folio bearing the Ottonian *Maiestas Domini* was "... eingebunden.." into the existing manuscript. This misinformation occasionally reappears in later publications. In fact, folio 22r displays the last few lines of Matthew's chapter lists, clearly written in the same script and ink as the rest of the manuscript.

² The manuscript features a dedication to Ada, Charlemagne's sister. The group of luxury manuscripts produced at Charlemagne's court was long labeled the "Ada School" or the "Court School". The publication of a facsimile as early as the late nineteenth century testifies to the manuscript's appeal. Karl Menzel, Peter Corssen, Hubert Janitschek, Alexander Schnütgen, F. Hettner, Die Trierer Ada-Handschrift, (Leipzig: A. Dürr, 1889).

³ The Codex Egberti has also been the object of extensive studies and is available in a new facsimile. Der Egbert-Codex, Luzern (Faksimile-Verlag, 2005). Carl Nordenfalk, "Der Meister der Registrum Gregorii," reprinted in Studies in Manuscript Illumination, (London: Pindar Press, 1992), pp. 133-148.

relegated Trier 23 to a realm of secondary relevance, and preemptively dismissed claims that it should be identified as the gift to Charlemagne referenced in the dedication poem. Consequently, the manuscript has been viewed as a copy of this now lost original gift, regardless of the absence of a known precedent for the practice of making a copy of a prestigious offering almost immediately following its presentation.⁴ The great, late paleographer Bernhard Bischoff's declaration that the Trier codex' script dates to the period after Charlemagne effectively put to rest any attempt to challenge this ready dismissal.⁵

The present investigation addresses various points of contention connected to the manuscript's textual, pictorial and material components and its context of creation. Art historical reservations have long reflected the tyranny of the outdated and ill-fitting Carolingian renaissance paradigm, while the illusory aura of paleographical certainties has accepted Bischoff's opinions as definitive. An objective reassessment of Trier 23 must also negotiate philological arguments regarding authorship, date and place of redaction of early medieval exegesis, including doubts over the very existence of a distinctive Hiberno-Saxon tradition as well as historical debates over the impact and legacy of Alcuin as either an influential exegete and primary agent behind Charlemagne's

⁴ This unsatisfactory default explanation emerges periodically to account for works whose appearance, contents, or other characteristics challenge modern scholarly assumptions, especially those pertaining to issues of style, taste, and luxury at the court of Charlemagne or in its orbit.

⁵ This most consequential dating will be addressed at length below and in Chapter 3. It occurred in a footnote to Bischoff's influential article "Panorama der Handschriftenüberlieferung aus der Zeit Karls des Grossen" published in the second of four volumes surrounding the 1965 *Karl der Grosse* exhibition at Aachen. Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben, Band II, Das Geistige Leben, Düsseldorf (Verlag L. Schwann, 1965), p. 236, footnote 17.

program of reforms or conversely as a passive witness to momentous events over which he exerted limited control.⁶

This dissertation does not claim to resolve these complex issues but attempts to make a modest contribution to the broader debates by focusing on their manifestation in the context of the Trier codex. This will be accomplished via a two-pronged approach. A systematic investigation of the manuscript's textual and ornamental components will be provided and the findings contextualized within the political, artistic and ideological background of the Carolingian period. Uncompromising expectations that have contributed to Trier 23's virtual absence from scholarly discourse on Carolingian book production will be problematized. A review of the fate of the manuscript and a brief discussion of the few instances where it has garnered some attention will lay the foundation for the detailed discussion unfolding in the following chapters.

The Fate of the Trier Codex and its Scholarly Reception

Trier 23's relative absence from art historical discussions of Carolingian artistic achievement exposes the shortcomings of the Carolingian renaissance paradigm.⁷ This

⁶ As will be seen below, Michael Gorman has been an ardent detractor of Alcuin's systematic aggrandizement. In contrast, it is not uncommon to encounter statements as bold as Liutpold Wallach's "The work of the Northumbrian Alcuin in the service of Charlemagne by far excels in importance the contributions of other scholars allied with the Frankish king." Alcuin on Virtues and Vices: A Manual for a Carolingian Soldier," The Harvard Theological Review, Vol. 48, No.3 (Jul., 1955), p.175.

⁷ This problematic interpretive paradigm's failure to account for the diversity of the Carolingian artistic output and its reductive perspective on the impetus behind Charlemagne's program of reforms has been noted. An overview of its misguided implications appears in Lawrence Nees, "The Problem of the Carolingian Renaissance" in his A Tainted Mantle: Hercules and the Classical Tradition at the Carolingian Court, Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania Press, Middle Ages Series, 1991), pp. 3-17. It is

ubiquitous interpretative model inadequately accounts for the range and diversity of the preserved evidence.⁸ Furthermore, it silences the agency of courtiers, advisors and other prominent and influential figures disseminated throughout the expanding Frankish territory, while perpetuating the illusionary homogeneity of a well-defined program of reform and artistic expression which Charlemagne supposedly sought to systematically enforce. The totality of the remaining evidence, in contrast to the select examples seemingly confirming this assumption, attests to active patronage by a wide range of men and women who possessed the will, means and resources necessary for the creation of this diverse artistic output. These patrons' origins, personal taste, needs, but also agendas, beliefs and ambitions, materialized in the sophisticated objects they sponsored, whose luxury is often expressed in visual modes sharply divergent from the renaissance paradigm's narrow expectations of classicism.⁹

important to acknowledge the lasting impact of this discriminating construct on contemporary scholarship as it long dictated which works received scholarly attention and publications. See also Phillipe Depreux, "Ambitions et limites des réformes culturelles à l'époque carolingienne," Presses Universitaires de France, Revue historique, (2002-3), No. 623, pp. 721-753. This call for a careful reassessment of once celebrated interpretative models extends beyond art historical scholarship and has parallels in medieval history, as demonstrated by Elizabeth A. R. Brown, in her influential essay, "The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism, and Historians of Medieval Europe", The American Historical Review, Vol. 79, No. 4 (Oct.1974), pp.1063-1088. Brown points out the damage caused by the overuse of this passe-partout label and urges scholars to stop using the term all together.

⁸ Richard E. Sullivan's "The Carolingian Age: Reflections on Its Place in the History of the Middle Ages," Speculum, Vol. 64, No.2 (Apr., 1989), pp. 267-306, calls for a reexamination of scholarly assumptions regarding the Carolingian period and a call to reevaluate the selection of evidence perennially prioritized. Most importantly, Sullivan brings attention to the inherent pluralism and diversity of the preserved evidence in sharp contrast to traditional scholarly emphasis on Carolingian longing for homogeneity and uniformity.

⁹ Lawrence Nees substituted to idea of 'networks' to the monolithic view that prioritizes the court as epicenter of production along with few established scriptoria, engaged in the

To this day the sole publication devoted exclusively to the manuscript remains the fifteen-page article published in 1974 by Richard Laufner, of Trier's Stadtbibliothek, titled "Zur Herkunft des karolingischen Evangeliars aus dem Benediktinerkloster St. Maria ad Martyres in Trier (heute Stadtbibliothek Trier Ms. 23/122 a und b)." ¹⁰

Laufner's access to the manuscript and interest in its recognition as a compelling example of Carolingian book production informed his brief yet extremely valuable contribution. He describes the manuscript, lists the contents of both volumes, traces its provenance and suggests some possible origins. ¹¹ Laufner presents further avenues of inquiry into the elusive dating of the script, thus refusing to accept Bischoff's assessment as definitive; the ornamental scheme, and its relationship to the later ninth century Franco-Saxon style; as well as the twelfth century binding possibly once adorned by elaborate metal and ivory covers. ¹²

The manuscript entered the collection of Trier's Stadtbibliothek as a gift from one of its most generous benefactors, Johann Peter Job Hermes, as recorded in the hand of the

dissemination of at least partially standardized creations. Nees, "Imperial Networks", in Medieval Mastery: Book Illumination from Charlemagne to Charles the Bold, 800-1475, (Davidsfonds, Leuven: Brepols, 2002), pp. 91-101.

¹⁰ Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch 14, (1974), pp. 46-60. It is worth noting that this publication was not accompanied by any illustration.

¹¹ Laufner laments the virtual dead end occasioned by the absence of records for the monastic communities of St. Maximin and Sta. Maria ad Martyres prior to 975, Herkunft, p.56.

¹² Laufner speculates that metal fittings and possibly ivory plaques adorned the currently bare oak covers. Dendochronology has established that the two top covers came from the same tree, while the two back covers came from another tree, cut down in 1177. Laufner speculated that the celebrations surrounding the rededication of altars at Sta. Maria ad Martyres possibly occasioned this lavish binding. The possible design and whereabouts of the ivory and silver plaques remain unknown. Laufner, Herkunft, p. 57.

Stadtbibliothek's first librarian, Johann Hugo Wyttenbach on March 18th 1823.¹³ This notice further indicates "hic codex manuscriptus olim erat Prumiensis,"¹⁴ a statement left unsubstantiated in the catalog and whose origin, as Laufner laments, is regrettably no longer known. In an attempt to elucidate the possible source of this claim, Laufner notes that a long-standing devotion to the Savior had existed at Prüm since the foundation of a Benedictine abbey by Bertrada, Charlemagne's great-grand-mother, in 720.¹⁵ While exiled in Francia, in 799, Pope Leo dedicated a new church at this location. Laufner notes that the church at Prüm benefitted from continued royal support in the form of endowments and privileges, but recognizes that there is no evidence pointing to the existence of an active scriptorium, capable of producing a lavish codex such as Trier 23. Laufner does not entertain the possibility that the manuscript could have been presented to Prüm by a royal donor, at a relatively early date.

Wyttenbach and his assistant dated the manuscript to the "late 8th or 9th century" in the library's first printed catalog in 1831.¹⁶ By 1856, the name *Gospels of Sta. Maria ad Martyres*,¹⁷ is recorded, on the basis of a notice (fol.120v-121v) in the second tome, written in fifteenth century hand indicating this provenance.¹⁸ The German art historian

¹³ Laufner, Herkunft, p.46.

¹⁴The name Prüm Evangeliar is used by Ernst Dümmler in the Monumenta Germaniae Historica series and more still recently in the Clavis volume devoted to Alcuin, in the *Corpus Christianorum* series, which refers to Trier 23 as "Evangélaire de Prüm".

¹⁵ Laufner, Herkunft, pp.52-53. It is worth noting that Prüm is today located in the diocese of Trier.

¹⁶ Laufner, Herkunft, p.48

¹⁷ Laufner, Herkunft, p.48.

Karl Lamprecht repeated the name in 1882, and proposed a later dating –“Mitte bis 2. Hälfte des 9. Jhdts.”¹⁹ In 1888, Max Keuffer, the current librarian, authored a descriptive catalog of the Stadtbibliothek’s holdings, where he detailed the manuscript’s contents and suggested that the now bare oak covers were once adorned with metal fittings surrounding ivory plaques.²⁰ The rectangular recess at the center of the covers as well as holes and dark marks, possible evidence of metal rubbing against the inside cover folio, appear to substantiate this assertion.

Edmund Braun’s 1896 publication, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Trierer Buchmalerei im Früheren Mittelalter provides a brief overview of the codex and repeats Lamprecht’s dating. Braun asserts that “Geschrieben ist der Codex wohl in St. Maximin,”²¹ while he places the *Maiestas Domini* addition to the beginning of the tenth century.²² He understands Trier 23 as a later manifestation of Irish influences on the continent, adding that the manuscript’s Trier origin can be confidently assumed.²³

¹⁸ The manuscript appears to have been in use at the abbey of St Peter’s in Bitburg, also in Trier’s diocese, until its secularization. Laufner, Herkunft, p. 53.

¹⁹ Karl Lamprecht, *Initial-Ornamentik des 8. bis 13. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig (1882), p.27, Nr.14, quoted in Laufner, Herkunft, p. 48.

²⁰ Dendochronology has since dated the oak covers to the twelfth century. Whether Keuffer knew that the now bare covers were not original to the manuscript is unclear. Max Keuffer, Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek zu Trier, (Wiesbaden, 1888), pp. 23-28.

²¹ Edmund Braun, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Trierer Buchmalerei im Früheren Mittelalter (mit sechs Lichtdrucktafeln), *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst*, Ergänzungsheft IX, Trier (Verlag der Fr. Lintz’schen Buchhandlung, 1896), p.76.

²² Braun, Beiträge, p. 77 “es gehört in den Anfang des 10. Jahrhunderts.”

²³ Braun, Beiträge, p. 71.

Stephan Beissel's Geschichte des Evangelianbücher in der ersten hälfte des Mittelalters, published in 1906, reproduced three folios; a canon table, the frontispiece to Matthew's gospel, and the Ottonian *Maiestas Domini* miniature, alongside a transcription of the poem concluding Trier 23's preface, beginning *Matheus e sacro*.²⁴ Beissel observed that the Trier codex exemplified "wie tief die Miniaturemalerei hier und da sank, wie lange sie aber merowingische Werke nachahmte..."²⁵ Beissel localized the manuscript in St. Maria ad Martyres, and dated it to the "9. oder 10. Jahrhunderts"²⁶ on account of its ornamental scheme. Beissel drew particular attention to its lavish decorated initials, for which he found compelling parallels in Franco-Saxon gospel books in Cambrai and Lyon.²⁷ This distinctive style, localized in Northern France, blossomed in the second half of the ninth century, especially in St. Amand and its environs, and attests to the enduring appeal of insular art on the continent. It is characterized by the liberal use of vibrant shades of green, yellow and red, harmoniously combined in intricate ornamental patterns of interlace and knot-work echoing earlier insular motifs, while large initials stretch over entire folios.²⁸ One of the most celebrated embodiment of the Franco-

²⁴ Stephan Beissel, Geschichte des Evangelianbücher in der ersten hälfte des Mittelalters, (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1906), pp. 157-159, Figures 44-46. Beissel does not provide shelfmarks for the suggested comparative Franco-Saxon manuscripts, but they can be identified as Cambrai, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 162-163, and Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 431.

²⁵ Beissel, Geschichte, p. 157.

²⁶ Beissel, Geschichte, p. 157.

²⁷ Beissel, Geschichte, p. 158.

²⁸ On the development of this distinctive style, see Charles Niver, A Study of Certain of the More Important Manuscripts of the Franco-Saxon School, Ph.D. Dissertation,

Saxon style is undoubtedly the luxurious bible made for Charlemagne's grandson, in the third quarter of the ninth century, still known today as the Second Bible of Charles the Bald (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. Lat. 2).²⁹

Trier 23 features oversized initials marking the start of not only each gospel text, but also, and most unusually, Matthew's chapter lists and the remaining three gospels' argumenta. They occupy almost the entire height of their respective folios and combine both the color scheme, although blue is also featured, and intricate patterns of knots, spirals, and imitation interlace consistent with this stylistic development. Carl Nordenfalk conceded this visual parallel in his 1931 article "Ein karolingischer Evangeliar aus Echternach und seiner Vorläufer" while supporting an earlier dating for the Trier codex.³⁰ Nordenfalk argued that Trier 23 is a precursor to and not an exemplar of this later ninth century stylistic development, observing that the location of a specific style's flourishing does not necessarily coincide with the place where it first emerged.³¹ Additionally, a significant period of time could elapse between a style's first manifestation and its later popularization.

Harvard University, 1941. For a census of Franco-Saxon manuscripts, see Wilhelm Köhler, and Florentine Mütherich, with Katharina Bierbrauer, Fabrizio Crivello and Matthias Exner, eds. *Die karolingischen Miniaturen* 7: Die frankosächsische Schule. 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2009).

²⁹ Jacques Guilmain, "The Illumination of the Second Bible of Charles the Bald" *Speculum*, Vol.41, No.2 (Apr., 1966), pp.246-260.

³⁰ Carl Nordenfalk, "Ein karolingische Sakramentar aus Echternach und seine Vorläufer," *Acta Archaeologica*, Vol. II, (1931), pp. 207-244. Geneviève L. Micheli also recognized the insular influence on Trier 23, noting that it originated "de quelque scriptorium de Trèves" and dated it to the "début du IXe siècle" in *L'enluminure du haut moyen âge et les influences irlandaises, histoire d'une influence*, (Bruxelles: Editions de la Connaissance, 1939), p.133.

³¹ Nordenfalk, *Vorläufer*, p. 232.

Adolf Goldschmidt's 1928 volume Die deutsche Buchmalerei, selectively compiled examples of Carolingian and Ottonian book art displayed in full page black and white reproductions.³² Goldschmidt introduced Trier 23, which he loosely dated to the ninth century, in the Carolingian section of his two-part book, reproducing both the frontispiece and opening Initial to John's gospel.³³ He recognized an echo of Byzantine practice in the chromatic articulation of facial features, stating: "The faces painted over with silver, partly turned black. Drawing of features of Christ and the angel according to Byzantine convention of colours: eyebrows and upper eyelid in brown, line between brow and lid red, lower eyelids in blue tint. For the rest, vermilion, chrome yellow, green, blue, light brown violet."³⁴ Trier 23's Ottonian addition is not featured in Goldschmidt's corresponding section. This decision contrasts the manuscript's later twentieth century reception, which has privileged this later component.

The manuscript has remained a fixture in a variety of Stadtbibliothek publications such as the 1984 Kostbare Bücher und Dokumente aus Mittelalter und Neuzeit.³⁵ This handy pamphlet provides an overview of the library's holdings. Much of the entry devoted to Trier 23 reiterates the thoughts Laufner expressed in his 1974 article. This

³² (Munich: Wolff, 1928) with the English translation, German Illumination, (New York: Harcourt & Brace, 1970). Goldschmidt mentions Trier 23's "strong Franco-Saxon (Anglo-Frankish) character, particularly in its ornamentation", p. 6, while also noting that "in the drawing and design of the heads [Trier 23] exhibits the colour system of the Ada school, and also in its Comes it agrees with that of the Ada manuscript", p.14.

³³ Plates 9 and 10, respectively.

³⁴ Adolf Goldschmidt, German Illumination, brief notice accompanying Plate 9.

³⁵ Kostbare Bücher und Dokumente aus Mittelalter und Neuzeit. Katalog der Ausstellung der Stadtbibliothek und des Stadtarchivs Trier, Nr.8 (1984). Entry 5 is devoted to Trier 23, pp. 12-13.

same basic information reappeared at the start of the technical report on the manuscript's conservation published in 2001.³⁶

A welcome resurgence of scholarly interest in Trier 23 has emerged in a variety of publications by Lawrence Nees, who already included the Trier codex in his 1987 monograph on the Gundohinus Gospels (Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 3), and reproduced the frontispiece to Matthew's gospel.³⁷ His more recent discussions of Frankish manuscripts have addressed the Trier codex with regard to a multiplicity of issues, including Alcuin's patronage in absentia, and the codex' identification as the gift to Charlemagne mentioned in the dedication poem. Nees proposed that the Trier codex' Ottonian addition exemplifies the practice of commissioning prized artists, such as the Gregory Master or Godescalc, with special commissions of one or a handful of miniatures to be featured in certain codices.³⁸

³⁶ Birgit Ines Harand, "Das Evangelium von St. Maria ad Martyres- Shadensbilder, Restaurierung und Konservierung" in Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch 41. Jahrgang, Trier, (2001), pp. 291-314.

³⁷ Lawrence Nees, The Gundohinus Gospels, Medieval Academy Books, No. 95, (Cambridge: Medieval Academy of America, 1987), especially pp.146-147, and Figure 52.

³⁸ Lawrence Nees, "On Carolingian Book Painters: The Ottoboni Gospels and Its Transfiguration Master" The Art Bulletin, Vol. 83, No.2, (June 2001), pp. 209-239. "Alcuin and manuscript illumination," in Ernst Tremp, ed., Alkuin von York (um 730-804) und die geistige Grundlegung Europas (St. Gallen: Verlag am Klosterhof St. Gallen, 2010). Trier 23 is also discussed in "The Jonathan Gospels (Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, cod. Pal. lat. 46)," in Susan L'Engle and Gerald B. Guest, eds., Tributes to Jonathan J. G. Alexander: The Making and Meaning of Illuminated Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts, Art & Architecture (London and Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2006), pp. 85-98.

Trier 23 on Display

The relative scholarly disinterest, evidenced in the brevity of the historiographical survey, has not barred the manuscript from being included in exhibitions on Carolingian art and history.³⁹ These notably include the *Karl der Grosse* retrospective held at Aachen in 1965⁴⁰ and the 2002 *Medieval Mastery* show in Louvain.⁴¹ Trier 23's Ottonian addition was on display as part of the 1993 Trier exhibition commemorating the millennial anniversary of Archbishop Egbert's death.⁴² More recently, it was exhibited in the context of the celebration surrounded the masterpiece of Ottonian illumination, and Trier 23's shelf mate, the Codex Egberti, (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, cod.24), which coincided with the publication of a new facsimile.

Paleography and Authority: Tyranny of a Privileged Assessment?

The decline of interest in the Trier codex in the later part of the twentieth century is I believe deeply indebted to the publication of Bernhard Bischoff's influential essay, "Panorama der Handschriftenüberlieferung aus der Zeit Karls des Grossen" in the second of the four scholarly volumes, Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben,

³⁹ Although the manuscript was notably absent from the Trésors Carolingiens: Livres manuscrits de Charlemagne à Charles le Chauve exhibition, held in Paris and is not discussed in the accompanying catalog. Marie-Pierre Laffitte and Charlotte Denoël, avec la collaboration de Marianne Besseyre, (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2007).

⁴⁰ Karl der Grosse: Werk und Wirkung, (Aachen, 1965), Cat. #441, p.269.

⁴¹ Medieval Mastery: book illumination from Charlemagne to Charles the Bold, 800-1475, (Tunhout/Leuven: Brepols, 2002), Cat. 4, pp.108-109.

⁴² Egbert, Erzbischof von Trier 977-993. Gedenkschrift der Diözese Trier zum 1000. Todestag, (Trier, Rheinischen Landesmuseums Verlag, 1993). Bd I, Taf.123, p.174.

accompanying the 1965 *Karl der Grosse* exhibition at Aachen.⁴³ In a footnote Bischoff states that Trier 23's Caroline minuscule script dates from the period after the era of Charlemagne.⁴⁴ The absence of supporting evidence, while understandable in a footnote, does not in itself suffice to negate the validity of his expert opinion, however, it ought to have hindered its ready acceptance and eager perpetuation. Bischoff's exceptional talent and authority determined his judgment's reception as reliable and definitive. This response ignores his occasional revisions to previously published dating or localization of certain manuscripts.⁴⁵ Scholars whose expertise resides in other disciplines do not always acknowledge these adjustments, and insistently privilege Bischoff's initial findings, thus announcing their deference to the authority and superiority of his paleographical assessment, even at the detriment of their own field. The *Karl der Grosse* exhibition catalog favored an open-ended dating in the entry (#441) devoted to the manuscript, assigning it to the "1. Viertel 9. Jh.,"⁴⁶ allowing for production before, as well as after, Charlemagne's death in 814. Following this pivotal publication, confidence in Bischoff's

⁴³ Wolfgang Braunfels ed. *Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, Band II: *Die Geistige Leben*, (Düsseldorf, 1967), pp.233-254, Trier appears in footnote #17, p.236. Translated into English by Michal Gorman, it appears in the collection of essays titled *Manuscripts and Libraries and the Age of Charlemagne*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, published posthumously in 1994). It is perhaps one of the many great ironies of the publishing world that the initial announcing the start of Mark's argumentum in Trier 23 is prominently featured on the dust jacket.

⁴⁴ "[...] nach ihrer Schrift beurteilt, meines Erachtens erst in der Zeit nach Karl entstanden", *Panorama*, p.236.

⁴⁵ I want to thank Teresa Nevins for bringing to my attention Bischoff's adjusting his dating and localization of the Valenciennes Apocalypse (Valenciennes, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 99) and to evidence that scholars appear to have ignored these changes even after their publication, electing to perpetuate Bischoff's original pronouncement. *Viewing Revelation: Text and Image in Ninth-Century Apocalypse Manuscripts*, Ph.D. Dissertation, (University of Delaware, in progress).

⁴⁶ *Aachen*, catalog entry #441, p.269, recognized its origin as "wohl Trier".

expertise effectively thwarted attempts to challenge or nuance its conclusion, even when rooted in a sound objective and comprehensive assessment of the manuscript's other components.

The absence of reference to specific characteristics of the Trier codex' script corroborating Bischoff's assessment and its precluding a pre-814 dating is frustrating.⁴⁷ While a detailed explanation would not have been practical or even feasible in a footnote setting, this omission has undoubtedly obstructed the formulation of potential challenges to this most consequential ruling. Yet, a certain degree of skepticism ought to have resisted the unquestioned acceptance of this uncharacteristically precise *terminus post quem* dating. The rate and scope of development and diffusion of Carolingian minuscule is not so securely established or homogenized as to allow for a margin of error as small as a decade to be considered, which in this particular instance carries major implications. Numerous manuscripts are neither securely dated nor localized. This is the case for nearly all of the codices most closely associated with Charlemagne's court whose production remains problematically arranged along a vague relative chronology, which supposes that they were created sequentially. Our understanding of the script's development over a precise location, let alone a large territory, remains tentative.⁴⁸ This already complex equation is complicated further once the additional variable of individual scribes' skills, training and experience is taken into account.⁴⁹ In the case of the Trier codex, the

⁴⁷ I was unable to obtain a copy of Bischoff's notes, which Michael Gorman categorized via email as challenging to read and decipher.

⁴⁸ Chapter 5 engages with the inherent problem associated with claiming to understand the rate and direction of an artist's stylistic evolution as evidenced in Carl Nordenfalk's problematic reconstruction of a career for the Gregory Master.

reasonable allowance of even a modest margin of error of a few years not only allows for the eventuality of Charles seeing the codex, but also permits Alcuin's involvement, whose death in May 804 provides a *terminus ante quem* for the gift's commission. Privileging paleography over of all other avenues of inquiry into Trier 23's textual and ornamental components, on account of its perceived scientific exactitude cannot be justified as sound methodology.

This paleographical assessment's ready acceptance owes much to its lending credence to art historical views that Trier 23 would have been unsuitable to serve as a gift to Charlemagne. This dismissal assumes that a close friend like Alcuin would have known better than to present a manuscript so deeply lacking in classicizing characteristics and overt luxury to a king who supposedly favored classical modes of artistic expression, and whose own patronage materialized in extremely luxurious displays. This reductive construct ignores that parameters of luxury extend beyond reductive modern clichés expecting purple dyed parchment and gold or silver ink, and fails to differentiate between court productions and objects originating elsewhere, even if intended for presentation and use at the court. In addition, this interpretation's relegation of the Trier codex to the status of copy of this now lost original gift fails to take into consideration the absence of a known precedent for making a duplicate of a gift almost immediately after its presentation.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ One could complexify this even more by pondering the degree to which the absorption of the new script was actively promoted and the extent to which opportunities to put it into use presented themselves.

⁵⁰ As Nees has pointed out, the burden of proof rests heavily on detractors of the manuscript's identification as the gift mentioned in the poem. *Alcuin and Manuscript Illumination*, esp. pp. 224-225.

The study of manuscripts necessitates an interdisciplinary approach, which involves negotiating layers of evidence, and reconciling potentially contradictory findings to reach plausible conclusions. This methodology reflects these objects' composite nature, as intentional assemblages of visual signs in the form of carefully selected texts and ornamental motifs articulated in discrete choices of script, color and format. They appear at the crossroads of patrons and scribes' agency, creativity, and selective appropriation of the available sources and are limited only by the range of these resources, time, and material constraints.⁵¹ During this investigative process, temptation may arise to privilege one set of variables to the detriment of another, or defer to the established authority of an expert in a discipline one does not master, particularly when first hand access to the material may be impractical or restricted.⁵² Relying on the assessments and opinions of specialists is a sound option, particularly as it prevents a crippling limitation of the scope of one's inquiry. However, deference should not equate surrender, and is never a substitute for healthy skepticism, particularly when no specific supporting evidence is provided, and potentially contradictory data emerges from other, and equally relevant avenues of investigation.

⁵¹ For a discussion of the often secondary issue of creativity and artistic self-awareness in the medieval period, see Nees, "The Originality of Early Medieval Artists" in Celia M. Chazelle ed., Literacy, Politics and Artistic Innovation in the Early Medieval West, Papers Delivered at "A Symposium on Early Medieval Culture" Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA, Lanham, (New York: University Press of America, 1992), pp. 77-109.

⁵² In addition, the opinions presented do not always result from first hand experience of the primary sources and even good quality photographs or digital reproductions have their limitations.

David Ganz has lamented the relative demise of paleography, warning that his discipline is not infallible and therefore not obsolete.⁵³ He problematized the aura of almost scientific reliability it had long enjoyed in the eyes of many, stressing that “a purely paleographical date is *always* a date of last resort.”⁵⁴ This warning is particularly apropos with regard to a manuscript, such as Trier 23, which also features illuminated initials and figurative imagery as well as the earliest surviving occurrences of important texts attributed to Alcuin. This dissertation embraces Ganz’ advocacy that all the manuscript’s components ought to be equally valued and evaluated before any pronouncement can be attempted. Ganz noted that our understanding of the development and transmission of scripts remains provisional and only the overdue systematic publication of numerous text pages will allow a more reliable, and likely more complex picture to emerge to remedy this situation.⁵⁵

Laufner noted that uncial letters, especially “a” and “d”, sporadically infiltrate Trier 23’s Carolingian minuscule script.⁵⁶ These are most commonly found at the beginning of words, and it is not unusual to find the same letter, once in uncial, once in the new script, coexisting in a single word. These occurrences interrupt the flow of what he otherwise fittingly describes as a “vollentwickelte karolingische Minuskel von

⁵³ David Ganz, “Latin Paleography since Bischoff” in Anne J. Duggan, Joan Greatrex and Brenda Bolton eds., Omnia Disce- Medieval Studies in Memory of Leonard Boyle, O.P. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 91-107.

⁵⁴ Ganz, Latin Paleography, p. 104. My emphasis.

⁵⁵ Ganz advocates literally exposing this material to more sets of eyes, Latin Paleography, p.106.

⁵⁶ Laufner, Herkunft, p. 50.

geradezu klassischer Regelmässigkeit”.⁵⁷ These slippages can be explained as inadvertent relapses exposing the scribe’s natural tendency to revert to the original script in which he was trained. It can accordingly be inferred that his acquaintance with the newer script was somewhat recent, although the undeniable elegance and regularity of the flow of the text demonstrates ease and mastery. Uncial script remained in use following the emergence and diffusion of Carolingian minuscule, which while closely associated with Charles’ reformatory efforts, did not preclude some prestigious Court-related codices from having been created in that ‘older’ script. Such is the case for the Gospels of Ste Croix de Poitiers (Poitiers, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 17), likely made at the scriptorium of Corbie.⁵⁸

The origin of Carolingian minuscule has been convincingly localized to the monastery of Corbie, where it first appeared in the 770s.⁵⁹ Numerous scribes learned the new script into the ninth century, and as such the presence of mixed script is in itself inconclusive, and does not, on its own, confirm a pre-800 dating, or in fact preclude a later ninth century placement. A turn of the century date still allots the considerable gap

⁵⁷ Laufner, *Herkunft*, p. 50, repeated verbatim in *Kostbare Bücher*, p 12.

⁵⁸ This may result from personal preference, a defined interest in antiquarianism (for effect) and as it requires more parchment, a display of wealth and luxury. See Rosamond McKitterick, “Carolingian Uncial: A Context for the Lothar Psalter,” *The British Library Journal* 16 (1990), pp. 1-15. On this neglected, yet important book, see Lynley A. Herbert, *LUX VITA: The Majesty and Humanity of Christ in the Gospels of Sainte-Croix of Poitiers*, Ph.D. Dissertation, (University of Delaware, 2012).

⁵⁹ David Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, *Beihefte der Francia*, 20, (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1990). This script ironically has no connection in either form or usage with classical Antiquity. Rather, it evolved from charter hands and majuscule book hands in the third quarter of the eighth century. The script is featured in the colophon of the splendid Godescalc Evangeliary, dated to 781-83 in use at the traveling royal chapel, likely familiar to the prominent scholars residing at the court.

of an entire generation to elapse from the time of the script's emergence to its "full development" and diffusion. This is a significant window, even though the rate of transmission is hardly predictable, within a small area, let alone the entire territory under Charles' rule. Individual scribe's abilities to master the new script could vary greatly and further complicates this already challenging equation. Moreover, it is reasonable to presume that a gift intended for the king would have occasioned the selection of a skilled and trusted scribe.⁶⁰ This explanation aligns with the directives promulgated in the *Admonitio Generalis* of 789, which advocated entrusting the most experienced scribes with the responsibility of copying the sacred texts. "Do not let your boys corrupt books in reading or writing. If a new gospel, psalter or missal is needed, it is to be copied with great care by a mature man."⁶¹ A "mature" and experienced scribe, in that early period of the new script's existence, likely learned his skill in a bookhand other than Carolingian minuscule. Chapter 3 attempts to elucidate the significance of the presence of mixed script and the sporadic presence of unusual spellings in the form of the insertion of the letter "h" where it is not commonly found.

The Carolingian Renaissance Paradigm and its Legacy

The "renaissance" label attached in the twentieth century to the period of Charlemagne's rule had a profound and lasting impact on art historical scholarship. It has remained a commonplace, as ubiquitous as the period's supposed shortage of creativity,

⁶⁰ This suggests that the selected scribe's mastery of Caroline minuscule may not reflect the state of absorption of the script at his particular location.

⁶¹ Translated and quoted in James Allott, *Alcuin of York- his life and letters*, (York: William Sessions Limited, 1974), p. 89.

and the dependence on now lost models, faithfully, although unskillfully copied. Erwin Panofsky's influential Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art published in 1960 identified Carolingian artistic achievement as valuable but only with hindsight, as a forerunner of the "real" Renaissance of the fifteenth century.⁶² As a result, objects displaying stylistic characteristics deemed unclassical, were ignored altogether, a view that still holds wide sway. Classicism was identified, in effect, as the avant-garde, and Panofsky labeled as "progressive" those artists whose works bear the recognizable markers of dependency on classical models or sources.⁶³ "More progressive masters," Panofsky continues, sought out more naturalism, thus perpetuating the prevalent assumption that naturalism is not only the superior mode of artistic expression, but also that the pursuit of naturalism was the motivating factor, which is not substantiated by the remaining evidence.

This interpretation is a cliché of the art historical meta-narrative, regurgitated in countless textbooks. It is 'confirmed' by the common assertion that Charlemagne consciously modeled his aspirations, policies and artistic patronage after a lost Roman imperial tradition he longed to revive, as undeniably evidenced by the very occurrence of the imperial coronation of Christmas Day 800. This reductive model ignores the overwhelmingly religious character of Carolingian artistic production and the diverse backgrounds of the scholars assembled at the court. It implies that a shared yearning for classical knowledge -whose origin is unquestioned and mostly unexplored- under the Frankish ruler's catalytic personality homogenized their diversity into an institutionalized

⁶² Erwin Panofsky, "Renaissance and Renascences" in Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, (New York: Icons Editions, 1969), pp. 42-113.

⁶³ Panofsky, Renaissance, p.48.

classicized output.⁶⁴ This interpretative paradigm promotes works conforming to a singular formalist developmental scheme to the detriment of myriad others exemplifying diversity, and consequently marginalizes or overlooks creations that do not conform to these artificial parameters, including the Trier codex. Manuscripts containing “classical” or “roman” features, such as seated author portraits, or canon tables under arcades with birds, acanthus leaves, column shafts imitating marble, and displaying the most overt markers of luxury are privileged, alongside examples of the revival of ivory carving.

Rosamond McKitterick’s discussion of Ottonian manuscripts has advocated a more productive approach, observing that, “[i]t is clear from the manuscript evidence in particular that royal patronage is not just random aesthetic pleasure or arcane intellectual curiosity, but an organized and determined assembly and deployment of resources to carry out what appear to be specific aims and objectives”.⁶⁵ This understanding of the material can be effectively applied to the Carolingian period also. It challenges the default explanation of *Zeitgeist* to elucidate the creation, contents and appearance of the works produced at any given period. However, the interpretative model it promotes can be extended further to encompass more than royal commissions and include all aspects of sponsorship, recognizing the agency of patrons, authors, and scribes.

⁶⁴ Sullivan has challenged this idea of consensus and uniformity, (1989) p. 296. As has John J. Contreni, “Inharmonious Harmony: education in the Carolingian world” in *Carolingian Learning, Masters and Manuscripts*, (Ashgate, 1992), Chapter 4. Rosamond McKitterick, “The Foundations of the Carolingian Renaissance,” in *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751-987*, (London: Longman Group, 1983), Ch. 6, pp.140-168.

⁶⁵ Rosamond McKitterick, “Ottonian Intellectual Culture in the Tenth Century” in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millenium*, Adelbert Davids ed, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 173.

Heinrich Zimmerman released Vorkarolingische Miniaturen in 1916, shortly after Amédée Boinet's La Miniature Carolingienne, ses origines, son développement.⁶⁶ Zimmerman's compilation of "pre-Carolingian miniatures" includes the famous Gellone Sacramentary, (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat. 12048) actually dated to c.790, and thus squarely within the reign of Charlemagne, but treated here as a "Merovingian" creation on account of its visual departure from reductive constructs defining Carolingian court taste as classicizing. In scholarship, "Merovingian" and "Carolingian" became stylistic terms in the guises of dynastic periods well into the second half of the twentieth century.⁶⁷ Works lacking in overt classicizing features, and whose very existence and dating questions the tenets of this assessment, such as the Gellone Sacramentary, are dismissed as "Merovingian" although they exemplify the diversity of Carolingian book production. The dominant scholarly interpretative paradigm overrides actual internal evidence to relegate the Trier manuscript, and others like it, to a realm of secondary relevance, as uncharacteristic of or ill-fitting the period that actually created them.

The impact of nationalistic affinities on the selection of materials for inclusion, and prioritization, as well as the problematic and loaded appropriation of the Carolingian heritage as distinctively, albeit anachronistically French or German deserves notice. To this latent bias must be added the question of access, which indubitably impacted scholarly pursuits and their conclusions, particularly in times of war. Further obstruction to the development of a more accurate assessment of this material is created by the

⁶⁶ Published in 1913, only the volume of plates was released, (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Picard et Fils). The emphasis rests squarely on making accessible to a wider audience the most extensive examples of Carolingian illumination. As such few text pages are reproduced and those include all feature prominent and elaborate decorated initials.

⁶⁷ André Grabar and Carl Nordenfalk, Early Medieval Painting, (Skira, 1957).

understandably necessary, but often frustratingly limiting and ideologically loaded, boundaries of periodization, defining manageable entities for scholarly inquiry. Adolph Goldschmidt's Die deutsche Buchmalerei, comprising both a "Carolingian" and an "Ottonian" section, effectively claims this medieval heritage as essentially Germanic, downplaying or even negating the Frankish/French component of Carolingian identity.

Setting aside contested political or geographical boundaries and contemporary partisanship, an alternative breakdown of this material along temporal lines informs E. A. Lowe's seminal contribution, the Codices Latini Antiquiores series, which features all Latin manuscripts produced, as far as can be ascertained, before the year 800.⁶⁸ As noted, setting boundaries to any scholarly investigation is a logistical necessity. However, it is important not to lose sight of their relative arbitrariness, although they often carry latent ideological implications. Lowe's chosen boundary feeds into the perception that a fundamental shift followed the imperial coronation, implying that post 800 manuscripts differ noticeably from those produced earlier. In a field where definite and definitive dating is not the norm, echoes (or foreshadowings) of Bischoff's "right after Charlemagne's" dismissal of Trier 23's script linger vexingly.

An alternative approach consists of grouping early medieval manuscripts in discrete units sharing symptoms, stylistic features, and known or assigned provenance. This method is the organizational principle behind Die karolingische Miniaturen, the ongoing series of volumes begun by Willhelm Koehler in 1908.⁶⁹ This reference

⁶⁸ E.A. Lowe, Codices Latini Antiquiores: a paleographical guide to latin manuscripts prior to the ninth century, (1934-).

collection par excellence was conceived is a virtual census of Carolingian illuminations, but is in fact incomplete and highly selective. As scholarship evolves and attributions are challenged or reexamined, future scholars may be surprised to find certain manuscripts assigned to some discredited places or periods.⁷⁰

To this day, Die karolingischen Miniaturen follows the format of its original volume, including black and white plates, for the sake of uniformity, and because that format was preferable for reliability and quality when the series began. This former technological limitation, now a deliberate choice, may have inadvertently stirred art historical inquiries into prioritizing iconography at the expense of stylistic and certainly chromatic analysis. The series' focus on "Miniaturen" has logically privileged figurative decoration over ornament whose complexity and intricacies are best appreciated in color, and in person.

Florentine Mutherich and Joachim Gaehde's 1976 collaboration, entitled Carolingian Painting, reproduces miniatures and a few illuminated initials, and solely focuses on the most lavish manuscripts.⁷¹ The selection of the loaded word "painting" as opposed to "miniature" or "manuscript illumination" is telling, and deliberately connects these medieval creations to the acclaimed higher art of easel painting practiced in later

⁶⁹ Wilhelm Koehler, and Florentine Mutherich, eds. Die karolingischen Miniaturen, (Berlin: Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft, 1930-1999 and Wiesbaden, 2009-2013).

⁷⁰ The same holds true for other collections attempting to catalogue known manuscripts and usually represent a state of research at the date of publication and should not be taken as the final word on any specific manuscript. Such is the case for J. J. G. Alexander's multi-volume Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles, (H. Miller Publishers, 1978-).

⁷¹ Joachim Gaehde and Florentine Mutherich, Carolingian Painting, (New York: George Braziller, 1977).

centuries, as does the standardized formatting of the various illuminations reproduced. This distinction separates the work of the scribe from the contribution of the illuminator, downplaying the fact that they were often one and the same, or collaborated closely on the conception and execution of the piece. In addition, this approach undermines the very essence of manuscripts as a distinct medium, where images and texts coexist, and ought to be interpreted as such. Images and texts intertwine, and unfold sequentially and temporally to create a cumulative experience for the viewer, from which subtle, compounded meanings can be communicated.

Carolingian Painting reproduces single folios in standardized full-page color plates and is a welcome attempt to at least partially capture the manuscripts designers' visions. The book presents many works previously featured in black and white plates only in the Carolingian section of Goldschmidt's German Illuminations, or in Amédée Boinet's La Miniature Carolingienne, with the notable exception of Trier 23, which had appeared in both of these surveys, is not included. Carolingian Painting remains widely available today, perpetuating to modern audiences through its image selection and its introduction the view that "[T]he aim of the artistic revival proclaimed at the court was the renewal of classical art."⁷² This matter of fact statement cements Panofsky's earlier pronouncement and implies that a virtual manifesto promoting this idea was purposely distributed.⁷³ Nees cautioned that while the hypothesis of a 'program' of Carolingian art

⁷² Müttherich and Gahede, Carolingian Painting, p. 9.

⁷³ Panofsky talks of a "deliberate attempt to reclaim the heritage of Rome", p. 44 and stresses that this worthy development occurred in what was otherwise a cultural "vacuum". G. W. Trompf conveyed a similar sentiment, calling this transitional period "abysmal" and still pondered about the "relative quality of the so-called Carolingian

effortlessly conforms to preconceived ideas about a renaissance, it is unsubstantiated by the surviving evidence, which speaks of *correctio* and shows a clear focus on Christianity and discriminately sought patristic sources.⁷⁴ Carolingian sources' use of the terms *renovare* or *correctio* are most openly reflected in the marked concern for the correction of the biblical text, whose accuracy and orthodoxy alleviated a genuine anxiety over the potential denial of eternal life.

Carolingian Paintings showcases the most lavish embodiments of luxury and privilege, openly challenging the enduring denigration of the medieval period as a “Dark Age” of human achievement and a cultural vacuum. Yet, this improbable Carolingian success remains subordinated to what is therein presented as their true contribution, the preservation of the classical past which enabled the advent of the real Renaissance of the fifteenth century. Politically and ideologically, this uncompromising interpretive paradigm insists that Charlemagne consciously modeled his aspirations, policies and artistic patronage after a lost Roman imperial tradition.⁷⁵ Richard Krautheimer's influential 1942 essay, “The Carolingian Revival of Early Christian Architecture” moderated this sweeping assumption and identified Constantine, the first Christian

renaissance” when compared to the ‘real’ one. “The Concept of the Carolingian Renaissance”, Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 34, Issue 1 (Jan.- Mar., 1973) p.19.

⁷⁴ Nees, “The Plan of St Gall and the Theory of the Program of Carolingian Art,” Gesta, Vol. 25, No 1, Essays in Honor of Whitney Snow Stoddard (1986), pp. 1-8.

⁷⁵ The 2004 edition of Janson's History of Art boldly claims that Charles' motivation was to “encourage[] the collecting and copying of many works of ancient Roman literature” (p.322). This supposed indiscriminate reverence for all things “Roman” fails to account for the primarily religious and patristic focus of the works collected. Additionally, the blanket term “Rome” ambiguously refers to potentially diverse ideas and concepts in both time and place. The “Rome” of primary interest to the Carolingian was undoubtedly a Christian one.

emperor, as the sole acceptable model of imperial rulership for Charlemagne.⁷⁶ This more selective reading has the advantage of putting to the forefront the overwhelmingly religious character of the Carolingian endeavor, but still denied the Frankish ruler the agency of independent self-fashioning. Chapter 2 demonstrates the shortcomings of this reductive interpretation and contextualizes the creation of the Trier codex against the ever-increasing promotion of Christo-mimetic kingship in the closing years of the eighth century. This development reflected Alcuin's ambitions for the king of the Franks while crafting an opportunistic response to contemporary events understood in light of universal history and God's plan for salvation.

Alcuin's own correspondence testifies to the existence of active networks of communication and exchange. Alcuin, but also Theodulf, Angilbert, Jesse, Richbod, Arno and others variously contributed to the Carolingian artistic and scholarly output although modern scholarship has treated their respective achievements and contributions with uneven enthusiasm. It seems pernicious to insist that these accomplishments would have been impossible without royal permission, awareness or oversight.

⁷⁶ Richard Krautheimer, "The Carolingian Revival of Early Christian Architecture", *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 24, (1942), pp.1-38, reprinted in his collected studies volume, *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval and Renaissance Art*. Edited by James S. Ackerman et al. (New York: New York University Press, 1969). While some of Krautheimer's observations are compelling his paralleling the Lorsch Torhalle and the Arch of Constantine seems forced. Interestingly, the very composite nature of the arch, and its eclecticism are characteristics denied to Charlemagne believed to have exclusively promoted a singular model. For a more recent discussion see Charles B. McClendon, *The Origins of Early Medieval Architecture: Building in Europe, A.D. 600-900*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005). McClendon's discussion of the Torhalle highlights its Carolingian creators' creative reconfiguration of known designs and ornaments to serve new aesthetic tastes and purposes and whose best parallel may be found in the gatehouse of St. Peter's basilica, (p. 92ff).

Alcuin's Impact and Legacy

The distorted aesthetic expectations associated with the renaissance paradigm, and the unresolved paleographical assessment of Trier 23's script, are supplemented by the ongoing scholarly debate regarding Alcuin's contributions and legacy. Similarly to its fifteenth century counterpart, the impetus for the Carolingian *renovatio* is sought in the agency of a few exceptional individuals, ambitious visionaries worthy of Charlemagne's grand program of reforms. The Anglo-Saxon scholar is alternatively cast as the architect of the Carolingian renaissance, the head of the court school, and Charlemagne's most trusted advisor, or as an uninspired exegete, a passive witness to history, who exerted no more influence on the affairs of the kingdom than any of the many advisors who temporarily resided at Charlemagne's court.⁷⁷ Chapter 2 addresses Jennifer Davis' reevaluation of the dynamics of power at the court and her proposition that individual advisors intermittently gained ascendancy in accordance with current issues and concerns and that each individual was viewed as possessing a specific area of expertise.⁷⁸

Alcuin's writings have been variously praised or dismissed. Much of his prolific correspondence, especially from his Tours years (796-804), survives today.⁷⁹ It provides

⁷⁷ On the court culture see Donald Bullough, "Aula Renovata: The Carolingian Court Before the Aachen Palace", Raleigh Lecture on History (Read 24 October 1985), Proceedings of the British Academy, London, Volume LXXI (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

⁷⁸ Jennifer Davis, "Alcuin's Letters to Kings", paper presented at the 43rd International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 8th, 2008.

⁷⁹ We are indebted to Arno, Alcuin's frequent correspondent for much of the preservation of this material. The letters are published in their original Latin by Dümmler in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* series, and are presented in the Clavis. Many are at least partially translated into English by Allott, Letters. C. Chase, Two Alcuin Letter-Books, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval

modern audiences with an uncharacteristic sense of familiarity, even intimacy with the Anglo-Saxon scholar. Alcuin's contributions were extolled within a few years of his passing, and both Einhard, and Notker refer to him as one of the most learned man in the kingdom.⁸⁰ These praises misdirected contemporary scholars into assigning him the authorship of various tracts and official promulgations, including the *Opus Caroli Regis Contra Synodum*, (*Libri Carolini*) now securely attributed to Theodulf.⁸¹ The Clavis des auteurs latins volume devoted to Alcuin perpetuates this trend. As a consequence, this compilation's all-inclusive approach has been met with strong criticism with Michael Gorman leading the charge, and lamenting the missed opportunity to critically reassess the myriad compositions indiscriminately assigned to Alcuin's pen.⁸²

Studies, 1975) and Rolph Barlow Page, A.M., The Letters of Alcuin, Ph.D. dissertation, (New York, 1909).

⁸⁰ Einhard's refers to Alcuin as a "Albinus, a deacon from Britain of the race of the Saxons, a man who in any place would have been thought most learned", in chapter 25 of his *Life of Charlemagne*, while Notker introduces Alcuin in chapter 2 as "more skilled in all the breadths of writings than other men of modern times, being a pupil of the most learned Bede, the most learned interpreter of the Scriptures since St. Gregory." Both of these assessments reflect the formulaic language of these post-mortem exaltations. It is telling that in the eyes of Notker and undoubtedly others, Alcuin's status was greatly enhanced by his knowledge of Bede and by being linked with that great Anglo-Saxon scholar. Einhard and Notker the Stammerer, *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, translated with an introduction by David Ganz, (London: Penguin Books, 2008).

⁸¹ *Opus Caroli Regis Contra Synodum*, ed. Ann Freeman, with Paul Meyvaert, MGH, (Hannover, 1998). Theodulf's authorship and its reflections of his own ideas regarding images come to light in the design of the apse mosaic at his own oratory at Germigny-des-Prés as explained by Ann Freeman and Paul Meyvaert, "The Meaning of Theodulf's Apse Mosaic at Germigny-des-Prés, *Gesta*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2001), pp. 125-139. For a recent discussion of the Carolingian engagement with images, see Thomas F. X. Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009). This extensive discussion interestingly features no images, except for the front dust jacket showcasing one of Harbanus Maurus' *carmina figurata*.

⁸² This all-inclusive approach has the merit of providing a starting point to anyone

The commentary on Hebrew Names, its dedication, and the poem on the four gospels appearing in Trier 23 all feature in the Clavis volume as works by Alcuin. The exegesis on the genealogy of Christ in Matthew's opening chapter and its appended dedication appear in a single entry (ALC 62), a logical organization as the poem is unknown independently of the commentary, which it references directly. The Clavis provides the names of scholars who have supported and challenged these attributions. Any investigation of the Trier codex must take into account the ongoing debate over the supposed Alcuinian authorship of the commentary, the dedication and the *Matheus e sacro* poem, (ALC 11.71.1) particularly as Trier 23 presents their earliest recorded occurrence.

Olivier Szwerniniack has convincingly argued for the recognition of Alcuin's authorship of the commentary on Hebrew names, for which he uncovered compelling sources, which will be addressed in Chapter 3.⁸³ The Hebrew Names commentary's version transcribed in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*⁸⁴ differs extensively from the text in the

studying this material, but as Michael Gorman and others have lamented, it falls short of applying rigorous scholarly standards. In a series of publications, Gorman lists as *dubia* or *spuria* thirty-six works attributed to Alcuin in the *Clavis des Auteurs Latins du Moyen Âge, Territoire Français 735-987. Tomus II Alcuin*. Edited by Marie-Hélène Jullien and Françoise Perelman. CC Continuatio Mediaevalis. (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1999). He also questions the very existence of what Bischoff recognized as a distinctive Hiberno-Saxon exegetical tradition and Alcuin's impact. "Alcuin before Migne", *Revue Bénédictine*, 112 (2002), pp.42-84, and "The Myth of Hiberno Latin Exegesis" *Revue Bénédictine*, 110 (2000), pp. 42-85.

⁸³ See especially Olivier Szwerniniack, "Les *Interpretationes nominum Hebraicorum progenitorum Iesu Christi* (ALC 62): une oeuvre authentique d'Alcuin", in *Alcuin de York à Tours, Écriture, Pouvoir et Réseaux dans L'Europe du Haut Moyen Âge*, Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de L'Ouest, Tome 111, No. 3 (2004), pp. 289-299. Szwerniniack directly engages with Gorman's criticism of the corpus of Alcuin's compositions.

⁸⁴ The Clavis references both instances where a text approximating that found in Trier 23 is reproduced in the PL. As will be addressed in Chapter 3, the version in PL 94, 413-8

Trier codex and its date and place of origin remain contested. Meanwhile, the *Matheus e sacro* poem has been largely ignored, and Beissel's reproduction marks one of the few instances where it is given attention in the context of a discussion of Trier 23.⁸⁵ With regard to its occurrence in Trier 23, Alcuin's authorship of the poem is of secondary relevance, as its mere inclusion purposefully and harmoniously integrates with the manuscript's other textual and visual components, and the overall emphasis on gospel harmony and concordance. The poem, which explains the pairing of each evangelist with his respective symbolic beast, concludes the textual section of the general prefaces introducing the Gospels, and directly precedes the unusually extensive canon tables.⁸⁶ It therefore transitions between the textual and pictorial reiterations of the gospels' harmony, which extends to the recurring design of Trier 23's gospel frontispieces. Samuel Berger's *Histoire de la Vulgate pendant les premiers siècles du moyen âge*, originally published in 1893, categorically rejects the possibility of Alcuin's authorship of the *Matheus e sacro* poem and emphatically dismisses the Trier manuscript as the intended gift to Charlemagne.⁸⁷ Berger does not substantiate his objections and his

presents a homily by the Pseudo-Bede likely inspired by Alcuin's commentary. PL 100, 725-34, reproduces a closer version albeit one with much intercalated material not found in Trier 23.

⁸⁵ Beissel, *Geschichte*, pp. 158-159.

⁸⁶ An extensive discussion of Trier 23's prefatory texts will be the focus of Chapter 3. The number of these common prefatory texts can vary greatly, but Jerome's preface to all four gospels, beginning *Plures fuisse* is commonly featured alongside his letter to Pope Damasus introducing his new translation, *Novum Opus*. Eusebius' letter introducing his system of canon tables, beginning *Amonius quidem*, is also frequently included.

⁸⁷ Berger, *Histoire*, p.194. He assesses the poem as "insignifiant" adding that it has "rien qui rappelle le style d'Alcuin," and that, "Nous ne nous arrêterons pas à ces traditions douteuses et ces attributions sans valeur." In a footnote, Berger briefly rejects Jaffé and

condescending tone suggests that he expects his reader to simply accept his expert opinion.

While art historical constructs of what would have been a suitably luxurious and classicizing gift to offer Charlemagne have challenged Trier 23's identification as the two-part gift mentioned in the dedication poem. P. Jaffé and Ernst Dümmler were the first to suggest that the manuscript should indeed be identified as this intended offering. They connected the dedication poem with a letter Alcuin addressed to Charles and one intended for Nathaniel, his pupil Fridugis, and consequently dated the manuscript to 798-803.⁸⁸ James Allott's 1974 edition and translation of Alcuin letters repeated this pairing, insisting that Trier 23 is a "fine manuscript of the gospels."⁸⁹ This complementary pairing elucidates the apparent lack of identification by name of the recipient for the gift mentioned in the poem. Nees, Berger and others have rejected Dümmler's reading on account of the letter's ambiguous reference to a book of the scriptures, which may more suitably reference a full bible rather than a gospel book. Chapter 3 examines the compelling linguistic parallels linking these two epistles with the dedication poem, and attempts to resolve this additional point of contention.

Dümmler's identification of Trier 23 as the gift referenced in the dedication, and also rejects claims that the manuscript originated at Prüm, (note 3).

⁸⁸ Ernst Dümmler, ed., *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolarum Tomus IV, Epistolae Karolini aevi II* (Berlin) 1895, pp.418-419 for the letters (#261 and #262) and MGH, *Poeta Latii Karolini Aevi I* (Berlin, 1881), p.293 for the dedication poem.

⁸⁹ Allott, *Letters*, p.88.

A Gift Almost Fit for a King: Understanding Luxury

Trier 23's smooth, creamy white parchment is consumed with little or no regard for expense, presenting the gospels in two volumes of 121 and 122 folios respectively, while the margins remain conspicuously generous, even after at least one known rebinding in the twelfth century.⁹⁰ The first volume measures 30,5 cm by 21,5 cm and the second 30,5 cm by 22, 5 cm, a format consistent with de luxe volumes. This testifies to the means available to the manuscript's patron. Oddly, Goldschmidt's observation that the chromatic articulation and layering of pigments on Christ's face paralleled Byzantine practice has not garnered more interest, for it coincides with projected expectations of preserved classical heritage. Throughout the manuscript, figurative and abstract designs symbiotically morph. The canon tables' decorative scheme harmoniously combines knot-work, interlace, rosettes, crosses, bird heads and foliage. The gospel incipits emerge in brightly colored arcaded frames anchored by the figure of Christ and the evangelist symbols in medallions. The extensive use of blue, a pigment as costly as, or more costly, than gold, distinctly communicates luxury. Alternating bands of interlace and vegetal motifs surround the incipit text, recalling courtly productions such as the Godescalc Evangelistary, (Paris, BnF, Nouv. Acq. Ms. lat. 1203), datable 781-784, with which Trier 23 shares other characteristics.⁹¹ The initials' elegant looped terminals and acanthus

⁹⁰ As noted, Laufner indicates that dendochronological dating places cutting of the oak trees used for the current covers to 1177, *Herkunft*, p.51.

⁹¹ This unusually close dating is made possible by the colophon's mention of Charlemagne's two sons' baptism by Pope Hadrian, which occurred in 781, and the mention of Queen Hildegard, who died in 783, as still alive. For a discussion of Godescalc and his career see Lawrence Nees, "Godescalc's Career and the Problems of 'Influence.'" In *Under the Influence: The Concept of Influence in the Study of*

tendrils reflect the scribe's delicate penmanship. Chapter 4 investigates a variety of stylistic and iconographic parallels, and uncovers similar composite initials, originating in a Greek scriptorium operating in Rome c. 800.⁹²

The Carolingians' capacity to selectively reference, absorb, and transform a variety of available sources to serve their specific purposes has been demonstrated, with regard to exegesis and other tracts. This active engagement with textual sources equally applies to artistic endeavors. Synthesis, emulation but also innovations are epitomized in the remaining evidence.⁹³ Nancy Netzer has demonstrated the benefits of this methodological sensitivity to "cultural interplay" in her stimulating study of the Trier Gospels, (Trier, Domschatz, Cod. 61) and the scriptorium at the monastery of Echternach, near Trier, where they were most likely created.⁹⁴ This methodology has been fruitful for it is more attuned to the evidence than any monolithic interpretative paradigm, whose underlying assumption of homogeneity is simply contradicted by the actual objects under investigation.

The prevailing linear treatment of the various ornamental motifs in Trier 23 sharply contrasts anachronistic expectations of modeled forms and illusionism. While both Charles and Alcuin were undoubtedly familiar with lavish books, and other

Illuminated Manuscripts, edited by John Lowden and Alixe Bovey. (Brepols, 2007), pp. 21-43.

⁹² John Osborne, "The Use of Painted Initials by Greek and Latin Scriptoria in Carolingian Rome," Gesta, Vol. 29, No.1 (1990), pp.76-85.

⁹³ Most notorious examples include Thomas' "Tetramorph" in the Trier Gospels, (Trier, Domschatz, Cod. 61, f.5v).

⁹⁴ Nancy Netzer, Cultural Interplay in the 8th Century, The Trier Gospels and the making of a scriptorium at Echternach, *Cambridge Studies in Paleography and Codicology* 3, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

embodiments of overt luxury and prestige produced and received at the court, they should not be denied the ability to appreciate anything modern audiences may unfairly construe as lesser or even just different. A substantial distinction ought to be drawn between works produced at the court's request to serve a ceremonial or diplomatic function, and creations originating elsewhere even if intended for presentation to a member of the court. The latter, while still lavish, likely expressed luxury in potentially strikingly diverse visual modes. Moreover, an ostentatious display rivaling court production may have been construed as a resounding faux pas, even when one had access to the necessary resources.⁹⁵

As Donald Bullough and others have stressed, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the documents circulating at Charlemagne's court and intended for study, as drafts of official edicts or letters, or other practical record keeping purposes had a significantly more modest appearance than the lavishly decorated codices with which art historical scholarship and exhibition catalogs have customarily and exclusively associated with the court.⁹⁶ The profoundly skewed nature of the relatively small sample of Carolingian works perennially reproduced ignores the fact that out of the

⁹⁵ Much has been written on the patterns and expectations of the usually very public performance of gift giving. Marcel Mauss, "Essai sur le don: Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques," *Année sociologique* 1 (1923-24), pp. 30-186 and more recently by Florin Curta, "Merovingian and Carolingian Gift Giving," *Speculum* 81 (2006), pp. 671-699.

⁹⁶ Donald Bullough, "Charlemagne's court library revisited," *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 12, Nr. 4 (2003), pp. 339-363. Rosamond McKitterick discusses, among other important aspects relating to an emphasis on written texts, the value and production of books, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Of great value is of course Bischoff's *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne*, previously mentioned.

approximately eight thousand or so Carolingian manuscripts known today,⁹⁷ only a few hundred are illuminated and even fewer contain extensive decorative programs including figurative imagery. Trier 23's belonging to this latter, most selective group ought to have secured its status in the art historical scholarship centered on Carolingian book production.

A great deal of inconsistency grants Charles the Bald, but not his grandfather, the capacity to appreciate not only luxury manuscripts in a "classicizing" style but also his bible executed in the Franco-Saxon style, for which Nordenfalk assumed Trier 23 to be a precursor.⁹⁸ This indebtedness fittingly reflects Charles the Bald's emulation of his illustrious grandfather, which extended to his physical representation as revealed on the folios of his Prayerbook, (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Schatzkammer der Residenz, s.n.) and the so-called First Bible of Charles the Bald (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat. 1), both closely resembling the 'portrait' of Charlemagne on an early ninth century coin.⁹⁹

In addition, objects made by the court for its own use or to serve as diplomatic gifts, such as the Dagulf Psalter, or the marble epitaph Alcuin composed to eulogize the late Pope Hadrian, operated as potent visual signifiers of the Frankish king and court's

⁹⁷ Bischoff, Libraries.

⁹⁸ Mütherich and Gahede's celebrate Charles the Bald's enjoyment of his Franco-Saxon bible, Second Bible of Charles the Bald (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat 2) regardless of the total absence of figurative imagery or narrative scenes, and yet appear to want to deny Charles a similar affinity, Carolingian Painting, p.9.

⁹⁹ This image is widely reproduced, especially as it appropriates much of the Roman imperial language of power as expressed in numismatic form. Karl der Grosse, (Aachen, 1965), cat. 14, fig.10, from 804. The young Charles' desire to align himself with his illustrious grandfather also informs the common mis-identification of a small equestrian statue now in the Musée du Louvre in Paris, as Charlemagne rather than Charles the Bald, cat. 29, fig. 13.

wealth and prestige. These glamorous offerings have long enticed a disproportionate number of scholarly inquiries, resulting in the skewed representation of the actual artistic output of the Carolingian period. Luxury manuscripts and other precious objects gifted to important dignitaries and celebrating the king's status and wealth when presented during elaborate public ceremonies showcasing power relationships and prestige are not the norm. In addition, these objects were more likely to be handled by only a handful of select people, on special occasions. As such, their overt luxury did not guarantee their proportionate impact. In contrast, manuscripts of modest appearance tend to show more signs of wear, as readers, copiers and exegetes handled them over many generations.

Ottonian Nachleben

Trier 23's later medieval reception sharply contrasts with this guarded modern response. The *Maistas Domini* addition has been featured in a variety of exhibitions, including some celebrations of Ottonian artistic achievement as noted above. Doris Oltrogge's contribution to the catalog published in conjunction with the 1993 exhibition celebrating the millennium of Archbishop Egbert's death revealed that the technique of gold foil application found in Trier 23's Ottonian miniature was consistent with the Gregory Master's distinctive practice.¹⁰⁰ As will be demonstrated, this technical parallel is confirmed by stylistic and iconographic comparisons with works assigned to this famous artist. The Trier codex belongs to a group of Carolingian manuscripts that have been strategically altered during the Ottonian period. Chapter 5 addresses the potential motivations informing this variably extensive reworking and transformations and their

¹⁰⁰ Doris Oltrogge, "'Materia' und 'Ingenium' Beobachtungen zu herstellung des Egbertcodex, *Egbert Erzbischof von Trier 977-993*, Bd 2, Aufsätze, (1993), pp.123-152.

anticipated rewards. As previously mentioned, Beissel's 1906 publication openly celebrated the manuscript's composite nature and reproduced the Ottonian addition alongside the Matthew frontispiece and a canon table.

The relative impact of the manuscript's current location on its reserved scholarly reception is worth pondering. In most modest collections, the book would occupy a place of honor, and even among the treasures preserved in the Stadtbibliothek's vault, the codex' placement, between two of the most prestigious exemplars of early medieval manuscript production, unequivocally declares its elevated status. Yet, scholarly attention has disproportionately focused on its shelf-mates. To the left, the "Ada Gospels", commonly thought to have been produced at the Court of Charlemagne and already available in a facsimile in the late nineteenth century, and to the right, the Codex Egberti, the Ottonian masterpiece associated with the Gregory Master. The latter showcases numerous framed narrative images with gold accents interspersed within long lines of text, which recalls the layout of late antique books such as the Vatican Vergil (Rome, Vatican Library, MS lat.3225). It embodies the apostolic ambitions for the city of Trier at the core of archbishop Egbert's propaganda, emphasizing connections with St. Peter's Rome and early Christianity. Thomas Head labeled this extensive recycling of relics and works from the past "sacred bricolage".¹⁰¹ It is in that context of active appropriation of the past to suit contemporary purposes and nurture new ambitions, and not solely as pure reverence for a glorious, iconic and mythicized past, that Trier 23 and its added *Maiestas Domini* miniature are best understood.

¹⁰¹ Thomas Head, "Art and Artifice in Ottonian Trier," *Gesta*, Vol. 36, No.1 (1997), pp. 65-82.

The codex' oak covers, dendochronologically dated to the twelfth century, still bear witness to the presence of metal plates and possibly ivory plaques.¹⁰² These vestiges remind us that, like the Ottonian addition of the tenth or early eleventh century, this transformation attests to the manuscript's elevated status in the eyes of its later medieval custodians. It is doubtful that the expense of outfitting the codex with this lavish, layered adornment would have been wasted on a manuscript of little value. Were these patrons more inclined to believe the book's prestigious Carolingian pedigree on the basis of its format and appearance, or did the dedication poem play the decisive role? Or was their assessment unhindered by such concerns as biased modern constructs and pre-conceived judgments?

The Gospels of Sta Maria ad Martyres present a unique opportunity to investigate Carolingian book production, its Ottonian reception and revisit modern scholarly constructs and far reaching methodological assumptions pertaining to images, texts and political legacy. It is to that systematic investigation that this dissertation is devoted.

¹⁰² Laufner, Herkunft, p. 51.

Chapter 2

CONSTRUCTING THE *IMPERIUM CHRISTIANUM*: DEFINING CHRISTOMIMETIC KINGSHIP IN THE EARLY CAROLINGIAN PERIOD

*Then the most wise Charlemagne,
imitating the justice of the eternal judge,
placed those who had worked well on his right ...*¹⁰³

This brief excerpt from The Deeds of Charlemagne appears in Notker's account of Charles' visit to the pupils left in the care of St. Clement in order to evaluate their progress. Upon examination, the king finds the hard working, poorer children excelling. On the surface, this passage epitomizes what modern audiences have eagerly embraced as Charles' supposed advocacy for universal education. Yet, Notker's wording is more revealing, as it explicitly imparts upon the Frankish ruler the essential qualities of wisdom, and sound discernment, reflecting the eternal Judge. Notker further assimilates Charles to Christ in a compositional tableau where the king's sorting of the good and bad pupils, placing the former on his right hand side, foreshadows Christ's actions on the Day

¹⁰³ Notker, Ch. 3. Einhard and Notker the Stammerer, Two Lives of Charlemagne, translated with an introduction by David Ganz, (London: Penguin Books, 2008), p.56.

of Judgment. By the mid 880's, the date of its composition, Notker's overt presentation of the late Frankish ruler as Christ's earthly counterpart appears well established.¹⁰⁴

Literary or visual representations of contemporary or deceased rulers, as idealized embodiments of the preferred character traits, or even physical attributes, of a given divinity is not a ninth century invention, nor is it a Christian singularity.¹⁰⁵ The explicit correspondence Notker draws between the earthly ruler and Christ found its most audacious visual expression in the late tenth century Ottonian *Liuthard Gospels* (Domkapitel Aachen, Liuthard/Aachen Gospels, fol.16r), where the emperor, Otto III, is not only compared to Christ, but substituted for him at the center of the Majesty composition, surrounded by symbols of the four Evangelists. [Figure 6] This much-discussed image marks the culmination of a carefully crafted advocacy of Christomimetic kingship, which while primarily associated with Ottonian political discourse in the scholarship, was actively promoted already in the Carolingian period, as this chapter argues.

Robert Deshman recognized Christ as the model of kingship pressed upon Charlemagne's grandson, Charles the Bald, in the carefully planned Prayerbook (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Schatzkammer der Residenz, s.n.) made for him in the 860's,¹⁰⁶ and more recently, Eric Miller's systematic investigation of Carolingian texts

¹⁰⁴ Written between 883-887, for Charles the Fat. Ganz, *Einhard*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁵ This was fairly commonplace with regard to depictions of Roman emperors, as exemplified in the full size marble statue of *Claudius as Jupiter* (c. 50) in the Musei Vaticani or the bust of *Commodus as Hercules* (c.190) in the Palazzo dei Conservatori in Rome.

¹⁰⁶ Robert Deshman, "The Exalted Servant: The Ruler Theology of the Prayerbook of Charles the Bald," *Viator* 2 (1980), pp. 385-417.

determined that the Carolingian formulation of a concept of kingship was primarily driven by the promotion of christomimesis.¹⁰⁷ Miller treats the period as a whole, relying on a wide range of sources, sometimes separated by decades or more, in order to establish that christomimesis was a primary and constant presence in the Carolingians' conception and articulation of kingship.¹⁰⁸ In contrast, I contend that what emerges in the closing years of the eighth century was intended to apply to Charlemagne and did not constitute a blueprint that future rulers were expected to follow. As will be shown, this construct presented the king with a model for responsible government and Christian leadership while simultaneously holding him accountable by stressing expectations of mercy, and humility, not always easily reconciled with the dominant military aspect of early medieval rulership.¹⁰⁹ The following discussion will explore the development of christomimetic kingship as it applied to Charlemagne in response to particular political, economic and religious circumstances in the closing years of the eighth century. This context gave a voice to Alcuin's ambitions for the Frankish king, and bolstered his promotion of *imitatio Christi*. However, this principle did not emerge in a vacuum, nor was it an Alcuinian invention, as it evolved from patristic and early medieval attempts to

¹⁰⁷ Eric Miller, The Politics of Imitating Christ: Christ the King and Christomimetic Rulership in Early Medieval Biblical Commentaries, Ph.D. dissertation, (University of Virginia, 2001).

¹⁰⁸ He mentions numerous times that the visual arts played a part in this construct but does not cite or discuss any specific examples.

¹⁰⁹ Janet Nelson had addressed this inherent tension in "Monks, secular men and masculinity, c. 900" in D. Haley ed., Masculinity in Medieval Europe, (London, 1998), pp. 121-142. The popularity of prayerbooks for kings and emperors also reflects a deep awareness of this issue and a constant reminder to the rulers that they need to repent and remain humble, and acknowledge that their success is predicated on God's sustained favoritism.

articulate contemporary kingship in terms of Old Testament rulership, expressed in the language of Roman imperial power. The ideas thus formulated then served as a complex allegory for Christ's rule, in turn projected upon his chosen earthly representative, as the sole model worthy of emulation.¹¹⁰ Christomimesis' enduring appeal in the later medieval period (and beyond) owed much to its ability to be tailored to suit the needs of successive generations of influential elites and rulers, at times facing drastically different socio-political circumstances than the ones at play here. In addition, its lasting promotion among obliging courtiers and other intellectuals owed much to the opportunity it presented for at least the possibility of admonition.

Christomimesis should not be merely substituted for the *renovatio imperii* paradigm that has dominated scholarly discourse on early Carolingian political aspirations.¹¹¹ Such a simplistic approach would fail to account for the selective appropriation and sophisticated synthesis of a broad range of sources available to the discriminating Carolingian *intelligentsia*. The picture that emerged selectively combined aspects of the Roman imperial past, reframed in Christian terms as it applied to Old Testament examples of kingship, which ultimately operated as prefiguration of the true ruler, Christ the king. This model was promoted with some urgency at a period of Christian history where the fear of impending judgment, at the dawn of the year

¹¹⁰ This concept was not static, and minor or more significant reformulations and adjustments took place throughout the later medieval period to accommodate changing ideas and ideals and to suit socio-political contexts constantly in flux. Eric Miller's concluding chapter dwells on the post-Carolingian occurrences of this principle. See also Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Theology*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) [1957], especially Chapter III, *Christ-Centered Kingship*, pp. 42-86.

¹¹¹ Chapter 1's problematization of the renaissance paradigm already established the dangers of relying exclusively on a narrow interpretative model.

800/6000, was particularly tangible. Alcuin's own eschatological anxiety played a part in his pressing Charles to abide by the principles championed by this construct. Alcuin's promotion of Charles' imitation of Christ was rooted in his understanding of current events, including his frustration with the king's handling of the Saxon problem. In addition, by the mid 790's, Alcuin had reluctantly come to terms with the fact he would not only spend his twilight years as an expatriate, but also in exile from the royal court. The complex political and eschatological context unfolding in the last decade of the eighth century provides the background against which, not only this ideological construct, but by extension the design and contents of Trier 23, must be understood.

A Changing Political Landscape: The Closing Years of the Eighth Century.

This eventful decade witnessed the Franks' recovery from the fallout over Pope Hadrian's rejection of the *Opus Caroli Regis Contra Synodum*, commonly known as the *Libri Carolini*,¹¹² and their effective maneuvering to reclaim the title of defenders of orthodoxy through the determined and strategic quelling of Adoptionism, with Alcuin leading the charge.¹¹³ The Carolingians looked on as the Islamic Caliph, Harun al-Rashid

¹¹² *Opus Caroli Regis Contra Synodum*, ed. Ann Freeman, with Paul Meyvaert, *MGH*, (Hannover, 1998). See also Ann Freeman, "Carolingian Orthodoxy and the Fate of the Libri Carolini", *Viator* 16, (1985), pp. 65-108 and more recently, Thomas F. X. Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

¹¹³ John C. Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785-820*, The Middle Ages Series, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), argues that the Carolingian categorization of Adoptionism as a heresy reflects a profound misunderstanding of the specific circumstances of its formulation, in Islamic occupied Spain, and the nuances of its claims which evinces a divide between East and West and lingering bitterness over the outcome of the image controversy as transpires in Alcuin's efforts to connect Adoptionism with Nestorianism. As will be suggested in this

(d.809), with whom they maintained diplomatic ties,¹¹⁴ solidified his power, mostly at the expense of the increasingly vulnerable Roman Empire. Constantinople was already under duress after the precarious and only temporary restoration of images following the first wave of iconoclasm. Irene's (d.803) polarizing takeover of the imperial throne in 797 only exacerbated this internal unease. Frankish self-interest would lead to their perception of Irene's claim to the imperial throne as a vacancy, as implied in one of Alcuin's own letters, quoted below.¹¹⁵

In sharp contrast to this unstable foreign backdrop, Frankish confidence was bolstered by the territorial and economic gains brought on by Charles' annexation of Bavaria in 788, following a lengthy diplomatic campaign. This enabled the subsequent staging of his army for further strategic deployment, resulting in the lucrative defeat of the Avars, and seizing of their rich treasury. This military victory was greatly facilitated by a reprieve of the hostilities with the Saxons. Frankish intervention in the rescue and

dissertation, the resolve to crush this supposed heresy owed much to the Carolingians' desire to showcase their orthodoxy and status of defenders of the faith damaged by Pope Hadrian's rejection of the *Opus Caroli*.

¹¹⁴ Einhard emphasizes Charles and Harun's friendly relationship and extols its benefits in the mention of all the luxurious and exotic presents the caliph gifted Charlemagne, (Chapter 16). For more scholarly assessments of this claim, see Steven Runciman, "Charlemagne and Palestine," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 50, No. 200 (Oct. 1935), pp. 606-619. The *Annales Regni Francorum* (RFA) entry for 801 references the Caliph as Aaron, thus creating a Charles/Moses counterpart which is most befitting the casting of the Frankish ruler as the leader of the new Chosen people. See Mary Garrison, "The Franks as the New Israel?" in Yitzhak Hen & Matthew Innes eds., *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.114-161. As this chapter demonstrates this concept of having been selected to carry out God's plan only gained more traction in the 780's and 790's.

¹¹⁵ Irene became regent (780-797) upon her husband's death and then assumed the imperial title (797-802). Claims that a possible union between Charlemagne and Irene was ever seriously considered are doubtful.

reinstatement of Pope Leo III, in keeping with the long-standing accord guaranteeing Carolingian assistance to the papacy, inaugurated in the mid eighth century by Charlemagne's father Pippin, set the stage for the events of Christmas day 800, but most significantly, readjusted the balance of powers.¹¹⁶

Continued Frankish success confirmed lasting divine approval and support of Charlemagne's leadership, which in turn reinforced Alcuin's determination to encourage Charles to model his behavior on Christ, the sole suitable model of kingship. Alcuin recognized the Frankish king as the earthly ruler tasked by God to assemble the various peoples of the world under his Christian leadership in anticipation of the Day of Judgment. Charles' own motivations were likely altogether more practical and self-serving, yet, his genuine concern and interest in spreading Christianity should not be doubted.¹¹⁷ Alcuin's encouragement of pastoral duties appears as the subtext of the four

¹¹⁶ Henry Mayr-Harting has conjectured that obtaining the imperial title was necessary to justifying Charlemagne's takeover of Saxony, in "Charlemagne, the Saxons and the Imperial Coronation of 800," *The English Historical Review*, Vol.111, No. 444 (Nov. 1996), pp. 1113-1133. The planning, unfolding and significance of the imperial coronation of 800 have long occupied medieval and later historians. Einhard's claims that Charles was taken by surprise have been mostly discredited as a humility trope, although I believe that the ceremony's unfolding, openly empowering the pope may not have been to Charles' liking. In addition, was it purposely intended as an affront to Irene, whose legitimacy was consequently challenged, or was it directed at Harun, whose Caliph title found a counterpart in the imperial, "King of Kings" status? The history altering event that the coronation is sometimes posited or assumed to have been must be mitigated by the realization that very little if anything seems to have changed and Charles never returned to Rome.

¹¹⁷ James Palmer attempts to identify various ideas and perceptions of "Others" in the use of this term and its categorization of sometimes different, local customs and practices, not necessarily "pagan" but rather "incorrect" in the eyes of the more pious Christian observers, "Defining Paganism in the Carolingian World", *Early Medieval Europe*, 2007, 15 (4), 402-425. Charles' own piety and religiosity is difficult to ascertain and Einhard's recollections of Charles' almost monastic devotion must be reconciled with his "irregular" private life and his duties as a warlord.

lives of saints he redacted while in Francia, and the overt emphasis of his reworking of the life of his relative Willibrord, (785-97).¹¹⁸

Chapter 1 problematized the limitations and distortions stemming from the unmitigated acceptance of a “renaissance” as the dominant interpretative paradigm for the Carolingian period. Charles’ supposed motivation to revive the Roman imperial past, even when nuanced by Richard Krautheimer’s advocacy for a more guided emphasis on Constantine, as the sole suitable Christian exemplar, unsatisfactorily accounts for the range and diversity of the preserved evidence. References to Old Testament kings including Solomon and Joshua¹¹⁹ have supplemented the explicit parallel with David,

¹¹⁸ The *Vita*’s dating reflects the fact that it was commissioned by Beornard, abbot of Echternach whose tenure span the years 785-797. It is a reworking of earlier sources presented in prose and in verse form. *Vita sancti Vedasti Episcopi Altrebatensis*, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, III, pp.414-27), *Vita sancti Richarii Confessoris Centulensis* (MGH, *Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, IV, pp.381-401) (Ed. B. Krusch), *Vita sancti Willibrordi Traiectensis episcopi* (W. Levison, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, VII, pp.81-141) and *Vita Sancti Martini Turonensis*, (Migne, PL 101, Cols. 657-64).

¹¹⁹ Solomon and David already appeared as preferred models of kingship in letters addressed to early Frankish rules, and Yitzhak Hen has demonstrated that articulations of kingship even in that early period were deeply infused with overt Christian references, allusions and parallels which evinced the special status of the Frankish leaders, “The uses of the Bible and the perception of kingship in Merovingian Gaul,” *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1998), pp. 277-290. Alcuin specifically equates Charles to Solomon and highlights their shared wisdom and generosity in a letter dated to the late 790s, (#145 in MGH and #78 in Allott) Incidentally, Alcuin also quotes from Vergil’s *Ecloges* at the end of that same letter, Allott, *Letters*, p.94. The identification with Joshua occurs in the prologue to the *Admonitio Generalis*, promulgated from Aachen in 789, for which see Mordek, Hubert, Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, and Michael Glatthaar, eds. *Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Großen*, MGH, *Fontes iuris germanici antiqui in usum scholarum separatim editi* 16. (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2012). Dorine van Espelo advanced that the *Admonitio*’s goal was to “transform society according to Christian principles that were shaped in Roman fashion,” in “A testimony of Carolingian rule? The *Codex epistolaris carolinus*, its historical context, and the meaning of imperium,” *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2013), pp.254-282 (p.262). The *Codex Carolinus* is a collection of papal letters sent to the Carolingian from the period of

Charles' own nickname, and confirmed this Carolingian predilection. Yet, these quests for models have overlooked the escalating Christomimetic tenets of Alcuin and others' discourse in the closing years of the eighth century. Eric Miller's systematic investigation of this concept's promotion in the Carolingian period highlights how patristic authors and early medieval exegetes applied allegory to their interpretations of the biblical sources to reveal increasingly more complex and multilayered articulations of this governing principle.¹²⁰ These commentaries point to Christ as the ultimate ruler celebrated in these elucidated prefigurations, and as such, as the sole suitable model of kingship.

From Emulation to Exaltation: Christomimesis as Model of Kingship

Hans Hubert Anton's Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos in der Karolingerzeit,¹²¹ published in 1968, long remained the most comprehensive study of models of rulership in this period. In 1980, Robert Deshman remarked in a footnote to his important article "The Exalted Servant: The Ruler Theology of The Prayerbook of Charles the Bald"¹²² that, "[i]t is revealing that in his excellent book on Carolingian ruler theology, Anton does not include Christ among the Carolingian *exempla regis*."¹²³ Deshman's work rectified

Charles Martel's rule through 791. Donal Bullough, "*Aula Renovata*: the Court before the Aachen Palace", Carolingian Renewal: sources and heritage, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), p.143.

¹²⁰ Miller, Politics, pp. 97ff

¹²¹ Hans Hubert Anton, Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos in der Karolingerzeit, Bonner Historische Forschungen, 32, (Bonn: Ludwig Röhrscheid, 1968).

¹²² Viator, Vol.11 (1980), pp. 385-417.

¹²³ Deshman, Exalted Servant, p.414. I am perplexed by Deshman's use of the word "revealing." Does he imply that the *Renovatio Imperi* paradigm was so dominant that no

Anton's omission and hypothesized that the Prayerbook of Charles the Bald, dated perhaps to the 860's,¹²⁴ and marked a turning point in the development of the concept of christomimetic kingship, which blossomed in the subsequent Ottonian period. Deshman's discussion highlights the Prayerbook's presentation of the Frankish king's humility in imitation of Christ, leading to their respective exaltation. In the only illumination, the kneeling ruler reaches across the gutter to the crucified Savior on the facing folio, [Figure 7] asking that Christ forgive "my wounds". The opening's composition and interplay of word and image parallel the two kings' sacrifice, humility and acceptance of their duties and fates.¹²⁵ The manuscript's elaborate ivory covers further contribute to this multidimensional articulation of rulership by means of their depiction of select scenes from the penitential psalms. According to Deshman, these selections stress the identification of king David with Christ, further explaining, that, "whether Charles the Bald chose to pattern his rule after the kingship of David or Christ, the ideal of kingship to be emulated was largely the same."¹²⁶

one considered other ideals might be at play or that scholars have overlooked evidence that did not corroborate this view?

¹²⁴ Deshman places it between 846 and 869, *Exalted Servant*, p. 385. Nees favors a date in the 860's, *Early Medieval Art*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 171.

¹²⁵ According to Deshman, the themes of humility and penitence at the core of the Prayerbook's message developed in the penitential psalms. The 'devotional psalms,' 24, 26 and 56, (p.406) selected to grace the Prayerbook's ivory covers, articulated the duty of a king as the conflation or dual role of 'officium and ministerium' (p.407). This particular selection recalls Alcuin, who followed Cassiodorus' categorization of seven psalms as penitential in nature and content. "*Septem psalmi poenitentiae*" which further inspired his "*De virtutibus et vitiis*" as will be discussed below. See Donald Bullough, "Alcuin and the Kingdom of Heaven: liturgy, theology, and the Carolingian age", in *Carolingian Renewal*, p. 173, and Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

However, this parallelism already graced the pages of the so-called First Bible of Charles the Bald, (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS lat.1), commissioned by count Vivian, it was created at Tours in the mid ninth century (845-6),¹²⁷ and thus predates the Prayerbook. The anticipated reader, and recipient, Charles the Bald, appears on the last decorated folio, as the culmination of a sequence identifying him with David and Christ, in a succession of frontispieces where their corresponding roles and status as leaders of God's people is enhanced through their shared facial features, crowns and positioning at the center of their respective compositions. [Figures 8, 9, 10]

Charles the Bald's appropriation of his grandfather and namesake's legacy also transpires in the Prayerbook's contents, which include the "Confessio peccaturam pura" (4v-5v), a penitential prayer Alcuin composed for Charlemagne. The later Charles aspired to learn and benefit from the advice and cautionary insights, which had so well served and guided his grandfather. The prayer's Alcuinian authorship has been recognized and was known to the Prayerbook's creators, as the presence of the titulus

¹²⁶ Deshman, *Exalted Servant*, p.413. "...an exalted office that paradoxically could be attained and held with honoring glory only through the utmost humility and self-restraint before God and the people, a devoted and dutiful service to Christ and the Church that required the ruler as *defensor* to continue Christianity's ancient struggle to conquer Satan and other evil enemies." The emphasis on an almost perpetual engagement with the forces of evil resonated in light of the fact that war was a nearly constant preoccupation for an early medieval ruler. The prayerbook's encouragement to practice penitence and humility insured that the other half of this double-sided duty was practiced.

¹²⁷ This elaborate manuscript's texts and images and its context of creation have been closely investigated by Paul Edward Dutton and Herbert L. Kessler in *The Poetry and paintings of the first bible of Charles the Bald*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997).

*Confessio quam Alcuinus composuit Carolo Imperator*¹²⁸ attests and further testifies to the later Carolingian awareness of the circumstances surrounding its composition.

Alcuin's *Confessio* echoes his treatise on the seven penitential psalms, and reflects upon the kingships of David and Christ. Its message reflects Alcuin's other writings whether addressed directly to Charles, whom he referred to as "David", as in the question and answer exchange known as *Disputatio De Rhetorica et de Virtutibus Sapientissimi Regis Karli et Albini Magistri*,¹²⁹ dated to the mid 790's, or indirectly, as in his later tract *De Virtutibus et Vitiis*,¹³⁰ which Liutpold Wallach identified as an early form of *Speculum Principis*.¹³¹ The *De Rhetorica* engages the king and his teacher in a lengthy discussion, where the king's erudition, reasoning and logic are highlighted. The work focuses on rightful conduct and virtues, essential qualities of a good ruler, which Charles is implied to possess. Wallach claimed that the ultimate purpose of the piece was to champion the king's mores, which his subjects were expected to not only recognize and praise but also emulate. Matthew Kempshall has favored a more nuanced reading,

¹²⁸ Bullough, *Heaven*, p.170. Bullough highlights the candor with which Charlemagne's close advisors and friends pointed out the ruler's flaws and admonished him. *Clavis* (ALC 16), pp.119-121.

¹²⁹ *The Rhetoric of Alcuin & Charlemagne*, ed. by Wilbur Samuel Howell, (New York: Russell & Russell, (1941), 1965).

¹³⁰ *De Virtutibus et Vitiis*, Migne, PL 101, Cols. 613-639. Liutpold Wallach, "Alcuin on Virtues and Vices: A Manual for a Carolingian Solider," *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Jul., 1955), pp. 175-195.

¹³¹ Wallach, *Virtues*, p. 175. If that is indeed its purpose, it would pre-date the earliest recognized *Speculum Principis*, in the early ninth century *Via Regia* of Smaragdus of St. Mihiel, Miller, *Politics*, p.134. J.M Wallace-Hadrill, views Smaragus as an exception to what he perceives to be a Theocentric construct of kingship which he contrasts to Ottonian christomimesis. "The Via Regia of the Carolingian Age", *Trends in Medieval Political Thought*, edited by Beryl Smalley (New York: Barnes & Nobles, 1965), p. 24.

concluding that Alcuin aimed to establish that rhetoric, when practiced effectively, promoted philosophy and by extension wisdom, essential to the moral and virtuous pursuits of a Christian life.¹³² Alcuin's treatise on virtues and vices, intended for Wido, a high ranking military officer,¹³³ and likely written at his request in 799-800, elucidates the soldier's concerns about living a Christian life and consequently addresses issues relating to wisdom, humility, and charity. As warlord, the king would have been expected to abide by the same essential principles.

Alcuin's *Confessio* is especially indebted to the exegetical work of Cassiodorus and as such shares its Christological emphasis.¹³⁴ Cassiodorus' interpretation of the psalms formulates Christ's dominion in light of David's kingship. His exegesis informed the design of two, of the likely three, original full-page miniatures, found in the oldest extant version of this text, albeit abbreviated, in a manuscript now in Durham, dated to c.730.¹³⁵ David first appears as victor, trampling a two-headed serpent.¹³⁶ [Figures 11]

¹³² Matthew S. Kempshall, "The virtues of rhetoric: Alcuin's *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus*", *Anglo-Saxon England* 37, (December 2008), pp. 1-30.

¹³³ Count Wido appears in the entry for 799 in the Royal Frankish Annals, where it is recorded that he was "commander of the Breton March" and that he succeeded in conquering Brittany and then presented the spoils of war to his king Charlemagne. *Carolingian Chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Histories*, translated by Bernhard Walter Scholz with Barbara Rogers, (Ann Arbor Paperbacks: The University of Michigan Press, 1972), p.78. Alcuin mentions Wido in a letter to Charlemagne where he praises the Count as a "sound man, honest judge and loyal emissary", (Ep. 249 in *MGH*), Allott, *Letters*, letter 116, p. 123.

¹³⁴ Jonathan Black, "Psalm Uses in Carolingian Prayerbooks: Alcuin's *Confessio Peccatorum Pura* and The Seven Penitential Psalms (Use 1)", *Mediaeval Studies* 65, (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2003), p. 1-56.

¹³⁵ Durham, Cathedral Library, MS B. II. 30, traditionally dated to the eighth century. Laura E. Cochrane, "The wine in the vines and the Foliage in the Roots": Representations of David in the Durham Cassiodorus", *Studies in Iconography* 28 (2007), pp.23-50.

This composition echoes representations of the victorious Christ, triumphing over the forces of evil. Relatively rare in late antiquity, this imagery was a favored subject of Carolingian artists, as transpires from the numerous depictions of Christ trampling the beasts based on Psalm 91:13 “Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample underfoot the lion and the dragon.”¹³⁷

The second depiction visually transcribes Cassiodorus’ argument in the author portrait, where David, enthroned, plays the lyre.¹³⁸ [Figure 12] Two disks inscribed with the tituli *David* and *Rex* flank his head, while three lines, now faded, transform his nimbus into a cruciform halo. These subtle iconographic elements contribute to the images’ duality. The enthroned and triumphant King David is not simply cast in the role of forerunner to Christ, the one true king. The iconography purposely communicates their synchronic presence; through David, one sees Christ, the true and ever present focus of the psalms.¹³⁹ Cochrane’s close visual analysis of these two miniatures demonstrates a

Cochrane suggests that a third miniature, now lost, likely completed the decorative program currently comprising two multi-layered depictions of David ahead of psalm 51 and 101. Cochrane has convincingly demonstrated that the key to unpacking the unique iconography of the two remaining images in this much abbreviated version is found in the truncated passages and as such establishes the creator’s familiarity with and access to the complete work.

¹³⁶ Preceding Cassiodorus’ *Expositio* on psalm 101.

¹³⁷ Depictions of the *Miles Christi* can be found for example on the ivory gracing the front of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Douce 176, *Karl der Grosse* (Aachen, 1965), fig. 95, cat. 519; the front cover of the Lorsch Gospels, now in Vatican, Museo Sacro, fig. 96, cat. 521; and in the Goenels Elderen ivory now in Bruxelles, Musées d’Art et d’Histoire, fig. 104, cat 534.

¹³⁸ It appears on folio 81v, preceding the interpretation of psalm 51 (50).

¹³⁹ Cochrane, *Vines*, p. 36 stresses that, “David denotes Christ” and again that all must be viewed as referring to the heavenly ruler.

conscious stylistic contrast between the two figures.¹⁴⁰ More subtle, but equally compelling is her observation that the letter ‘d’ at the end of the word “David” unusually wraps back over the preceding letters, in a manner more akin to abbreviations, and thus possibly communicates that through this depiction of King David, one is meant to understand Christ’s presence.¹⁴¹ This complex iconographic assemblage implies that Christ’s coming and rule are not only foretold in David’s psalms, but his very presence is already implied, and it is Christ who speaks through David.¹⁴² This essential assimilation and synchronicity must have appealed to Alcuin, for it could be extended to Charles, the current King David, himself also “christus,” the anointed one,¹⁴³ and current heir to the leadership of Christendom. In this context, the presence at the very start of Trier 23 of Alcuin’s commentary on Christ’s ancestors, and its focus on the uninterrupted transmission of the royal priesthood shared by Christ and David, is revealing.

Challenges and Threats: Toward a Formulation of The Divine Rule of Kings.

Alcuin exploited current events to bolster his advocacy of Christomimetic kingship by interpreting the changing political context through the sole relevant filter,

¹⁴⁰ Cochrane, *Vines*, p. 28.

¹⁴¹ Cochrane, *Vines*, p. 36.

¹⁴² Cochrane, *Vines*, p. 35.

¹⁴³ This additional parallel between Christ and the twice-anointed Carolingian rulers will be revisited. Robert Deshman, “Otto II and the Warmund Sacramentary: A Study in Political Theology,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 34 Bd., H.1 (1971), pp. 1-20. Deshman addresses the tangled web of symbolic associations engendered by the baptismal anointing and the coronation anointing that befell Carolingian rulers and how it emphasized their partaking on a deeper level than just other members of the Church, into Christ’s status as *rex et sacerdos*.

that of universal history and Christian salvation.¹⁴⁴ Whether he would have been as pressing with his agenda under different circumstances cannot be ascertained. One can suppose that he would have persevered in encouraging the king to follow a more gentle approach to conversion, and pressured the ruler to show wisdom, mercy and generosity toward the various peoples he was privileged to lead. Yet, a more stable environment might not have granted the Frankish elite the opportunity to enact this nascent ideology and leave behind most of the evidence discussed here.

Charles' father Pippin (d.768), mindful of residual resentment, and precarious loyalties, prompted by his usurpation of the Frankish throne from the Merovingian line, made provisions to ease the transition of power to his two sons, at a time when dynastic succession was not automatic.¹⁴⁵ In a conscious departure from Merovingian custom, Charles and Carloman had been jointly anointed, in an echo of Old Testament practice, and a reflection of Christ, the anointed king of kings, thus deliberately aligning the Carolingian ruling line with these biblical parallels.¹⁴⁶ As Eric Miller has noted, Eusebius

¹⁴⁴ Philippe Depreux stresses that this dynamics was equally at play with regard to the past, itself decrypted in light of the unfolding of salvation history. "Ambitions et limites des réformes culturelles à l'époque carolingienne, *Revue historique* 623 (2002/3), p.742.

¹⁴⁵ Rosamond McKitterick additionally noted that there is no evidence the Merovingians ever elevated more than one king to the throne at any given time and as such the break with tradition already occasioned by the dynastic change was further enhanced by the accession of both Pippin's sons to the status of kings. *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 78.

¹⁴⁶ The RFA entry for 754 records that "Pope Stephen confirmed Pepin as king by holy anointing and with him he anointed as kings his two sons, the Lords Charles and Carloman." *Carolingian Chronicles*, p. 40. The wording "anointed as kings" is revealing for it implies that in a break from Frankish tradition and in a conscious alignment with biblical practice, only the pairing of coronation and anointing created legitimate Carolingian kings, whose privileged, elevated status among other earthly rulers is consequently strengthened. For a discussion of the Frankish ritual of royal anointing, see

emphasized how the ritual of anointing Old Testament kings must be understood as an anticipatory emulation of Christ. He writes:

The Hebrew name, “Christ,” was used to adorn not only those who have been honored with high priesthood and anointed with prepared olive oil for a symbolic purpose but also the kings, whom also the prophets at the divine call made to be imitation kinds of Christs (sic) by anointing, in as much as they bore in themselves types of the kingly and ruling power of the only true Christ, the divine Logos who royally rules over all... The true Christ is the only king of all creation.¹⁴⁷

Carolingian rulers uniquely experienced a double anointing, on the occasion of their baptism and at the time of their elevation to the throne, thus reinforcing this symbolic identification with Christ, and reminding their subjects, enemies and would be rivals of their divinely sanctioned right to rule.¹⁴⁸ Pope Stephen II’s anointing of Charles

Janet Nelson, noted that papal missives recorded in the *Codex Carolinus* reinforce the interpretation of post-baptism anointing, in accordance with Bede, that “the anointing of kings and priests in the Old Testament prefigured Christ, the Anointed One, who united the functions of king and priest...”, “The Lord’s anointed and the people’s choice: Carolingian royal ritual”, in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, edited by David Cannadine and Simon Price, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 153.

¹⁴⁷ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 1.3.7-8, quoted and translated by Eric Miller, *The Politics of Imitating Christ*, p. 92. Miller does not reference a specific Frankish manuscript for this excerpt of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, which was available in a Latin translation by Rufinus of Aquileia (Tyrannius Rufinus), (340-410), who supplements extensive details and information to the original text. As Rosamond McKitterick points out, the *Historia Ecclesiastica* was “the standard reference book for world chronology” and it started with Abraham, which provides a compelling parallel to the emphasis on God’s covenant with his chosen people and transmission of the royal priesthood in the commentary opening Trier 23. *History and Memory in the Carolingian World*, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 226ff, (esp. 237ff for the still ample manuscript evidence).

and Carloman, during an unprecedented journey north of the Alps, strengthened the symbiotic bond uniting the Carolingian line to the papacy, first established by Pope Zacharias' backing of Pippin's claim to the Frankish throne in 751. This momentous event broadcast God's support of the new royal line through the intermediary agency of his earthly representative. Trier 23's opening text, Alcuin's commentary on the genealogy of Christ, as it appears in Matthew's first chapter, resonates in light of this Carolingian practice. As Chapter 3 will reveal, the biblical passage celebrates God's covenant with his chosen people. As such, the perceived irregularities unfolding in the genealogy are potent reminders of God's ultimate control over the transmission of the royal priesthood and powerful precedents for the Carolingians' own takeover.

This deliberate biblical emulation primarily defined Carolingian monarchs as Christian kings, which they contrasted to their Merovingian predecessors, who, while also Christians, commemorated their heroic, albeit pagan origins in the symbolic use of oxen-pulled carts, notoriously mocked by Einhard.¹⁴⁹ These innovations were mitigated by the Carolingians' efforts not to alienate the Frankish people through further departure from tradition. As such, the annals record that the brothers' shared accession was sanctioned by popular acclamation, as was customary, and Pippin's territory divided between

¹⁴⁸ David Harry Miller, "Sacral Kingship, Biblical Kingship, and the elevation of Pepin the Short" in Religion, Culture and Society in the Early Middle Ages, Studies in Honors of Richard E. Sullivan, ed. Thomas F.X. Noble and John J. Contreni, (Kalamazoo, Western Michigan University: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), pp.131-154. Miller notes that the Carolingians purposely showcased their "divinely-favored" status and their role as leaders and "protectors of the church." (p.137), in sharp contrast to the Merovingians' own symbolic sacral kingship.

¹⁴⁹ Einhard's mocking of the Merovingians has often been readily accepted as factual, rather than a partisan account intended on aggrandizing the Carolingians. See Emily Wilson "The rise of the Carolingians or the decline of the Merovingians?" Access History, Vol.2, No.1, (1998), p.5-21

them.¹⁵⁰ The care taken to inscribe the new line of kings within long established traditions extended to the naming of Charles' children, including, alongside Carolingian family names such as Pippin and Carloman, names of Merovingian origins, masked by modern convention in English scholarship, such as Louis, a variation of Clovis, and in the next generation Lothair, a variant of Clothar.¹⁵¹

Regardless of any allegiance or deviations from perceived procedural norms, the promise of lasting stability was contingent on Charles' securing aristocratic loyalty through continued success on the field of battle. Ongoing military engagement, the primary occupation of an early medieval ruler, was an essential tool of self-aggrandizement, and actual locus of his power and authority, as it provided leverage through its economic repercussions and the promise of associative prosperity it offered the aristocracy. The brutality and even cruelty of war had to be reconciled with Charles' avowed Christian faith and papal support. As will be shown below, the pope did not hesitate from preemptively forgiving the shedding of blood, under certain circumstances. In addition, the call to spread the word of God could be claimed as the underlying impetus behind the eager conquest of pagan lands, a helpful, if not necessary step toward securing their inhabitants' conversions. This practical justification alleviated the burden

¹⁵⁰ The RFA record that "Charles and Carloman were raised to the kingship" and the entry for 769 explicitly state that Pippin's kingdom was divided between them, as does Einhard, (ch.3). McKitterick notes that it might be wrong to assume that they led territorially separate kingdoms, suggesting that this assumption may be fueled by the reports of disharmony between the two brothers. *Charlemagne* (2008), p. 78.

¹⁵¹ These variants and their subsequent French or German incarnations can be traced back to the Merovingian ruler name Clovis. His baptism in the late fifth century brought about the intersection of Frankish kingship and Christianity. For a discussion of Carolingian royal naming practices and their political and ideological significance, see Walter Goffart, "Paul the Deacon's 'Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium' and the Early Design of Charlemagne's Succession," *Traditio* 42 (1986), pp. 59-93.

occasioned by the deaths such campaigns unfailingly caused. Besides, Christ's battle against Satan and evil, and their eventual destruction, offered a compelling parallel to these earthly endeavors. This relatable aspect of Christ's identity is illustrated in the Carolingian predilection for representations of the Savior as a warrior, a *Miles Christi*.¹⁵²

Charlemagne's biographers, as well as contemporary and later annalists and chroniclers report a rift between the brothers soon after their shared accession to the Frankish throne, blaming Carloman's failure to honor their oath of mutual assistance. Whether Carloman instigated the tension, as sources suggest,¹⁵³ or was too weak-minded to resist the manipulations of greedy and ambitious aristocrats is uncertain. The remaining sources' allegiance to Charles silenced any suggestion that his ambition planted the seed of discord, or that the entire episode was pure fabrication, but this eventuality must be considered. The threat of a potential fragmentation of the kingdom and its subsequent vulnerability to a foreign invasion sufficed to justify the rapid quelling of the siblings' quarrel, particularly as the situation in Aquitaine remained unresolved. This scenario informs Einhard's characterization of the events. He pens Carloman as the easily manipulated instigator, whose untimely, yet fortuitous, death in 771, likely guided the biographer's conclusion that the threat may have been more imaginary than real.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Elizabeth Sears' offers a stimulating discussion of this motif as it relates to Charlemagne's son. "Louis the Pious as *Miles Christi*: The Dedicatory Image in Hrabanus's *De laudibus sanctae crucis*", in Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814-840), edited by Peter Godman and Roger Collins. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 605-628.

¹⁵³ Einhard claims that, "many of the partisans of Carloman did their best to break up the alliance, to the point that certain of them even plotted to engage the two in warfare." *Vita*, Ch.3.

With hindsight, implying that the king's late brother was thought of as a traitor could be damaging to Charles' character and reputation simply by association. Einhard quickly adds that Charles was subsequently "unanimously elected King of the Franks,"¹⁵⁵ hinting at the people's unconditional support for the better-qualified brother, to whom fate or providence had conspired to surrender sole control over the entire kingdom. The *Vita*'s referencing of Carloman's double betrayal, first, of the promise to his brother made in front of the Frankish people, further aggravated by its simultaneous disregard for his father's wishes, as well as the weakness displayed in giving in to external pressures, alludes to his unsuitability to rule. In contrast, Charles' steadfast character and lasting devotion to his father's memory emerges aggrandized. However, Charles' future dealings with ambitious relatives openly challenging his authority would not be so expeditiously resolved.

Intersecting genealogies wove a tangled web of Carolingian, Lombard and Bavarian destinies and fueled ambitions. This situation spawned various claims and nurtured perceived privileges and rights over titles and territories. Resolutions through

¹⁵⁴ The Codex Carolinus (Codex epistolaris carolinus, ed. W. Gundlach, MGH, Epistolae 3, Epistolae merovingici et karolini aevi I (Berlin, 1892), pp. 269-253 is a collection of ninety-nine papal letters to the Frankish monarchy and dating from 739-791 and compiled for Charlemagne in 791. It features a missive from pope Stephen III, addressed to both brothers and dated summer 770, it communicates the pontiff's rejoicing at the news that the brothers have resolved their misunderstanding and returned to "brotherly affection." The same letter openly reiterates their "God-instituted royal power" and reminds them of their pledged protectorate over the papacy. This reminder is likely informed by paper concerns over escalating tensions with the Lombards over territories and may reflect papal concerns over the news of an upcoming Franco-Lombard marriage. P.D. King, Charlemagne: Translated Sources, (1987), p.269.

¹⁵⁵ Einhard was evidently not a witness to these events and it is doubtful that he had access to many or any people with living memory of them. This convenient resolution could be viewed as a sign that divine providence watched over the welfare of the Frankish people, and favored their king, Charlemagne.

diplomatic negotiations or marital alliances often only temporarily deflected or postponed inevitable military interventions. All-out war was usually averted through lengthy sieges and exchange of hostages.¹⁵⁶

Papal correspondence documents a well-founded apprehension over a possible alliance between Franks and Lombards. The Lombard coveting of St Peter's territories could hardly be reconciled with the avowed Frankish protectorate over the papal state's welfare and autonomy. Pope Stephen III objected on legal and moral grounds to either Charles or Carloman marrying a daughter of the Lombard king Desiderius,¹⁵⁷ and reminded them both of the fact that they already had wives.¹⁵⁸ This Frankish attempt at a rapprochement with Desiderius involved a three-way settlement, seemingly also beneficial to the pope. The Moselle Annals' brief yet informative record for the year 770, report that Charles' mother, Bertrada, journeyed to Italy to meet with the Lombard

¹⁵⁶ The questionable effectiveness of this practice has been discussed by Roger Collins, Charlemagne, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), p. 49. This practice may explain why these successive submissions were so ineffective in achieving lasting order and peace. For a detailed discussions of the status, use and fate of hostages in the Carolingian world, see Adam J. Kosto, "Hostages in the Carolingian World (714-840)," Early Medieval Europe, 11/2 (2002), pp. 123-147.

¹⁵⁷ There is confusion over the identity of Carloman's wife and repudiated Lombard princess. Janet Nelson, "Making a difference in eighth-century politics: the daughters of Desiderius", in A. Murray (ed.), After Rome's Fall: Narrators and Sources of early Medieval History. Essays presented to Walter Goffart (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), pp. 171-90. Nelson speculates that Charles' first wife, the Lombard princess, Desiderata was actually Gerberga (believed to be Carloman's wife), this confusion is further perpetuated by papal letters and other sources which are inconsistent or vague and unclear. The RFA entry for 771 simply states that, "Carloman's wife with a few Franks departed for Italy." Carolingian Chronicles, p. 48. Meanwhile, as will be discussed below, another daughter of Desiderius, Liutperga made her way to Bavaria and wed Charles' cousin, Tassilo.

¹⁵⁸ King, Charlemagne, p. 271. The wife in question was Himiltrude whose status as a legitimate wife or concubine extended to her son Pippin (The Hunchback).

King.¹⁵⁹ This visit resulted in the successful negotiations of some cities' return under papal control and the possible arrival in Francia of a daughter of Desiderius.¹⁶⁰ The proposed agreement ultimately fell through, and Frankish-Lombard antagonism openly resumed. Following this diplomatic breakdown, Charles' army laid siege to Pavia, and by 774, Charles had dethroned Desiderius and appended *Rex Langobardorum* to his royal Frankish title.¹⁶¹

By 792, Charles had to settle yet another relative's challenge to his authority, when his illegitimate but oldest son, Pippin the Hunchback,¹⁶² aspired to claim for

¹⁵⁹ King, Charlemagne, p. 132. The RFA for the same year mention Bertrada travelling through Bavaria to Italy in search of peace, Carolingian Chronicles, p. 48.

¹⁶⁰ The Codex Carolinus preserves a letter to Charles and Bertrada dated 771 conveying papal concern and perplexity at the news of a Lombard-Frankish alliance through Charles and Desiderata's marriage, seemingly irreconcilable with the Frankish promise to defend papal interests. King, Charlemagne, p.275. Whether Bertrada's peace keeping effort included Tassilo is unclear, although the annals mention her travelling through Bavaria on her way to Italy. With hindsight, her potential promotion of a Lombard-Bavarian alliance would seem utterly misguided, although Roger Collins and others have suggested that Tassilo married Liutperga by 768. The evidence is conflicting and confusing. Nelson, as mentioned above in note 54, and Mc Kitterick, Charlemagne, p. 87, report that even contemporary sources confuse Charles' Lombard wife and Caroloman's widow, Gerberga who sought refuge at the court of Desiderius following her husband's death, possibly indicating her mistrust of her brother-in-law's intention with regard to herself and her children. Desiderius must have welcomed the prospect of housing the legitimate challenger to Charlemagne's authority. Nelson and Carl I. Hammer argue that the Lombard princess never arrived in Francia, an opinion reiterated by McKitterick, Charlemagne, p. 86. If we accept that Charles' intended and Tassilo's actual wife are the same woman, we are to believe that she reached Francia, where she may or may not have married Charles, was repudiated, travelled to Bavaria, negotiated with Tassilo whom she wed, and had a child baptized by pope Hadrian in Rome by 772.

¹⁶¹ Roger Collins remarks that "For one powerful kingdom to eliminate another militarily was highly unusual: it was even more surprising for the king of one people to take the title and monarchical role of that of another." in Charlemagne, p. 62. We may ponder whether this unusual development resulted from papal pressure.

himself his father's kingdom. The Lorsch Annals detail this scheme and report that following judgment in Regensburg, over an assembly of Christian people presided over by the king, the co-conspirators were executed, Pippin tonsured and sent to the family monastery at Prüm.¹⁶³ Einhard's version of events relies on formulaic accusations of treachery echoing those previously levied against Carloman, adding that Pippin cowardly plotted his coup while his father was once again engaging the Saxons.

This latest incident may have persuaded Charles to send a clear warning to any further challengers to his authority. This unequivocal message took the shape of Tassilo being administered a last humiliating public coup de grace at the Council of Frankfurt in 794.¹⁶⁴ In front of a large assembly of secular and religious leaders, presided over by Charlemagne, the already deposed Bavarian duke reaffirmed his admission of oath breaching, confessed his sins and relinquished any future Agilofling rights or claims over Bavaria, already effectively under Charles' control since 788. This unnecessary and intentionally demeaning display operated as a symbolic warning for others contemplating

¹⁶² Einhard's chapter 20 addresses Pippin the Hunchback's attempt to overthrow his father. Einhard acknowledges omitting him from his earlier discussion of Charles' children. This oversight owes much to Pippin's illegitimacy, exacerbated by his physical deformity, which could be viewed as an external proof of his moral failings and his unsuitability to assume the throne, ultimately confirmed in his attempted takeover in 792. In addition, by the 780's, Charles' son Carloman is baptized by the pope as the new Pippin, King of the Lombards. The RFA, entry for 781 records Carloman and Louis' baptism by Pope Hadrian in Rome, *Carolingian Chronicles*, p. 59.

¹⁶³ The Lorsch Annals entry for 792 inserts a biblical reference, equating Pippin's conspiracy with that of the wicked son of the Israelite king Gideon. King, *Charlemagne*, p.140.

¹⁶⁴ *Synodus franconofurthensis*, ed. A. Boretius, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I (Hanover, 1883).

defying Charles' authority, and, as will be shown below, was intended to sharply contrast Tassilo, the fallen bad ruler, and Charles, the successful, good one.¹⁶⁵

This ultimate public display closed the lengthy diplomatic campaign waged against the Bavarian duke. The resolve manifested by the Frankish annalists' determined exposure of Tassilo's wretched character, oath breaking, and blasphemous disregard for the sacred relics of the most illustrious Frankish saints, testifies to the validity and seriousness of the threat he represented.¹⁶⁶ Einhard describes Tassilo's demise as rightful retribution for his own "arrogance and folly."¹⁶⁷ Yet, Tassilo's ambitions were rooted in his family's standing, his lineage, connecting him to Charles Martel, Charlemagne's grandfather, and further buttressed by his marriage to the Lombard princess Liutperga, whose rank he exploited in the formulation of his "virtual 'royal' power".¹⁶⁸ Tassilo

¹⁶⁵ For a discussion of "bad" rulership as exemplified by the Merovingians in Carolingian sources, see Janet Nelson, "Bad Kingship in the Earlier Middle Ages", Haskins Society Journal 8 (1999), pp. 1-26. Reprinted in Court, Elites, and Gendered Power in the Early Middle Ages: Charlemagne and Others, (Ashgate/Variorum, 2007), VIII.

¹⁶⁶ On the Frankish historical record's notorious revisionist approach to its sources, see Collins, Charlemagne, p.3ff and McKitterick, Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages, (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2004). Collins proposes that the RFA were officially sponsored by the ruler as evinced in the convenient omission of certain unpleasant or damaging events, p.4 in contrast to McKitterick's interpretation. The Lorsch Annals stand out for a variety of reasons, while one of the earliest preserved historical records it does, as McKitterick points out "the text itself speaks with an interestingly independent voice." She notes instances of details of recollections or commentaries that are known to us only from this source, such as Pope Leo III kneeling in front of Charles at the coronation, as will be discussed below, or Irene's appropriation of the Imperial title in Constantinople being interpreted as a vacancy on the imperial throne. McKitterick, History and Memory in the Carolingian World, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.1 04ff.

¹⁶⁷ Einhard, Vita, Ch. 22.

could not be discarded and executed in a manner acceptable for the disposal of random foreign enemies. The Franks' response to the particular challenge Tassilo presented contributed to their complex articulation of the unique nature of Charles' kingship. Furthermore, as will be demonstrated, the Franks' familiarity and even appropriation of the duke's well-developed rhetoric of power played a crucial role in their own visual and textual fashioning of christomimesis as it applied to Charlemagne.

Tassilo and the Lasting Lombard Impertinence

Duke Tassilo III had ruled over Bavaria since 748, installed while still a young boy, following his uncle Pippin's deposition of Duke Grifo.¹⁶⁹ The annals stress his debt to Pippin, and accordingly position Tassilo as a vassal of the Frankish king and his sons, to whom in 757, we are told, he swore allegiance over the relics of the most prominent saints associated with Francia and the royal house: Denis, Rusticus, Eleutherius, Germanus and Martin.¹⁷⁰ Tassilo's subservient status, whether legitimate or the result of a

¹⁶⁸ Carl I. Hammer. *From Ducatus To Regnum: Ruling Bavaria Under the Merovingians and Early Carolingians*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007). See especially, "Our Cousin Tassilo", pp.137-200.

¹⁶⁹ The RFA entry for 748 states the Pippin deposed Grifo and installed Tassilo in his place as ruler over Bavaria. *Carolingian Chronicles*, p. 39.

¹⁷⁰ Sic confirmavit supradictus Tassilo supra corpus sancti Dionisii, Rustici et Eleutherii necnon et sancti Germani seu sancti Martini, ut omnibus diebus vitae eius sic conservaret, sicut sacramentis promiserat; sic et eius homines maiores natu, qui erant cum eo, firmaverunt, sicut dictum est, in locis superius nominatis quam et in aliis multis. RFA entry for 757, translated in *Carolingian Chronicles*, p. 42. This specific assemblage may have been the brainchild of the court Chaplain, Fulrad of St. Denis. Whether the sacred relics were brought to Compiègne, about forty miles north of Paris, where Tassilo took his oath, or he travelled to the various locations where they were kept in order to take his oath has been the subject of debate. On these conflicting reports see Philippe Depreux,

revisionist endeavor intent on flattering Pippin and validating Charles' actions, resurfaced in the late 780's to support accusations of a long-standing pattern of insolence and insubordination. Tassilo's conduct justified Charles' takeover of Bavaria, cast as a lawful repossession brought on by the duke's moral and behavioral failings. Only recently have Carl I. Hammer and Stuart Airlie suggested that the Carolingian spin-doctors' systematic vilification of Tassilo in the Frankish historical record was an intentional construct aimed at justifying on legal and moral grounds his inevitable and necessary removal rather than a dependable account of his ongoing defiance and Frankish forbearance.¹⁷¹

The allegations of Tassilo's repeated offenses and oath breaking began with the report of his cowardly desertion of Pippin during the Aquitaine campaign. His continued insubordination and disregard for the binding oaths he pronounced over the sacred relics stirred consecutive warnings and scolding, first in 763, then again in 781. By then, the matter is before the pope, where Charles opportunistically demanded that Tassilo's *missi* swear in their master's name, and without first consulting with him, that he would abide by the proposed accord.¹⁷² Charles anticipated they would not, or could not honor this

"Tassilon III et le roi des Francs: examen d'une vassalité controversée," Revue Historique 293 (1995), especially pp. 44ff.

¹⁷¹Stuart Airlie, "Narratives of Triumph and Rituals of Submission: Charlemagne's Mastering of Bavaria," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Sixth Series, Vol. 9 (1999), pp. 93-119. Airlie describes Charlemagne's strategy to gain control over Bavaria and rid himself of the legitimate and dangerous challenge to his authority posed by Tassilo as "ruthlessly skillful", p. 94.

¹⁷² This event is recorded in the RFA entry for 787. Carolingian Chronicles, p.65. The following year's records confirm that Charles and the Pope's mistrust were warranted as Tassilo, we are told, admitted that "When his people took oaths, he told them to make mental reservations and swear falsely. What is worse, he confessed to having said that even if he had ten sons, he would rather have them all perish than keep the agreements and stand by what he had sworn." Carolingian Chronicles, p. 66.

request, which he and the pope could then freely interpret as evidence of Tassilo's reluctance to resolve the matter peacefully.¹⁷³ The St Amand Annals record pope Hadrian warning Tassilo that this refusal rendered Charles and his army non-accountable for the blood shed should they decide to intervene militarily.¹⁷⁴ This episode exposes Charles' desire to be vindicated by the pope and to further assign to Tassilo full responsibility for his people's suffering.¹⁷⁵ These allegations cumulatively operate as preemptive justifications, and create a legal smokescreen underscoring the credibility of the threat posed by Tassilo. Only after the duke was neutralized did Charles acknowledge their consanguinity; the basis for sparing his deposed cousin's life, and an opportunity to once again showcase his own goodness, generosity and mercy. Rumors of Tassilo seeking an alliance with the rich, powerful Avars, overtly recorded in the Royal Frankish Annals, possibly laid the foundation for Charles' subsequent advance into their territory, although their wealth likely offered enough of an incentive.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ King, Charlemagne, p.155ff. The *Chesne fragment* for 787, states that Tassilo sought out papal assistance in brokering peace, but as the legates did not agree to abide by the proposed accord, "Hadrian bound him in the chains of anathema", King, Charlemagne, p. 155

¹⁷⁴ The St Amand Annals, entry for 781, and the earlier Metz Annals for the same year report Tassilo showing up at Worms following Charles' summon and note that he brought many gifts. King, Charlemagne, p.153

¹⁷⁵ This calculated move was equivalent to "washing his hands off" the Bavarian people's potential hardship and suffering should the situation deteriorate into all out war.

¹⁷⁶ RFA entry for 788 cites that "Tassilo confessed ... that he had made overtures to the Avars." Carolingian Chronicles, p. 66. Interestingly Charles' subsequent defeat of the Avars is presented in the Annals as a Christian defeat of the pagans, stating that, "... since they were protected by the Lord the Christians won the victory." Carolingian Chronicles, p. 67.

In the absence of an officially sanctioned Bavarian equivalent to the partisan perspective presented in the various Frankish annals, due to accidents of preservation, destruction, or simply because such records were never kept, our understanding of these crucial events remains speculative. Various luxury objects, which Tassilo patronized, offer compelling evidence of the duke's ambitious rhetoric of power and support Charles' resolve to neutralize this credible threat. Charles's familiarity with this carefully crafted visual propaganda prior to the duke's demise is difficult to establish, although he may have gained insight into his cousin's aspirations via his contacts with *missi* and other envoys such as Arno, who navigated in both their court milieus.¹⁷⁷ Upon Tassilo's deposition, the annals tell us that Charles sent envoys to Bavaria to seize his cousin's "household and treasures."¹⁷⁸ At least one private devotional object, likely part of this loot, can be securely located in Carolingian hands by the early 790's, the psalter, now in Montpellier, that will be addressed below.

Charles' interest in Bavaria rested on more than his eagerness to stifle his cousin's ambition. The region was home to important primary resources, such as salt, and

¹⁷⁷ Arno's career does not appear to have been negatively impacted by his earlier association with Tassilo, as his elevation to the Archbishopric of Salzburg attests. Arno's documented friendship with Alcuin may have also played a part in his seemingly effortless transition from Bavarian to Carolingian service, although Charlemagne recognized an asset when he saw one. In addition, it is possible that Arno had been directly involved in the manufacturing of the objects discussed below and advised Tassilo on the formulation of his "virtual royal power".

¹⁷⁸ The St. Nazarius Annals entry for 788 indicate that Charles purposely dispatched some of his men to seize Tassilo's "treasures and household", quoted in Airlie, Triumph, p.111. The annalist also compares God's intervention in bringing about the fortuitous conclusion of the Bavarian situation to His parting the Red Sea to allow Moses and the Children of Israel to escape Pharaoh, King, Charlemagne, pp. 156-157.

occupied an enviable place at the crossroads of major communication thoroughfares.¹⁷⁹ These economic advantages contributed to Tassilo's power and secured aristocratic loyalties and could potentially destabilize the Frankish royal house. In addition, Tassilo and his eldest son Theodo existed at the intersection of Frankish, Lombard and Bavarian ruling lines and could reasonably lay claim over many of the territories currently under Charles' control. Whether the Frankish ruler calculatedly demanded Theodo be one of the hostages sent by Tassilo during the crisis of 787/8, or as the RFA report Tassilo "added as a thirteenth [hostage] his son Theodo"¹⁸⁰ as a gesture of goodwill or due to pressure, Theodo's surrender preemptively averted a potential rallying of Bavarian nobles behind the son should Charles' treatment of the father be deemed unacceptable.

Tassilo's envisioned rulership exploited the long-standing entente uniting Bavaria and the Lombard ruling house, dating back to the time of Theodelinda (d.628), the Bavarian spouse of two consecutive Lombard rulers, who enjoyed a close rapport with Pope Gregory the Great.¹⁸¹ Tassilo's decision to take the infant Theodo to Rome in 772, just two years before Charlemagne's invasion of Italy and termination of the independent Lombard Kingdom, to be baptized by pope Hadrian, marks a concerted effort to rekindle cordial dealings with the papacy, rightfully suspicious of the Lombard family and their

¹⁷⁹ Collins exposes clearly the multi-faceted economic and strategic appeal Bavaria presented. Neutralizing Tassilo was a bonus. *Charlemagne*, p.77ff.

¹⁸⁰ RFA, 787 entry, *Carolingian Chronicles*, p. 65. A Bavarian ruler name, Theodo achieved full Bavarian independence from the Franks in the late 7th - early 8th century and this selection of patronym was likely not accidental.

¹⁸¹ Theodelinda first wed Authari (d. 590), then she married Agilulf (d.616). Her artistic patronage has been well documented, as evinced in the lavish book covers featuring ancient cameos, (*Karl der Grosse*, fig. 15, cat. 218) alongside the jeweled crosses and votive crowns with which she and Agilulf are associated. In addition she founded a monastery dedicated to John the Baptist in Monza.

allies. This event conjures memories of the papal anointing of Charles and Carloman at St. Denis in 754, and hints at Tassilo's plan to disrupt that relationship.¹⁸² This calculated maneuver coincided with Tassilo's conquest of the pagan Carinthians, whom he endeavored to have converted to Christianity, mirroring Charles' efforts in Saxony, and pleasing the pope. Both rulers were also the recipients of unsolicited advice, on the part of Clemens Peregrinus in the case of Tassilo, and Cathwulf for Charlemagne.¹⁸³ Mary Garrison writes that both men received "a remarkable, idiosyncratic and thoroughly biblical letter of admonition and exhortation by an otherwise unknown writer."¹⁸⁴ The authors, both generally considered as Insular *Peregrini*, articulated the duties, responsibilities, and burdens of Christian rulership through specific biblical references and models.¹⁸⁵ The cousins' parallel trajectories extended to their respective endowment

¹⁸² Charlemagne would in turn take his sons Carloman and Louis to Rome to be baptized by their godfather, Pope Hadrian in 781, as commemorated in the Godescalc Evangelistary colophon.

¹⁸³ Mary Garrison, "Letters to a king and biblical exempla, the examples of Cathuulf and Clemens Peregrinus," *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol.7, Issue 3, (1998), pp. 305-328, and Joanna Story, "Cathwulf, Kingship, and the Royal Abbey of Saint-Denis," *Speculum*, Vol. 74, No.1 (Jan. 1999), pp.1-21. Rob Meens noted that the letter was known to Alcuin on the basis of a letter sent in 793 to King Æthelred of Northumbria, which indicates that he had "read that good kingship brings benefits to the whole people, victory to the army, good weather, abundance from the earth, the benediction of children and good health." "Politics, mirrors of princes and the Bible: sins, kings and the well-being of the realm" *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1998), p. 354, Dümmler, # 503, and Allott, *Letters*, letter 13, pp. 20-23.

¹⁸⁴ Garrison, *Exempla*, p.305. These parallel situations indicate that for at least a moment, both men showed promise for effective Christian leadership. The Frankish destiny constructed in the sources, and often accepted in the secondary literature masks this reality.

¹⁸⁵ The biblical parallels expectedly include Abraham, Moses and Joshua, whose faith in God allowed them to lead their people to victory and prosperity. Garrison, *Exempla*, p. 308.

of churches and foundation of monasteries. The troubling news of a possible détente in Bavarian- papal relations triggered a Frankish response, and likely contributed to prompting Charlemagne's annexation of the Lombard kingdom in 774.

Whether Tassilo aspired to reclaim for himself, or his son, the Lombard royal throne, awarded by Charles to his son Pippin in 781, is unclear. The Annals' entries for the years 787/88 indicate an escalation of the number and gravity of the accusations levied against Tassilo. The duke's disregard for the oath he supposedly swore over the relics of the most prominent Frankish saints, perceived as an offense not only to these very special dead, but also as an insult to the Franks who worship them, was revisited upon his being summoned to appear before his lord Charles. Tassilo obliged, yet this action only temporarily delayed his inevitable deposition following a trial in Regensburg, which provided at least the illusion of justice.¹⁸⁶ He was subsequently tonsured, and only resurfaced in 794 at the Council of Frankfurt to make one last, carefully orchestrated, public appearance.

We may rightfully wonder why if the various charges levied against Tassilo were even only partially legitimate, then why did Charles tolerate his cousin's impertinence and delay his intervention for so long, as the essence of his offenses remained the same. In 771, engaging Tassilo may have been a costly distraction for a newly minted sole ruler of the Franks, whose attention and army were already engaged elsewhere. The Lorsch Annals imply that Tassilo was granted countless opportunities to make amends for his

¹⁸⁶ The RFA entry for 788 records that the consensus was to put Tassilo to death for treason, but Charlemagne, in his great mercy intervened to spare the life of his relative. *Carolingian Chronicles*, p. 66.

behavior, but chose to disregard all warnings, including the pope's.¹⁸⁷ This recorded emphasis, benefitting from hindsight, showcases Charles' patience and mercy, two vital qualities a good, Christ-like ruler was expected to exhibit.¹⁸⁸ The St. Nazarius Annals (787) and the RFA lay much of the blame at the foot of Tassilo's "wicked wife", the Lombard Liutperga who, it is implied, must have harbored some deeply rooted familial resentment toward Charles, as the impetus behind her husband's insubordination, while recalling that Charles did not conquer Bavaria as much as reclaim the land his father had entrusted to the duke.¹⁸⁹ This accusation has the advantage of also tarnishing Tassilo's reputation by implying he was susceptible to being manipulated by his wife, thus revealing a fundamental weakness of character. Charlemagne's decision to finally depose Tassilo may have come about from his increased suspicions of the duke's desire to enact the rhetoric of power he had so carefully crafted. This menace was only aggravated by Theodo's coming of age, and rumors, actual or fabricated, of the duke seeking a profitable alliance with the Avars.¹⁹⁰ A temporary reprieve in the ongoing hostilities with

¹⁸⁷ King, Charlemagne, p.156.

¹⁸⁸ When in fact, they may reveal Charles' unwillingness to engage with his more experienced cousin at that early date and on account of his own to desire to first strengthen his position in Francia.

¹⁸⁹ The RFA entry for 788 mentions that Tassilo was "egged on" by his wife. Carolingian Chronicles, p. 66.

¹⁹⁰ Whether this was true or not is unclear, although as noted earlier Tassilo was recorded in the annals as having admitted as much. The date, place and authorship of the various annals produced in Francia have been extensively studied and their convoluted and often still unresolved transmission, copying, rewriting and correction is a fascinating source of historical inquiry. Rosamond McKitterick's scholarly contribution on the matter remains an essential point of departure for the study of this material. In the present situation, it is worth reiterating that the annals were written with the benefit of hindsight and as such claims of a possible alliance between Tassilo and the Avars justified both his removal and

the Saxons facilitated this intervention. The Carolingian insistence on documenting Tassilo's allegedly deceitful character effectively set up a dichotomy contrasting the duke's reproachful behavior with Charles' honorable conduct, illustrated by his patience in granting his cousin countless opportunities to mend his behavior, and by his mercy in commuting Tassilo's death sentence. Charles' status as a fair and just ruler emerged aggrandized from this episode. It is of note that Charlemagne's sole recorded acknowledgment of their consanguinity occurred on the occasion of Tassilo's final public appearance where the disgraced Bavarian duke could not have appeared any more dissimilar than his cousin, acclaimed as *Rex et Sacerdos*.¹⁹¹

While Hammer and Airlie have provided an overdue and welcome dose of skepticism with regard to our understanding of what is essentially a partisan account of these events, scholarly discussions have failed to recognize that Tassilo served a key role in the presentation and representation of Charlemagne as the quintessential Christ-like ruler. Tassilo's unexpected, and on the surface unnecessary, public reappearance in Frankfurt, occasioned the confirmation of his guilty plea, as outlined in the Annals. Most importantly, disgraced, powerless, and humiliated as a just consequence of his perfidy,

Charles' subsequent engagement with the Avars, cast as a legitimate threat to his kingdom.

¹⁹¹ Only the Lorsch Annals record Tassilo's reappearance at Frankfurt. King, *Charlemagne*, p. 141. This, however, does not diminish the impact that his presence was intended to project on the special assembly of high-ranking officials gathered at the Synod. Legally and bureaucratically the Tassilo problem had been resolved and consequently, his unexpected reappearance in 794 must be understood as carefully orchestrated to create a powerful visual contrast between the two men. This has been overlooked and most secondary sources view this event as little more than a confirmation of Tassilo's sentencing in front of a larger audience. As Airlie notes, Tassilo "had re-entered history only to underline his and his family's absence from it." *Triumph*, p.118.

deception, and oath breaking, Tassilo served as the most compelling counterpart to Charles' portrayal as the tolerant, patient, forgiving, and exalted ruler.¹⁹²

Charles remained in Bavaria for most of the period 791-793, allowing for the securing of the region and the staging of his offensive against the Avars, which marked the culmination of his territorial expansion. His dominion reached across most of continental Europe, extending to within reach of the de facto borders of the Roman Empire centered at Constantinople, already under stress from the Caliph's assault. The victory over the Avars in 796 not only preemptively aborted any attempts by Tassilo loyalists to finance a counterattack, but also greatly enhanced the Frankish coffers. This success and its economic repercussions funded the extensive building program at Aachen and encouraged Charlemagne's continued patronage of churches and monasteries, strengthening the Frankish bond with the papacy.

It is against this background that the Franks' critical response to the 787 Council of Nicea's pronouncement on images must be understood. This situation offered them a unique opportunity to showcase their orthodoxy, in contrast to what they perceived to be the heretical views promoted by Constantinople. However, the anticipated papal praise did not materialize and pope Hadrian's reaction to the *Opus Caroli* outline he received ahead of the completed work, still under redaction and correction at the court, necessitated the Franks making amends. This took the form of gifts, including the

¹⁹² Einhard characterizes Tassilo as proud, arrogant and manipulated by his wife, *Vita*, Ch.11. These traits reflect the characterizations of the virtues and vices of lay people, especially rulers in contemporary writings. Alcuin's own work on virtues and vices makes clear that pride/superbia is the most appalling sin of the lay ruler/warrior. Rachel Stone provides a good overview of these concepts and the Carolingian enjoyment of the dichotomies between good and evil kings in "*Waltharius* and Carolingian morality: satire and lay values," *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 21, No. 1, (2013), pp.50-70.

luxurious Dagulf Psalter (Vienna, Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, (Cod.1861)¹⁹³ and the redirecting of their heresy-quelling efforts on Spain and Adoptionism as a new foil against which Frankish orthodoxy could be championed.

In the noted absence of a Bavarian counterpart to challenge the Frankish version of events, Tassilo's patronage of the arts offers clues as to his perspective and ambitions and confirms Frankish suspicions. Whether Tassilo ever realistically aspired to challenge his cousin's control of the Frankish throne, or position his son Theodo as a contender, remains speculative. Carl I. Hammer has uncovered evidence of Tassilo's "royal" ambitions and the duke's efforts to devise a language of "virtual rule".¹⁹⁴ This sophisticated formulation apparently appealed to the Frankish elite, as much of it was absorbed into their own nascent codified articulations of power. Charles' confiscation of his cousin's "treasures" guaranteed his monopoly over Tassilo's sophisticated textual and visual expressions of authority. Before his demise in 788, not only was Tassilo's rhetoric of power more refined than the Franks', but as noted earlier, his actions mirrored Charles' royal endeavors in compelling ways.

Tassilo's Patronage of the Arts: Visual Propaganda

A few luxury objects can be localized in Bavaria and dated during Tassilo's reign, some securely and some uncertainly. They include the small Psalter from Mondsee (near Salzburg) now in Montpellier (Montpellier, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Médecine, Ms.409) [Figures 13, 14], the large chalice still housed at Tassilo's family monastery of

¹⁹³ See Nees' review of Holter's facsimile, *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 67, No.4, (Dec., 1985), pp. 681-690.

¹⁹⁴ Hammer, *Regnum*, p.141ff.

Kremsmünster, [Figure 15] the metalwork piece currently bound as the back cover of the later Carolingian Lindau Gospels, (New York, Morgan Library, Ms. lat.1) [Figures 16, 17] as well as possibly, the Codex Millenarius, (Kremsmünster, Stiftsbibliothek, Clm.1),¹⁹⁵ and Cuthbercht Gospels (Vienna, Österreichisches Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1224).¹⁹⁶ The so-called Genoels-Elderen ivories [Figure 18] must be added to this list, on account of the compelling stylistic parallels they share with these objects,¹⁹⁷ while the representation of Christ with a staff, trampling the beasts, resonates in light of the period's marked interest in depictions of the *Miles Christi*.

These objects reflect eighth century Bavarian art's stylistic synthesis of Anglo-Saxon/Insular, Germanic and Mediterranean influences,¹⁹⁸ and as such, are not

¹⁹⁵ The manuscript is usually dated to c. 800 and localized at Mondsee, and as such post-dates the period of Tassilo's active artistic patronage, but remains stylistically and iconographically connected to this group. It may therefore evidence the continuation of support and financial backing for this former Tassilo stronghold after the Carolingian takeover and may reflect my interpretation of the eager Carolingian takeover, appropriation and emulation of Tassilo's visual articulation of power.

¹⁹⁶ Carol L. Newman De Vegar has argued that these objects are also the most compelling stylistic parallels to the Genoels-Eldern Ivories in Brussels, sometimes erroneously assigned to an Anglo-Saxon production center. If that is indeed the case, the depiction of Christ in those ivories especially resonates in light of this discussion and predilection for representations of the *Miles Christi*. "The Origin of the Genoels-Elderen Ivories", *Gesta*, Vol. 29, No.1 (1990), pp.8-24.

¹⁹⁷ The place of origin of this pair of ivories remains debated. Adolf Goldschmidt placed them in the Frankish court's orbit. *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der Karolingischen und Sächsischen Kaiser, 8-11. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1914), I, No. 1-2. The *Karl der Grosse* exhibition catalog reproduces the ivory featuring Christ trampling the beasts directly across from the Tassilo Chalice, (Fig. 104 and 105 respectively, and cat. 534). Other assessments have favored an Anglo-Saxon or a Bavarian origin. For an overview of these various claims' strengths and weaknesses see Carol L. Neuman de Vegvar, "The Origins of the Genoels-Elderen Ivories," *Gesta*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (1990), pp. 8-24.

particularly distinctive from contemporary Carolingian productions. Tassilo's deposition in 787/8 provides a likely *terminus ante quem* for the commission and subsequent creation of the objects showcasing his 'royal' aspirations, especially the chalice that bears his name, and the Montpellier Psalter. The following discussion will focus on these two particular objects.

The Tassilo Chalice

The large copper vessel decorated with gilding and niello surviving at Tassilo's monastic foundation of Kremsmünster is the earliest preserved chalice from post antique, North West Europe.¹⁹⁹ [Figure 15] It bears the name of Tassilo and his Lombard wife Liutperga in an inscription unfolding along the entire circumference of the vessel's foot. The chalice's bowl and foot are respectively adorned with five and four figure-bearing medallions surrounded by interlace patterns and vegetal motifs.²⁰⁰ Carl I. Hammer has suggested that the chalice or "wedding cup" commemorated Tassilo and Liutberga's

¹⁹⁸ The term "influence" has long been recognized as problematic and my goal is not to tackle its assumptions and implications in the context of this dissertation. A valuable multilayered engagement with this concept, its application and impact can be found in the collection of essays assembled in Under the Influence: The Concept of Influence and the Study of Illuminated Manuscripts, edited by John Lowden and Alixe Bovey (London, Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).

¹⁹⁹ Karl der Grosse, (1965), fig. 105, cat. 548. The catalog entry suggests as possible Nortumbrian origin, which has been rejected by Gunther Haseloff, Der Tassilo-Kelch (1951). However, this connection might reflect the presence in Bavaria of the Englishman Virgil, who preceded Arno at Salzburg and further exemplifies the active engagement with various styles and their coexistence on singular objects during Tassilo's and indeed Charlemagne's reigns.

²⁰⁰ The chalice is unusually large, 26,6-27 cm in height according to Haseloff, Tassilo-Kelch, p.1. The Karl der Grosse (1965), catalog entry lists "etwa 25,0 cms" for its height, but very helpfully provides the vessel's capacity at "1.3/4 liter", p.366. The chalice's survival is likely due to its being made of copper.

union or was possibly commissioned to celebrate the foundation in 777 of the monastery where it is still preserved.²⁰¹

The inscription reads: + TASSILO DUX FORTIS + LIVTPIRG VIRGA REGALIS. Tassilo's name appears prominently under the figure of Christ giving his blessing, visually and conceptually connecting the two, and highlighting the duke's faith, devotion and promotion of Christianity. Liutberga, labeled "royal offspring/shoot", celebrates her royal lineage. Their union solidified the bond between Bavaria and the Lombards, the latter being adversaries of the papacy, whom the Carolingians swore to protect. At the time of the marriage, whether in 771 or even 768, Lombardy was autonomous, and could not have anticipated the Frankish takeover of 774. The inscription asserts Liutperga's status and associatively elevates her husband's rank while raising their offspring, Theodo, to that of contender and heir to the territories and legacies of their joint families. At the foot of the chalice, the fragment "REGALIS + TASSILO" creates a cohesive and meaningful unit attesting to Tassilo's royal aspirations, and when combined with the cross and the figure of Christ, giving his blessing, in the medallion directly above, Tassilo's special connection with the King of heaven is emphasized.

The inscription, and the very object on which it appears, symbolically enshrines the ruling couple as active participants in the liturgical celebration, transcending any artificial and anachronistic boundaries between secular and sacred realms in an echo of Constantinopolitan practice. Justinian's participation in the liturgy of the Great Entrance in Hagia Sophia was marked by the presence of votive crowns hovering over the altar.²⁰²

²⁰¹ Hammer, Regnum, p.174-715.

²⁰² Marilyn Stokstad, Medieval Art, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), pp. 84-85.

This virtual presence was emulated in the West as well, perhaps best known in the case of the Visigoths,²⁰³ but also in the Lombard kingdom, where votive crowns testify to Theodelinda and Agilulf similarly inserting themselves within the confines of this most sacred space. Inscribing one's name and consequently claiming at least a virtual presence on a chalice is an even bolder move, which the ruling couple's relegation to the foot of the vessel does not mitigate. The receptacle of the transubstantiated blood of Christ conferred associative greatness and power to the earthly rulers present on its body.

The chalice bowl's perimeter combines Christ, framed by Alpha and Omega and emerging as if under an arcade, with depictions of the four evangelists accompanied by their respective symbols in cramped medallions.²⁰⁴ The chalice's foot also bears figures, which Pankraz Stollenmeyer identified as forming a female side, coinciding with the segment of the inscription addressing Liutperga, and a male side, paired with Tassilo's. Each figure is flanked by initials, which offer cryptic clues as to their identification, [MT/IB/TM/PT]. Intercalated between these oblong roundels are various decorative motifs including intertwined beasts, geometric and vegetal ornaments.²⁰⁵ These figures' identifications remain mostly unsettled, with the exception of the bearded figure paired with IB, pointing to John the Baptist. The female figure flanked by MT has been read as

²⁰³ See for example the Visigothic crown of king Recceswinth (635-672) now in Musée Cluny, reproduced in Paolo Verzone, From Theodoric to Charlemagne, A History of the Dark Ages in the West, (Methuen and London, 1968), p. 153.

²⁰⁴ This design echoes the Cuthbercht Gospels' frontispieces with only partially visible evangelist symbols intruding on their respective evangelist's arcaded space. The frames surrounding them also combine stylized vegetation and various patterns of interlace.

²⁰⁵ Pankraz Stollenmeyer, and Erich Widder, Der Kelch des Herzog Tassilo (Rosenheimer Verlagshaus, 1976), p.18.

the Virgin Mary.²⁰⁶ Conclusive identification of the TM and PT figures has proved more problematic. Stollenmeyer suggested the remaining two figures should be read as Theodor Martyr and Panagia Theodelinda, holding a scepter.²⁰⁷ The presence of Theodelinda should not surprise, particularly considering her family's fervent devotion to John the Baptist, to whom she dedicated the monastery she had built in Monza.

The lavish enamel gold and niello piece currently bound with the later ninth century Lindau Gospels, (New York, Morgan Library, Ms. 1)²⁰⁸ [Figure 16] has been persuasively connected to the Tassilo chalice on stylistic and technical grounds and is a fine example of Bavarian artistic production in the second half of the eighth century. A large red cabochon, inscribed within a diamond, contained in a square anchored by medallions, occupies the center of the composition. The abbreviation IHS XPS DNS NOS [IHSUS XPISTUS DOMINUS NOSTER] unfolds in four parts, in the triangular areas directly under the medallions. The dominant cross design, with widening terminals or croix pattée, rises from a crowded background of intertwined, biting beasts, executed in accomplished Insular style, and symbolically articulates the triumph of good and order

²⁰⁶ Hammer interprets IB as John the Baptist, and MT as "Maria Theotokos" (which could also be interpreted as "Mater Theos"). He does not believe there is enough evidence to ascertain the names, or even the gender of the other two figures. Hammer, *Regnum*, p. 175. If indeed the Latin letters reference Greek names and labels, the connection with the votive crowns is strengthened.

²⁰⁷ Stollenmeyer, *Kelch*, esp. pp. 13-18.

²⁰⁸ Ulrike Sander, *Die ältere Lindauer Buchdeckel in seinen originalen Bestandteilen*, Ph.D. dissertation, (Bonn, Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität, 2007). She provides a detailed technical and stylistic discussion. Victor H. Elbern, "The 'Earlier' Lindau Book Cover: An Integrated Analysis" in *From Attila to Charlemagne: Arts of the Early Medieval Period in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, edited by Katharine Reynolds Brown, Dafydd Kidd and Charles T. Little, (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), pp. 322-335.

over evil and chaos. A compelling parallel emerges in the ornamental page introducing the Gospel of Matthew in the Lindisfarne Gospels (London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero D.iv, folio 26v). The dual A and ω pairings located on the vertical axis of the cross support this eschatological interpretation as Alpha and Omega (as in Rev. 22:13). Four arches inscribed in each arm of the cross radiate from the central square. Each contains a linear, enameled depiction of Christ, easily identified by his crossed nimbus, chromatically articulated by contrasting silver and gold, recalling the chalice, but supplemented by blue and red accents. This iconographic arrangement of four figures of Christ on each arm of a cross was familiar to Lombard artists of the sixth century as transpires from the nineteenth century discovery of the cross of Gisulf, in his sarcophagus.²⁰⁹ [Figure 19]

The four Christ figures are not identical, for one stands out through the crisscross pattern on his garment, possibly referencing a specific clerical vestment. This unusual feature and the compositional repetition of the half-length figure of the youthful Christ, under arches, dominating a central square, anchored at each corner by circular motifs offers the most compelling parallel to the frontispiece designs in Trier 23, which will be discussed at length in Chapter 4. The Lindau Gospels back cover's corner lunettes, inhabited by evangelists and their symbols, are later replacements but may reflect the subject matter, if not the exact iconography, of the original design, strengthening the correspondence with the Trier manuscript. The arrangement of the four Christ figures is

²⁰⁹ Karl der Grosse, (1965), fig.17, cat. 209.

similar to and perhaps adapted from diagrammatic depictions of the four winds.²¹⁰ This underlying configuration conveys Christ's omnipotence, his power enveloping all four corners of the earth. Christ's simultaneous placement on the cross, recalling his crucifixion, and under an arch, in an iconography of triumph, visually reiterates the eternal life-giving power of his sacrifice, in anticipation of the Last Judgment.²¹¹ The juxtaposition of Christ and the symbols of the evangelists, as well as the presence of Alpha and Omega, create a *Maiestas Domini*, which further supports this reading. This iconographic overlap transcribes Christ's two natures and the simultaneity of his glorification through and in death. The abbreviated inscription "Jesus Christ, Our Lord" at the center of the composition supports this triumphant depiction by stressing his divine nature, and offers a counterpoint to the dominant cross motif, the symbolic reminder of his human suffering. The interplay of these various iconographic layers paired with the

²¹⁰ For a recent discussion of the multilayered diagrammatic, computistical and symbolic organizational structures underlying many a depiction of Christ in Majesty in the medieval period see Bianca Kühnel, The End of Time and the Order of Things: Science and Eschatology in Early Medieval Art, (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2003). She provides an example of this composition in Laon, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 422, Plates 70 and 71, pp.326-7. Madeline H. Caviness important article "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," Gesta, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1983), pp. 99-120, which although deals primarily with Romanesque and Gothic examples, demonstrates the complexity and layered meanings imbedded in earlier deceptively simple medieval imagery. Some of these ideas will be inform Chapter 4's discussion of Trier 23's gospel frontispiece design.

²¹¹ This duality informs the subtle design of the sole illumination in the court related Gospels of Ste Croix de Poitiers, (Poitiers, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 17), see Herbert LUX VITA. This simultaneity is also symbolically conveyed in the very design and function of the Tassilo chalice, where Christ is show framed by Alpha and Omega, but on a vessel containing the offering of his sacrificial blood.

inscription communicates Christ's omnipotence, celebrates his two natures and indicates the path to salvation.²¹²

The Montpellier Psalter: The Psalter of Tassilo

The small luxury psalter, attributed to the Bavarian foundation of Mondsee, contains lavish initials, glosses, commentaries and two full-page miniatures, depicting Christ and David.²¹³ [Figures 13, 14] Evidence of later transformation attests to the psalter's transfer of ownership to the Carolingian royal family following Charlemagne's defeat of his quarrelsome cousin and his appropriation of Tassilo's "treasures." Christ and David are depicted with compellingly similar facial features. In addition, the artist's linear style, his placement of both figures in identical settings, under arches, filled with interlace designs, recall the chalice's configuration, as does the presence of text. Both figures tread over the gates of hell, destroyed when Christ defeated death and brought onto the world the promise of eternal life and salvation. Depicting David treading over the gates of hell is a most unusual choice, which seems to deliberately communicate to the viewer his and Christ's identification in a manner reminiscent of the Durham

²¹² The cabochon at the center of the composition is possibly a later replacement. Perhaps the central design once featured a relic, which would enhance the possible reading of the central section as an altar. In this context, the possible allusion to a specific liturgical vestment worn by the unique Christ figure, as well as Christ's dual role as priest but also sacrifice is enhanced.

²¹³ Hammer assumes the psalter belonged to a female member of Tassilo's courtly entourage due to its small size, claiming that Liutprig was its patron. "There is no evidence to determine whether the Psalter was intend for Liutpire's personal use or as a work of instruction for her daughters, Cotani and Rotrud", however, he goes on to add "or even for her older son Theodo." *Regnum*, p. 184. Others have also ignored the traditionally more modest dimensions of portable objects intended for private devotional use, whose format reflect their function and not the gender of their user. Nees has drawn attention to this common misreading and its implications, *Dagulf*, p. 688.

Cassiodorus manuscript, discussed earlier. Christ, labeled *Jesus Christus*, holds a scroll and a codex, highlighting the harmony of the Old and New Testaments, and reminding the viewer that he represents the promise fulfilled.²¹⁴ He is *christus*, the anointed one. David is labeled *Propheta*, assuming the role of precursor to the Messiah, whose incarnation, actualized on the page, is no longer forthcoming but an acknowledged reality. Christ's reign thus supplants the kingship of David, cast in the old law, and is praised as the newer, better model of royal behavior. This construct echoes, albeit more simply and explicitly, the complex visual argument communicated in the Durham Cassiodorus manuscript discussed above. The Northumbrian artist's conflation of Christ and David, subtly revealed through style, iconography and calligraphy, champions Christ's omnipotent rule, and reiterates his identity as the true subject and object of David's psalms.²¹⁵

This psalter's combination appealed to the book's early Carolingian audience, owing to their predilection for representations of the *Miles Christi*, the victorious conqueror of death and evil. This imagery of triumph, gracing the covers of the Lorsch Gospels (Vatican, bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana) [Figure 20] and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 176, [Figure 21] as well as the enigmatic Genoels Elderen ivories,

²¹⁴ As will be addressed below, Trier 23's frontispiece to Matthew's gospel uniquely depicts Christ with a jeweled brooch interpreted as a breastplate. This allusion to the high priest effectively links the Old and New Testaments and reiterates Christ's role as fulfillment of God's promise to his Chosen people. The fundamental harmony of the four gospels and Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament's promise is explicitly manifested in the multi-layered *Maiestas Domini* frontispieces, which became a Tours specialty in the ninth century.

²¹⁵ The conception of the psalter's illuminations echoes the imagery of the Durham Cassiodorus manuscript. Whether this reflects the possible involvement and supposed familiarity with the work, of the Northumbrian Virgil, in charge of the diocese of Salzburg before Arno is unclear.

[Figure 18] offers a visual counterpart to the Frankish revival of the ancient Roman practice of imperial acclamation, or *Laudes regiae*.²¹⁶ These enthusiastic acclamations celebrated Christ's place atop the celestial hierarchy, leading saints and martyrs and stretching to the earthly realm where both pope and king received associative praise. "*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*" rhythmically punctuates the list of saints names and articulates divine leadership.²¹⁷ Christ's power, expressed in the imperial language of authority, was projected back onto the king as a worthy, palpable model for emulation.²¹⁸ Interestingly, the Montpellier Psalter contains the earliest extant version of these acclamations, inserted in Caroline minuscule, before 794.²¹⁹ This development suggests, as proposed above, that the Carolingians, attuned to the idea of crafting a model of christomimetic kingship applicable to Charlemagne, already present in his royal *signum*, [Figure 22] recognized the effectiveness of the juxtaposition of the psalms with the visual exegesis contained in Tassilo's private devotional book. This

²¹⁶ The reference work on this material remains Ernst Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Mediaeval Ruler Worship*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946).

²¹⁷ *Laudes Regiae* also appear in the almost contemporary so-called Psalter of Charlemagne, (796-800), which is most notable for the instance of the king preceding the pope in the earthly hierarchy. Kantorowicz first ponders whether such an eventually could not simply an original arrangement, subsequently altered to restore papal primacy. He ultimately dismisses this occurrence as a scribal error. We may ponder, however, especially in the context of a private devotion book intended for a royal audience, whether this supposedly improper inversion does not reflect contemporary circumstances and attitudes toward the papacy. *Laudes Regiae*, pp. 46-48.

²¹⁸ This example supports Eric Miller's understanding of the dynamics of appropriation and conflation of Old Testament, patristic and imperial sources and rhetoric in the Carolingian formulation of christomimetic kingship.

²¹⁹ The inscription references the current queen whose passing provides a *terminus ante quem* for its redaction.

perspective also aligned, as noted above, with Alcuin's own writings, such as the *Confessio*. Hammer has interpreted the Carolingian alterations to the Psalter as evidence of their systematic policy of *Damnatio Memoriae* with regard to Tassilo, hypothesizing that the *Laudes regiae* replaced an original quire, containing similarly minded incantations celebrating Tassilo's elevated status.²²⁰ This reading is possible but highly speculative, and unfairly positions the Carolingians as mere imitators of Tassilo, and fails to account for the undisputable evidence of extensive cogitation regarding the nature of kingship and the ruler's imitation of Christ.

Advice, Praise, and Admonition: Charlemagne's Advisors and their Impact

Charlemagne's promotion of cultural renewal and reform relied on the advice and contributions of the scholars who gathered at his court from all corners of Europe. Where, when and from whom Charles learned the essential value of this endeavor is unclear.²²¹ His genuine interest in learning and education undeniably permeate his official proclamations and letters, and its lasting impact informs Notker's depiction of the Frankish king, which, as quoted at the start of this chapter, celebrates Charles' care and monitoring of the scholarly progress of the pupils at St. Clement's. The biographer emphasizes that wealthy and poor students learned side by side, thus crediting Charles

²²⁰ Hammer, *Regnum*, pp. 182-191.

²²¹ As seen in Chapter 1, the problem of the renaissance paradigm extends to the determination of its origin. Panofsky viewed Carolingian cultural achievements in sharp contrast to the "vacuum" from which they emerged, while McKitterick, Nees and others have favored the idea of continuity, noting the preservation of courtly and aristocratic traditions of artistic patronage in the sub-antique period.

with an egalitarian approach to children's education, of lasting appeal to modern audiences.

The scholars who joined the court, itinerant until the Aachen settlement, did so for varied periods of time, and sometimes intermittently throughout Charles' reign. As such, the contributions made by each of them in the formulation or redaction of official documents and proclamations remains a source of scholarly debate. The *Admonitio Generalis* of 789²²² is commonly credited to Alcuin²²³ while the *Opus Caroli* has been convincingly assigned to Theodulf's pen.²²⁴ Similar scholarly consensus has not been reached with regard to the authorship of many other literary and exegetical works produced at that time.²²⁵

The diverse geo-political, and cultural backgrounds represented at the Carolingian court account for the variety of sources available and the assortment of styles displayed in both textual and visual productions associated with that milieu.²²⁶ The cosmopolitan flair

²²² The text is available in a new edition, Mordek, Hubert, Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, and Michael Glatthaar, editors. *Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Grossen*. Series: MGH, *Fontes iuris germanici antiquae in usum scholarum separatim editi* 16. (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2012).

²²³ See consultation with others, not claiming those occurred in a vacuum. Although by no means a scholarly consensus. The attribution to Alcuin rests primarily on the stylistic similarities between the *Admonitio* and letters of Alcuin. See F. C. Scheibe, "Alcuin und die Briefe Karls des Grossen, *Deutsches Archiv* 15 (1959), pp.181-93 and Liutpold Wallach, "Charlemagne and Alcuin: Diplomatic Studies in Carolingian Epistolography", *Traditio* 9 (1953), pp. 127-154.

²²⁴ See Chapter 1.

²²⁵ It should not be assumed that these works were primarily the results of collaborative efforts, although some evidence suggests that on occasion a collaborative editing effort took place, as in the case of the *Opus Caroli*, although this instance may reflect an exception rather than the norm.

fitting the court of a ruler embracing his authority over culturally diverse groups of peoples still fascinates contemporary aspirations of European unity. The Anglo-Saxon deacon Alcuin could mine the legacy of his distant relative Willibrord, founder of the monastery at Echternach, and his familiarity with the works of Bede, the Lombard Paul the Deacon, Theodulf, hailing from Spain and Arno, originally at the service of Tassilo, just to name a few, contributed diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives to political, legal and exegetical debates. They were united by their Latin proficiency and shared knowledge of biblical, patristic and classical sources which facilitated communication, but also gave rise to pointed jokes and competitive poetic insults and jabs. A compelling feature of this scholarly ‘brotherhood’ emerged in the nicknames that Alcuin assigned to his fellow scholars. They offer insight into a shared scholarly heritage, in spite of their diverse origins.²²⁷

Donald Bullough remarked that Charlemagne’s advisors seemed to enjoy a surprising degree of what may best be described as freedom bordering on laxity regarding the nature and tone of the advice they provided the king, which often came accompanied

²²⁶ Concerns with localizations have impacted our ability to recognize certain creations, dismissed as provincial, as being very much in the orbit of the court, although not necessarily produced there, but engaging in complex fashion with its concerns and the debates taking place there. This is most notable in the Gospels of Ste.- Croix de Poitiers mentioned earlier, as well as the Gellone Sacramentary discussed in Chapter 1.

²²⁷ These nicknames have been interpreted as further confirmation of the preservation of classical knowledge in the early medieval period. Mary Garrison, “The Social World of Alcuin. Nicknames at York and at the Carolingian Court,” in Alcuin of York, Scholar at the Carolingian Court, Larj Houwen, Alasdair MacDonald eds., (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), pp. 59-79. The majority of these nicknames came from classical sources and the Old Testament. Alcuin explained the logic behind the practice in a letter addressed to Eulalia (alias for Gundrada), telling her that “nicknames often arise from familiarity” and that Christ himself renamed Simon as Peter. Allott, Letters, letter 86, p.100.

by unrequested lecturing and admonitions.²²⁸ Charles may have tolerated occasional breaches of decorum or favored an informal environment, but he was also capable of stern reprimands.²²⁹ Jennifer Davis has defined Charles' relationship with his advisors as an interactive web of fluid exchanges where the king sought the advice of those deemed most qualified on any given issue.²³⁰ Her systematic examination of the epistolary evidence reveals that Charles initiated contact when wishing to consult on matters of interest or concern, be they exegetical, computistical, astronomical or political, but reserved the right to ignore any advice provided. We can assume that these dynamics were at least partially at play in the personal interactions that took place at the court. Once open, these channels of communication provided the scholars whose advice was solicited with the opportunity to promote their own agenda and volunteer their opinions on unrelated issues.

It has been widely assumed that Alcuin enjoyed a privileged status among the scholars gathered at the court. The title of "master of the court school" conferred upon the Anglo-Saxon scholar by modern scholars, and his characterizations by both Einhard and Notker as the most learned man, has been eagerly embraced by modern scholarship's

²²⁸ Donald Bullough, "Alcuin and the Kingdom of Heaven" in Carolingian Renewal, p.170.

²²⁹ For example during Alcuin and Theodolph's conflict over an escaped convict in 802. Epistolary evidence attests to Alcuin pleading his case to his allies at the court, his students Candidus and Nathaniel, while the apologetic tone of his long missive to Charlemagne testifies to Alcuin's desire to make amends, as the king had sided with Theodulf. Carolingian Civilization: A Reader, Paul Edward Dutton ed., (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1993), pp.116-119, and Allott, Letters, Ch. XI, "The Case of the Escaped Convict," pp.120-126.

²³⁰ Jennifer Davis, "Alcuin's Letters to Kings," talk presented at the 43rd International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 8, 2008.

desire to impart upon a select few great men the agency of bringing about the Carolingian renaissance.²³¹ Consequently, Alcuin is often perceived as the catalyst behind Charlemagne's program of reform, and credited with the invention of Caroline minuscule.²³² Such claims have been tempered, as seen in Chapter 1, particularly with regard to the extent and originality of Alcuin's exegetical contribution.²³³

Davis' assertion that Charles consulted his advisors in accordance with their perceived areas of expertise sets up Alcuin as the authority to whom the king deferred in matters of astronomy as evidenced in their correspondence. Einhard confirms this interpretation and assigns to Paul the Deacon the role of expert grammarian.²³⁴ The

²³¹ See Chapter 1.

²³² Bullough's discussion of Alcuin's modern reception notes, "Mabillon's epoch making claim for Alcuin as the creator of 'Caroline minuscule' script..." Bullough also observed Wallach's unsuccessful attempts at finding evidence supporting Alcuin's authorship of the *Opus Caroli*, *Alcuin*, p. 13. Notker, who writes in the later ninth century, defines Alcuin as "[...] a man more skilled in all branches of knowledge than any other person in modern times, was, moreover, a pupil of Bede, the priest of great learning, himself the most accomplished interpreter of Scriptures since Saint Gregory. Charlemagne received Alcuin with great kindness and kept him close at his side as long as he lived...[...] The Emperor went so far as to have himself called Alcuin's pupil, and to call Alcuin his master." Book 1, chapter 2. Einhard is equally complimentary and more specific in the Anglo-Saxon scholars' areas of expertise: "... for all other subjects he [Charles] was taught by Alcuin, surnamed Albinus, another Deacon, a man of the Saxon race who came from Britain and was the most learned man anywhere to be found. Under him the Emperor spent much time and effort in studying rhetoric, dialectic and especially astrology." Einhard, Book III, chapter 25. On the origin of Caroline minuscule, actually traced to Corbie in the 770s-780s see David Ganz, "The Preconditions for Caroline Minuscule," *Viator* 18 (1987), pp. 23-44.

²³³ As mentioned in Chapter 1, Michael Gorman's response to the *Clavis* volume devoted to Alcuin exemplifies this trend. The lack of originality, lamented by contemporary audiences, reflects anachronistic expectations and modern misunderstanding of the desired purpose and function of these texts where recapitulations of authoritative patristic pronouncements and their confirmation through repetitions and redundancies were preferred.

advantages of having an elite group gathered at the court resided in granting Charles access to multiple opinions on any given matter. Whether a consensus was ever reached, or even sought, on any singular issue is uncertain. It can reasonably be assumed, however, that Charles' opinion prevailed, for while he welcomed advice and information, he is unlikely to have yielded to anyone.²³⁵

Evidence indicates that even when a scholar was entrusted with the redaction of an official response or proclamation, as was the case with Theodulf's composition of the *Opus Caroli*, in reply to the pope's perceived support of image worship, his expertise might be complemented by a collective editing effort. This process transpires in the annotations and corrections found on the folios of the earliest known copy of the text, now in the Vatican library (Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat.7207). This beautiful manuscript contains numerous delicately decorated initials, with leaf and loop terminals, in bright colors, enhancing an extremely soigné script, unfolding on high quality parchment. This luxurious production indicates that Theodulf may have assumed his work would be accepted as is, and this particular codex would be presented to the pope. Alcuin's role in the redaction of the *Opus Caroli* was minimal, as its composition coincided with his journey back to England in the early 790's. Yet, his opinion and feedback were sought as documented in his correspondence with the court.²³⁶

²³⁴ Einhard, *Vita*, Ch. 25.

²³⁵ Janet Nelson has attempted to discern whether Charlemagne's own voice and personality can be heard over the official promulgation formulated by his court in "The Voice of Charlemagne", in R. Gameson and H. Leyser eds., *Belief and Culture: Studies in the Middle Ages. Studies presented to Henry Mayr-Harting* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) pp. 76-88.

²³⁶ On Alcuin's involvement in the redaction or at least correction of the *Opus Caroli*, see Wallach, *Diplomatic*, especially IV. *Charlemagne's Libri Carolini and Alcuin*, pp. 143-149.

In time, Charlemagne's circle of trusted advisors extended to include people such as Arno, abbot of St Amand since 782, later named first Archbishop of Salzburg in 798.²³⁷ A contemporary and student of Alcuin, and his favorite correspondent, he was an experienced diplomat who had interacted with Charles while serving as *missus* for Tassilo. This development indicates that Charles held no grudges and recognized the potential benefits of keeping such a good and able man in his service. While Arno rose to the rank of Archbishop and Alcuin remained a deacon, albeit one entrusted with the abbacy of the important monastery of St. Martin's, they experienced somewhat parallel trajectories, for by the mid 790's neither could reasonably count on resuming their previous occupations due to Tassilo's downfall, and the uncertain English political situation respectively. They would thus both spend the rest of their lives at the service of a foreign, but worthy ruler.²³⁸

²³⁷ See *Erzbischof Arn von Salzburg*. Herausgegeben von Meta Niederkorn-Bruck und Anton Sharer, *Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, Band 40, (Vienna: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2004). This collection of essays provides an overview of Arno's life and contributions, starting with his origin in Freising and gives special emphasis to his connection to Alcuin. The *Clavis* includes the *Opus Caroli* as an entry in its Alcuin volume (ALC 66, p.473), recognizing that some have proclaimed his authorship but it redirects the reader to the *Theodulfus Aurelianensis* volume in the *Corpus Christianorum* series.

²³⁸ Alcuin's longing for his native England transpires from his correspondence but also in some amusing anecdote recalled in the *Vita Alcuini*. Soon after his arrival, his new charges were said to be lamenting, "O God, deliver this monastery from these Britishers [sic] who come swarming round this countryman of theirs like bees returning to a mother bee." Quoted in Simon Coates, "The Bishop as Benefactor and Civic Patron: Alcuin, York and Episcopal Authority in Anglo-Saxon England," *Speculum*, Vol. 71, No. 3 (Jul, 1996), p. 529.

Alcuin: royal advisor, mentor, and friend of Charlemagne.

Alcuin joined Charlemagne's peripatetic court in 782, following the king's request that he come to Francia upon meeting for the second time.²³⁹ Alcuin's diplomatic service, his learned mind, his familiarity with the works of Bede, his knowledge of astronomical matters, and possibly a genuine affinity between the two men, rendered the prospect of his joining the Frankish court appealing. We can speculate that respect, admiration and ultimately genuine friendship developed between them. Although it is difficult to evaluate, this bond underlies the tone and nature of their epistolary exchanges, and as this dissertation argues, informs the design, contents and very existence of Trier 23.

Alcuin's departure from the court in 796 to take charge of the monastery of St. Martin at Tours should not be perceived as a dismissal or demotion, which the Anglo-Saxon scholar resented.²⁴⁰ Alcuin undoubtedly came to lament his relative isolation, on account of Tours' geographical remoteness from main communication arteries, which required a time consuming detour on the part of even the most ardent traveler, and as

²³⁹ The exact date of Alcuin's joining Charles' court remains debated but it is usually assumed that Charles invited the Anglo-Saxon deacon to come join his court. Notker claims Alcuin came to seek a spot for himself at Charlemagne's learned court. *Deeds*, Book 1, Ch. 2. Donald Bullough disproved claims that a certain missus of Charles, named Albuinus, who partook in the negotiations with the Lombards in the 770s should be read as Alcuin, in "Albuinius deliciosus Karoli regis, Alcuin of York and the Shaping of the Early Carolingian Court", in *Institutionen, Kultur und Gessellschaft im Mittelalter, Festschrift fur Josef Fleckenstein zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1984), pp. 73-92.

²⁴⁰ Bullough claimed that Alcuin "reluctantly accepted the abbacy of St-Martin at Tours...", in "Charlemagne's 'Men of God'", in Joanna Story ed., *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, p. 140.

such he had few visitors.²⁴¹ Charles' taking the time, and a long detour, to visit Tours, on his journey to Rome in 800, is therefore significant. After stopping at St. Riquier, to confer with Angilbert, Charles arrived at Tours, possibly to persuade his friend to join him on this eventful journey to the holy city, an offer Alcuin had previously refused, and update him on the latest developments regarding the pope.²⁴² If invited, Alcuin declined, for we know that he did not go. Charles then travelled to Orleans to visit with Theodulf, who joined the king on his Rome trip, as we know from a subsequent letter by Alcuin.²⁴³

This convoluted path to Rome gave Charles the opportunity to consult his trusted advisors, update them on the planned resolution of Pope Leo's roman troubles, and projected reinstatement, as well as perhaps his own forthcoming appropriation of the

²⁴¹ This somewhat contradicts the claims mentioned above that the monks at Tours complained of the frequent presence of numerous visitors from England. The time Alcuin actually spent in the presence of Charlemagne may have been limited, especially as he is not believed to have accompanied the king on any of his campaigns, as confirmed by Notker, Deeds, Book 1, Ch. 2. In addition, Alcuin travelled back to England, twice, in 786, then again in 790-793.

²⁴² Charles' displeasure at the idea that Alcuin would not join him on his journey to Rome is substantiated by a letter dated 799 where Alcuin writes "As to your wish to reproach me for preferring the sooty roofs of Tours to the gilded citadels of Rome..." and adds that his decision rested primarily on his desire to stay away from a city "in the grip of fratricidal strife and incessantly poisoned by feuds..." quoted in Dutton, Carolingian Civilization, p. 115. Another letter already rejected the invitation by citing poor health, "As for the long and wearisome journey to Rome, I do not think it at all possible for my frail body, weak and broken by daily suffering, to complete it. If I could, I would have wished it. So I beg you in your fatherly generosity to allow me to assist your journey in faithful and earnest prayers with God's servants at St. Martin's." Allott, Letters, letter 104, p.112.

²⁴³ Ann Freeman and Paul Meyvaert. "The Meaning of Theodulf's Apse Mosaic at Germiny-des-Prés." Gesta, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2001), p.126.

imperial title.²⁴⁴ Neither time nor distance could break the bonds of trust and friendship formed at court. The strategic deployment of the scholars previously assembled at the court to the most influential posts in the kingdom was the next logical step in enacting the program of reform they had devised.²⁴⁵ Consequently, these assignments ought not be read as demotions. On the contrary, they are testaments to the trust and confidence these men received from their king.

Alcuin's appointment as head of St. Martin's was a privilege and an honor. He was entrusted with the care of the precious relics of a most beloved Frankish royal patron saint and celestial intercessor, whose wellbeing was intertwined with the destiny of the Frankish people and continued prosperity of the Carolingian royal house.²⁴⁶ Julia Smith has argued that the possession of relics played a crucial role in the symbolic and visual rhetoric of power in the early medieval period. A ruler's ability to acquire the most precious relics was seen as a sign of legitimacy and divine approval. Consequently, rulers engaged in what Smith calls "competitive relic collecting," in a concerted effort to

²⁴⁴ As this dissertation clearly indicates, I do not abide by the view, still accepted by many, that the coronation of Christmas day 800 came as a surprise to Charlemagne as suggested by Einhard's creation of the 'reluctant emperor'. *Vita*, Ch. 28.

²⁴⁵ However, this does not automatically entail that they were charged with systematically enforcing a thorough and detailed plan of reforms, which affected all aspects of their respective occupations.

²⁴⁶ The close connection linking the Frankish royal house, its people and relics of the most important Frankish saints already transpired in the Tassilo episode. The severity of the accusations of oath breaking levied against the Bavarian duke was enhanced by his having sworn over these most precious Frankish relics. His disobeying Charles could then be easily interpreted as a sign of disrespect to these very special dead and by extension to the entire Frankish nation whose piety and devotion was closely bound to them. As Janet Nelson highlights, the mention of St. Martin in royal blessings, "O God, the inexpressible author of the world, ... fill this king together with his army, with fruitful benediction by the intercession of St Martin... and fix [him] with firm stability on the throne of the kingdom..." in *Carolingian Royal Rituals*, p. 154.

strengthen and broadcast at least the illusion, if not the actuality, of their wielding extensive powers and authority, confirmed in their very possession of these most sacred objects.²⁴⁷ This ownership had the additional benefit of allowing their royal, noble or clerical possessors to gain further allies, secure lasting indebtedness, and self-aggrandize through the controlled dispensation of pieces of relics to select courtiers when advantageous. The impressive collection of relics at St. Riquier, acquired partially through the impetus of royal generosity are known to us from the abbot's description of the ritualized pilgrimage reenacted in the ordered visit of the various altars dispersed in the nave.²⁴⁸ While the relics were the true loci of power, the lavish reliquaries in which they were encased effectively conveyed their supernatural potency, and were reliable indicators of the prosperity and success they brought to their owners.

Loyalty and devotion to local or 'national' saints and martyrs contributed to the fashioning of a group identity. The fact that Tassilo was reported to have taken an oath over the relics of the "Frankish" saints only exacerbated his betrayal. It is that particular breach that returned to the forefront of the accusations levied against him decades later. The saints' support and intercession on behalf of the king and his people is confirmed in their granting him sovereignty over their earthly remains. In a dynamic of power hinging on the reassuring certainty of sustained divine approval, guaranteeing the saints'

²⁴⁷ Conversation with Julia Smith, Princeton, January 2009. As Chapter 5 demonstrates a similar dynamics could be applied to special Carolingian objects in the Ottonian period.

²⁴⁸ Angilbert's extensive collection of relics owed much to Charlemagne's generosity. See Caecilia Davis-Weyer, Early Medieval Art 300-1150, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 17, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), pp. 92-96. For a discussion of Angilbert's ideas and their manifestation at St. Riquier, see Susan A. Rabe, Faith, Art and Politics at Saint Riquier: The Symbolic Vision of Angilbert, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995).

satisfaction, through continued care and attention, was a task best suited for a trusted friend.

Relics and books often travelled together and made for prestigious gifts, bestowing power to both donor and recipient.²⁴⁹ Further similarities extended to their being protected by silks and other elaborate covers or receptacles. While effectively conveying the power of their contents, these luxurious appendages and vessels risked misdirecting viewers into worshipping the dazzling materiality of the containers rather than revere the true power of the contents. This ambivalent relationship between the content and the container surfaces in Trier 23's dedication poem, which urges its anticipated royal audience to cherish his ability to discern the genuinely and lastingly precious from ephemeral materialistic diversions. In a 769-770 letter, preserved in the *Codex Carolinus*, Pope Stephen III addressed Charles and Carloman and celebrated their reconciliation, while confidently (or rather tentatively) anticipating that neither would succumb to the distracting appeal of lavish offerings and therefore lose track of their duties as Christian kings.²⁵⁰

Chapter 3 explores Trier 23's textual components including the dedication poem, which alludes to the fact that the humble appearance of the book in which it is contained cannot rival the riches wealthy donors present to the king. However, like a relic, the book's contents sublimate these splendid displays of distracting, ephemeral materiality. The truly wise Christian king will not be deceived, but like Christ, in his appreciation of

²⁴⁹ These exchanges defined complex power relationships and anticipated reciprocations, as was typical of medieval gift giving practices. See Florin Curta, "Merovingian and Carolingian Gift-giving." *Speculum*, Vol. 81, No. 3 (Jul., 2006), pp. 671-699.

²⁵⁰ King, *Charlemagne*, p.269.

the widow's offering of two brass mites in the biblical story,²⁵¹ which the dedication poem references explicitly, will identify the truly virtuous donor in his offering of a gift bearing lasting, spiritual value. Alcuin thus celebrates Christ as Charles' template for sound judgment. This implied correspondence essentially coerces the king into recognizing Alcuin's self-described "humble gift" as the most precious.²⁵²

While temporarily or permanently absent from court, on personal or official duty, or following reassignment, Alcuin and other advisors relied on written exchanges with the king to push forward their agenda and share their ambitions and concerns for the Frankish monarchy. This approach required navigating the thin line between advice and admonition, and often infusing replies to official quandaries with advice, while never shying away from seizing the opportunity to defend one's position or advocate for a perspective on current events.²⁵³

The majority of Alcuin's correspondence preserved today dates to his time at Tours (796-804) and understandably reflects the preoccupations of an older man, aware of his approaching death. These letters also divulge Alcuin's concerns over current political events, including the fate of pope Leo III, and anxiety over the inevitable punishment awaiting the king and his people on account of God's disapproval of Charlemagne's failed strategy to subdue the Saxons.²⁵⁴ The king's approach, privileging

²⁵¹ The story is found in Luke 21:1-4, and also in Mark 12:41-44.

²⁵² This construct further coincides with Alcuin's condemnation of avarice in *De virtutibus et vitiis*, while recognizing that some people are rightly wealthy. Stone, *Morality*, p.62.

²⁵³ As in the *de gladio* letter discussed below.

physical strength, and mass baptism, offered instant results, but not lasting peace, as evinced in the recurring unrest and the inevitable resuming of hostilities. Alcuin made no secret that he favored the slower but more effective approach of preaching and catechism, which alone would lead to genuine and definitive embrace of the Christian faith. Only the latter could be satisfactory in the eyes of God, and it befell Alcuin to reach out to the king and convince him to let it happen thusly.²⁵⁵

The *Vita Sancti Willibordi*, which Alcuin wrote for Beornard, Abbot of Echternach, (786-797) celebrates the saint's relentless efforts to convert the Frisians, with special emphasis on his numerous miracles.²⁵⁶ It magnifies the status of Alcuin's relative while providing a general blueprint for the Frankish king's conversion of future peoples

²⁵⁴ One of the great sins that a lay person, particularly a warrior can commit, in the eyes of Alcuin, per his treaty on Virtues and Vices, resides in pride and obstinacy as the "contempt of the mandates of God." As such his anxiety about the potential consequences over Charles' determination to follow this ill-advised course of action is consistent and likely genuine. Stone, *Morality*, p. 59.

²⁵⁵ This approach, encouraging genuine conversion was slower to come about but more long lasting. In addition it had the advantage of putting the power in the hands of clerics and preachers. Alcuin communicated his concerns to the king in no uncertain terms. Alcuin is however careful to note with great emphasis that what motivates Charles is an eagerness to bring more people into the Church's fold. He then cleverly redirects his comments to note that this desire would be better reward if Charles embraced preaching and catechism as the mode of conversion. Allott, *Letters*, letter 56, pp.72-74. Alcuin's devotion to this cause is further evidenced in his reach out to the treasurer Megenfried to voice his concerns over Charles' failed strategy and plead for his support. Allot, *Letters*, letter 57, p.74.

²⁵⁶ *Clavis* (ALC 92), *Vita Sancti Willibroardi Traiectensis episcopi*, pp.507-511. While written by request of its abbot and future bishop of Sens, Beornard, it allowed Alcuin to commemorate a distant relative, for he was the "possessor of the Monastery of St. Andrew, founded by Willibrord's father, Wilgils, on a headland overlooking the mouth of the Humber..." *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany, Being the Lives of SS Willibrord, Boniface, Sturm, Leoba and Lebuin, together with the Hodeoporicon of St. Willibald and a selection from the correspondence of St. Boniface*, translated and edited by C. H. Talbot (New York, Sheed and Ward, 1954), p. 2.

to join in his Christian Kingdom. In light of current events, especially Charles' strategy of forceful conversion of the Saxons, which only resulted in instigating further resistance and rebellions, Alcuin's agenda took on additional urgency.²⁵⁷ To Alcuin, this failure owed as much to the king's flawed policy as to his self-serving motivation of expanding his dominion and subjugating more taxable peoples.²⁵⁸ Alcuin's predilection for the slower, more demanding, but proven strategy of preaching and catechism, as the sole mean of securing the expansion of Christendom, was a crucial point of contention, with critical consequences in anticipation of the Day of Judgment. The reader of the *Vita*²⁵⁹ is encouraged to recognize in Willibrord's successful conversion of the Frisians the guarantee of similar results should this strategy be applied to the Saxon campaign. Alcuin's letters attest to his steadfast resolve on this matter, discussing it with the king, as well as Ricbod, and Arno and communicating his frustrations to the treasurer Megenfried.²⁶⁰ In that particular missive, as Eric Miller points out, Alcuin explicitly

²⁵⁷ Mary Alberi, "The Evolution of Alcuin's Concept of the Imperium christianum." In *The Community, the Family and the Saint. Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*. Selected Proceedings of the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 4-7 July 1994, 10-13 July 1999. Edited by Joyce Hill and Mary Swan. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), p.4.

²⁵⁸ While Charles struggled to subjugate and convert the Saxons, his defeated of the Avars in the early 790's came relatively easily and was accompanied by an extensive financial reward in the appropriation their great treasury. It is interesting that Charles does not appear to have attempted or even considered converting the Avars.

²⁵⁹ While the *Vita* was not directly intended for Charles' ears it can be assumed that he might have heard it read at the court or during celebrations of the great Saint. Alcuin might also have passed along a copy.

²⁶⁰ As early as 789, Alcuin writes to his "dear friend, abbot N." about his concerns over the forceful conversion. Allott, *Letters*, letter 55, pp. 71-72. He expresses these same concerns directly to the king in 796, Allott, *Letters*, letter 56, pp. 72-74, and also to Megenfried, in hope that he would convince the king to reconsider his strategy, Allott,

parallels Charlemagne and Christ in referencing Matthew 9:38, and just as Christ sent his disciples on a “spiritual harvest”, Charles ought to send out priests and deacons in to the “mission harvest.”²⁶¹

For Alcuin, the essential duty of the Christian king, ever mindful of his indebtedness to God for his continued prosperity and success, primarily consisted of securing the genuine and lasting conversion of all peoples whose territories he had been providentially allowed to annex. Charles’ motivations were likely more practical and self-serving, as would be expected from an early medieval ruler, yet he did seek to bring about the Saxons’ conversion. Alcuin’s frustration owed much to his growing anxiety about the fate of his own soul should divine judgment find his efforts to bring about a change in the king’s policy insufficient. Ultimately, more than Alcuin’s eternal salvation lay in the balance. Charles’ damaging stubbornness could lead to the withdrawal of divine favor, which would not only result in his not being granted continued success and prosperity, for himself and his people, but would by extension jeopardize the Carolingian line’s hold on the Frankish throne. The disruptions to the transmission of the royal priesthood elucidated in Matthew’s genealogy, cast as precedents to the Carolingians’ own takeover of the Frankish throne, simultaneously justified their own usurpation and warned that divine support could be withdrawn. Alcuin’s commentary on this biblical passage’s insertion at the start of Trier 23 for presentation to the king from whom so

Letters, letter 57, pp. 74-75. It is interesting that those concerns were expressed in a letter dated from the year Alcuin left the court to take residence at Tours. They may attest to his ongoing ideas, which until then had been primarily expressed orally.

²⁶¹ Miller, Politics, p. 47.

much was expected is revealing. Alcuin communicated his concerns to Charlemagne more openly in an often- referenced letter, dated to c.796:

On receiving your letter telling of your good health so dear to us and your prosperity so necessary to the whole Christian Empire,[Christianitatis imperio] I poured forth the feelings of my heart in thankfulness to Christ, the most merciful king, earnestly praying his goodness with all who share our spiritual labours that he guard, guide and extend your peaceful and loving power to the advancement of his church and give lasting prosperity to the government of the Holy Empire.[sacratissimi gubernacula imperii]²⁶²

These lines hint at Alcuin's early attempts to develop a concept of *Imperium Christianum*,²⁶³ intimately connected to his ambitions for the Frankish ruler to whom Christ had entrusted his earthly kingdom. Alcuin emphasizes how Charles' success, contingent on Christ's continued endorsement, impacts more than himself, his family or even the Frankish people. Alcuin stresses the direct repercussions the king's actions and decisions bear on the entirety of Christendom, effectively casting the Frankish ruler as the earthly leader of the people of God.

Alcuin's correspondence with his fellow Englishmen, under pressure from Viking raids from 793, confirms his belief that wrongful behavior and complacency lead to the withdrawal of divine support, with catastrophic consequences. Alcuin's missives to his compatriots attest to his evolving perspective on their situation and misfortunes. His first

²⁶² Allott, *Letters*, letter 66, p.80, (#136 in Dümmler's edition).

²⁶³ Dorine van Espelo has recently investigated the relative fluidity of the meaning of "imperium", while essentially referencing "true power," whether it expressed sovereignty, or dominion, or authority, and as such not necessarily a distinct geographical or political entity. *Imperium*, p.272. As such, Charlemagne's rule, according to Alcuin, is a special kind of Christian leadership, not necessarily dependent on his dominion over a defined territory.

response upon hearing the news of the sack of Lindisfarne in 793 conveys all his sorrow and distress, as he laments their experiencing such destruction and savagery. Yet, this original empathy was soon replaced by admonition and blame, punctuated by Alcuin highlighting the monks' behavioral and moral failings as the reason for this dramatic turn of events.²⁶⁴ Alcuin took it upon himself to convince Charles to take ownership of the fate befalling not only the royal house, but also the entire Christian peoples whom God had gathered under his rule. Alcuin's self-appointed duty resided in preventing similar misfortunes from befalling the *Imperium Christianum* under Charles' leadership.

The letter quoted above is found in eighteen manuscripts, many from the ninth century, and is often introduced by the *titulus* "De gladio"²⁶⁵ in reference to its main content offering a response to an unnamed layperson's inquiry, forwarded by Charlemagne, regarding the apparent contradiction between a passage in Luke's gospel, where Christ asked the apostles to purchase a sword, and Matthew's report that Christ

²⁶⁴ Alcuin's letters first lament the "tragic suffering" and the "pagans [who] have desecrated God's sanctuary, shed the blood of saints around the altar..." but then ponders "Is this the beginning of greater suffering, or the outcome of the sins of those who live there? It has not happened by chance, but is the sign of some great guilt." Alcuin's words of warning and reprimand continue, condemning excesses in dress, drunkenness, and even blaming poor enunciation of prayers. Allott, *Letters*, letter 26, p. 36-38. A later missive cast this event as a blessing in disguise, stating, "The punishment that has been inflicted on your monastery must serve your eternal salvation." Allott, *Letters*, letter 27, p. 38.

²⁶⁵ *Clavis* (ALC 45.136) pp. 254-255. For a recent discussion see Michael Lauwers, "Le glaive et la parole. Charlemagne, Alcuin et le modèle du rex praedicator: notes d'ecclésiologie carolingienne," in *Alcuin de York à Tours. Écriture, Pouvoir et Réseaux dans L'Europe du Moyen Âge*, *Annales de Bretagne et du Pays de l'Ouest*, Tome 111, No. 3 (2004), pp. 221-244, and Mary Alberi, "'The Sword Which You Hold in Your Hand': Alcuin's Exegesis of the Two Swords and the Lay *Miles Christi*", in *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*, edited by Celia Chazelle and Burton Van Name Edwards, *Medieval Church Studies* 3, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), pp. 117-131.

unequivocally stated, “those who take the sword will perish by the sword.”²⁶⁶ Alcuin first eases the king’s concerns that lay people ought not preoccupy themselves with exegetical matters, adding that “[t]his layman, whoever he is, is wise in heart, though he has a soldier’s hands. Your majesty should have many like him.”²⁶⁷ This cautious reply likely reflects his uncertainty regarding the identity of the quandary’s originator, and his possible identification as the king himself, using the anonymous layman as a distancing screen.

Later, Alcuin opportunistically pleads with Charles to intervene and stop the “reprehensible practice” of certain high-ranking clerics opposing priests and deacons preaching. This remark suggests that not only was Alcuin not opposed to a certain level of royal involvement in church matters, he occasionally encouraged it, stressing that this was a situation “your wise authority can easily correct...”²⁶⁸ The tone and subtext of this message brings to mind Bede’s letter to Egbert, the Bishop of York. In his missive, the monk reminded his superior of his duties, and of his responsibility to teach by example. Egbert is urged to use his authority to correct the behavior of some ecclesiastics, and appoint reliable preachers. Bede reminds the bishop that his brethren’s salvation as well

²⁶⁶ Matthew, 26:52. Is this quandary indicative of Charles’ pondering about the lasting consequences of his action as a warrior Christian king?

²⁶⁷ Allott, Letters, p.80.

²⁶⁸ This appeal to Charles’ authority over the bishops who prevented priests and deacons from preaching implies that Alcuin recognizes that Charles outranked them. Alcuin likely conceived of these privileges as proper to Charlemagne and not just part of his royal office. It is also possible that this request was of particular importance to Alcuin as it pertained to the status and activities of other deacons, which was his own rank and he evidently liked “preaching” himself.

as his own were at stake.²⁶⁹ Alcuin actively participated in the dissemination of Charles's program of reforms, and probably authored much of the *Admonitio Generalis* of 789.²⁷⁰ Yet, his letters testify to a struggle with reconciling this occasional promotion of royal interventionism and admonition to defend the Christian faith and empire, with an aversion for lay intrusion in clerical matters, and trespassing on Church autonomy.²⁷¹ This ambivalence animated his later concerns, following the unfortunate events surrounding Pope Leo III, that no layperson or tribunal could sit in judgment of the pontiff.²⁷² However, after the Carolingian court's refutation of image worship in the *Opus Caroli*, in a powerful example of the permeability of the boundaries between lay and clerical realms, was rejected by pope Hadrian, who to Charlemagne's surprise accepted the 787 edict, the king dropped the issue and did not challenge the papal decision. This episode revealed how seriously the Franks embraced their role as guardians of orthodoxy, even if it entailed correcting the pope.²⁷³ In this context, Alcuin's promotion of Charles'

²⁶⁹ *The Historical Works of Venerable Bede*, Vol. II. Biographical Writings, Letters, and Chronology. Translated from the Latin by J.A. Giles. (London, 1845), p. 139.

²⁷⁰ Van Espelo, *Imperium*, p. 262ff.

²⁷¹ Alberi, *Imperium Christianum*, p.9.

²⁷² Alcuin writes to Arno that no one can sit in judgment of the pope. Allott, *Letters*, letter 102, p. 110.

²⁷³ While the Franks abandoned the *Opus Caroli*, the residual wound inflicted by the papal rejection of their heresy-crushing endeavor may inform the design and contents of the lavish gift they soon sent to Hadrian. The luxurious Dagulf Psalter contains a series of creeds, indicating that while the Carolingians were willing to acknowledge their missteps, they insisted on reminding the pope of his duties. The letter Charles sent to Pope Leo III to congratulate him on his accession openly states that "the sagacity of your authority cleave to the rulings of the canons... ever follow the decrees of the holy fathers." Quoted in van Espelo, *Imperium*, p. 264. These instances reveal a virtual checks-and-balances

imitatio Christi must be understood as personal, applying to him exclusively and dictated by circumstances, rather than as a sketch of a manifesto defining the expected behavior of future Carolingian kings.

In *de gladio*, Alcuin interprets the “sword” as a sign of divine judgment and the word of God, thus generating a two-fold explanation of Christ’s seemingly contradictory statements. The sword represents secular authority and military power as well as Christian leadership and promotion of the *verbum Dei*.²⁷⁴ Consequently, Alcuin offers a model of *Miles Christi* and calls the king “*ecclesiarum Christi defensor et rector*” promoting his role as “*rex et praedicator*”. The use of the word *rector* is telling, as it relates to the dominant concept of *correctio* animating Charles’ reformatory impetus. The term is also present in the preface to the *Admonitio Generalis*, with which, as noted earlier, Alcuin is likely closely connected.²⁷⁵ This empowering proposition recalls the acclamation of “*Rex et Sacerdos*” which greeted Charles at the Synod of Frankfurt in 794.²⁷⁶

The *gens Francorum* and their leader had long embraced their privileged relationship with the king of heaven. Under Charles’ father Pippin, a new prologue to the

dynamic with the implication that the Carolingians were as determined and as authoritative in their defense of orthodoxy as the pope.

²⁷⁴ Alberi, *Sword*, p. 129.

²⁷⁵ Van Espelo, *Imperium*, p. 263, and note 33.

²⁷⁶ “Sit rex et sacerdos, Sit omnium Christianum moderatissimus gubernator”. [Paulinus of Aquileia]. See Arnold Angenendt, Karl der Grosse als “Rex et Sacerdos” in *Das Frankfurter Konzil von 794: Kristallisationspunkt Karolingischer Kultur*, Akten zweier Symposien (von 23. bis 27. Februar und von 13. bis 15. Oktober 1994) anlässlich der 1200-Jahrfeier der Stadt Frankfurt am Main, edited by Rainer Berndt, Teil 1 Politik und Kirche, (Mainz: Der Gesellschaft für Mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte, 1997), pp.255-278.

Lex Salica, an old Germanic law, had been composed, stressing that very point.²⁷⁷

Reissued by Charlemagne in the later eighth century, it proudly announced: “Long live Christ who loves the Franks! May he guard their kingdom, fill their leaders with the light of his Grace, protect their army, accord them the defense of the Faith.”²⁷⁸ This confident proclamation awarded the Franks a privileged status among all Christian people in sharp contrast to contemporary developments in nearby England, as noted above. The prologue also makes a point of distinguishing the Franks’ original orthodoxy from the Romans’ pagan beginnings and their shedding the blood of the early martyrs and saints.²⁷⁹ This proclamation further complicates the Carolingian elites’ negotiation of various aspects of the past, and problematizes claims of a celebrated indebtedness to Rome’s imperial past.

²⁷⁷ The Law is known today from over eighty manuscripts. *The Laws of the Salian Franks*, translated and with an introduction by Katherine Fischer Drew (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press), 1991, p.52. Karl August Eckhardt, ed. *Lex Salica*. MGH, *Legum Sectio I, Leges Nationum Germanicarum*, Vol. IV, Part II (Hanover, 1969).

²⁷⁸ *Lex Salica Prologue*, in J. N. Hillgarth, *Christianity and Paganism 350-750: The Conversion of Western Europe*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), p.93.

²⁷⁹ For a discussion of Frankish orthodoxy, see M. Innes, “‘Immune from Heresy’: Defining the boundaries of Carolingian Christianity,” in P. Fouracre and D. Ganz eds., *Frankland. The Franks and the World of the Early Middle Ages. Essays in Honour of Dame Jinty Nelson* (Manchester, 2008), pp. 101-25. As van Espelo notes, it is compelling that the two letters that were addressed by the pope, to the Spanish bishops suspected of Adoptionism appear in the *Codex Carolinus*. They testify to the Carolingians’ partnership with the papacy in the battle against this heresy, *Imperium*, p.267, and footnote #55. Ann Freeman “Carolingian Orthodoxy and the fate of the *Libri Carolini*”, *Viator* 16 (1985), 65-108, the bold and assertive tone of the preface to the *Opus Caroli* indicates that they were self-assured in their mission, “so that the enemy advancing from the East may be struck helpless and harmless, by the judgment of the holy Fathers, in the Western lands given us by God’s grace.” p.65.

*Between Officium and Ministerium: Defining Carolingian Kingship*²⁸⁰

Einhard's mocking of the deposed Merovingian kings, the "rois fénéants," paraded around in carts pulled by oxen, has enduringly defined the Carolingians' predecessors and justified Pippin's takeover.²⁸¹ Less derisive interpretations have recognized in these processions a symbolic homage to the distant origin of Merovingian sacral, albeit pagan, kingship, although the Merovingian line had long embraced Christianity. Frankish concepts of sanctified kingship transitioned from Merovingian to Carolingian rule, and as noted by annalists and Charlemagne's biographers alike, the new Carolingian rulers perpetuated the established tradition of royal acclamation, as both Charles and Carloman, and Pippin before them, were elevated to the royal throne through this custom. As noted earlier, a clear departure from tradition emerged in the Carolingian rulers' ensuing coronation, which was supplemented by anointing.²⁸² Janet Nelson has convincingly argued that this Carolingian predilection for anointing monarchs purposely revived Old Testament practices and offered proof of the Franks' self-fashioning as the New Israel, a new chosen people.²⁸³ The early Carolingian rulers' double anointing, first at the time of their baptism and then on the occasion of their coronation, reinforced their

²⁸⁰ Walter Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship*, (London: Methuen, 1969). Yitzhak Hen, "The uses of the Bible and the perception of kingship in Merovingian Gaul," *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 7, No. 3, (1998), pp. 277-290.

²⁸¹ Einhard, *Vita*, Ch.1.

²⁸² Nelson, *Carolingian Royal Rituals*.

²⁸³ For a discussion of the sources and origins of this concept, see Mary Garrison, "The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an identity from Pippin to Charlemagne" in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, pp.114-161.

identification with the '*christus*' or anointed one, and encouraged the perception of the earthly ruler as the counterpart of Christ, the King of heaven.

The identification of the earthly ruler with his heavenly counterpart, constructed as a triumphant yet merciful and forgiving king, is further reflected in Charlemagne's royal *signum*, in use from 769. [Figure 22] Its cruciform design internalizes the two kings' codependence, as any victory achieved by the earthly ruler automatically aggrandizes and glorifies his heavenly model and counterpart.²⁸⁴ By extension, Charlemagne's accomplishments result from his dedication and resolve, but also from Christ's enduring assistance, in a symbiotic conception of universal power which ignores the pope. The chosen emblem of Charles' identity and authority coincides with the quintessential symbol of Christian faith. Thus allegiance to the earthly king simultaneously entails acceptance of his heavenly ruler, and vice versa. This equivalency held particularly true for newly conquered peoples.

Ildar H. Garipzanov's investigation into the evolution and transformations of early medieval royal *signa* has revealed a pivotal shift, which began with Pippin signing charters with the cross.²⁸⁵ Charles' monogram goes beyond announcing his allegiance to Christianity through its visual synchronism of the earthly and heavenly rulers' respective symbolic representations. I believe this can be taken even further, as deciphering the name KAROLUS required the eyes move along the horizontal and vertical axes, in an echo of the sign of the cross. In addition, Charles' seal depicts the profile head of a ruler,

²⁸⁴ Ildar H. Garipzanov has extensively studied the evolution of the royal *signum*, "Metamorphoses of the early medieval *signum* of a ruler in the Carolingian world," Early Medieval Europe, Vol. 14, No.4 (2006), p.431ff.

²⁸⁵ Garipzanov, Signum, p. 430.

expectedly interpreted as evidence of Roman imperial inspiration, also prominently features an inscription, which points in a different direction. It reads, “Christe Protege Carolum Regem Francorum” and as such not only proclaims Charles’ devotion and subjugation to the heavenly ruler, but also defines his own earthly authority in terms of his Frankish kingship.²⁸⁶ As noted at the start of this chapter, the equilibrium contained in the very design of the monogram was absent from the boldest visual expression of christomimesis in the Liuthard Gospels of Otto III. [Figure 6] The substitution of the emperor for Christ at the center of the Majesty composition fails to preserve the essential synchronicity embedded in Charles’ monogram and problematically, even blasphemously projects Otto III as having superseded his heavenly model.²⁸⁷

Christ guides the Frankish king, serving as the way and the light, in Alcuin’s moral *expositio* of “Achaz,” referencing John 14:6, in the Hebrew names commentary opening Trier 23. “I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” For Alcuin, the way through Christ, opening the door to salvation, was achieved via Charlemagne’s diligent promotion of peaceful and genuine conversion. Just as the Father can be reached through the Son, the Son can be reached through Charles’ pastoral agency. This paradigm reflects the experience of people conquered by the Franks, pledging allegiance to both Charles and Christ through their simultaneous oath of loyalty to the king and joining of the body of the Church through baptism.

²⁸⁶ The seal is preserved in Modena, Bibliotheca Capitolare, A.I.2. For a color plate, see 799: *Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit*, p. 79.

²⁸⁷ This daring composition and its almost blasphemous substitution does not appear to have been copied or emulated. A more subtle visual articulation of the ideas conveyed in Charles’ *signum* emerges in the design of the Lothar Cross, where depictions of the earthly ruler and his heavenly counterpart occupy the front and back of the cross respectively. This fascinating object will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The Palace Chapel at Aachen: Charlemagne Reflecting Christ

Charles spent the winter following his royal accession in 768 at the Carolingian “Aquis villa”.²⁸⁸ Located near hot springs, surrounded by forests for hunting, Aachen was conveniently in close proximity to the Saxon territories, whose troublesome dwellers occupied Charles through much of his reign. By 794, the king had taken residence, fairly permanently, and it can be assumed that the major phase of construction of his capital was mostly over. Janet Nelson has interpreted this move as indicative of Charlemagne’s desire to substitute Aachen for Rome as locus of power.²⁸⁹ She notes that Charlemagne’s promulgation of the *Admonitio Generalis* in that particular location, even before the palace’s construction, was not an accidental occurrence but reflected his desire to break with the past, as his new capital represented a new beginning, coinciding with his program of reforms.²⁹⁰ The *Admonitio Generalis*’ tone and focus, addressing both lay and clergymen, symbolically draws secular and sacred authority into Charles’ hands. The tangible draining of power from Rome, not only established an ideological break from ancient times, but also affected at least the perception of papal authority.²⁹¹

Charles’ role as king of the Franks, assigned him the burden of overseeing the physical, moral and spiritual wellbeing of the various peoples assembled under his dominion. The

²⁸⁸ RFA, Carolingian Chronicles, p.47. The RFA entry for 765 placed Pippin at Aachen also, Carolingian Chronicles, p. 44.

²⁸⁹ Janet L. Nelson, “Aachen as a Place of Power”, in Topographies of Power in Early Medieval Europe, edited by Frans Theuws, Mayke B. de Jong and Carine Van Rhijn, eds., (Leiden: Brill, 2001) pp. 217-41.

²⁹⁰ Hincmar of Rheims’ later adaptation of likely Adalard of Corbie’s *De ordine palatii*. Nelson, Aachen, p.10.

²⁹¹ What is implied or referenced by the use of the word “Rome” can vary significantly depending on place, time and context.

enactment of this crucial task not only entitled, but also demanded Charles shoulder the additional responsibility of overseeing all aspects of the running of his kingdom.²⁹² This mission was overtly proclaimed through the acclamation of “*Rex et Sacerdos*” which greeted the king at the Council of Frankfurt in 794.²⁹³ He was therefore positioned as the current, legitimate heir to the royal priesthood whose transmission is presented in the genealogy opening Matthew’s gospel and exposed in Alcuin’s commentary. Einhard contributes to this depiction by stressing Charles’ concern for the exact performance of the liturgy, his humility and daily mass attendance, creating an almost monastic aura for the king, a most generous categorization given Charles’ duties as warlord and his boisterous private life.²⁹⁴ The chapel at Aachen was a municipal church in the diocese of Liège and as such, the added symbolism of Charles providing the earthly path to salvation was likely not lost on those who were baptized under the auspices of the ruler’s sanctuary.²⁹⁵ The palace complex displayed a collection of *spolia* and other objects brought from Rome and Ravenna. These objects’ relocation and recontextualization echoed Constantine’s own *bricolage* in the artificial past he created for his new capital, and testified to an unequivocal desire for a new beginning.

²⁹² The duty to oversee the effective and orthodox ecclesiastics, and the articulation of the duties and roles of the king as simultaneously ‘*officium and ministerium*’. Deshman, Exalted Servant, p.416.

²⁹³ Paulinus of Aquileia used that term to refer to Charles and implore the ruler/bishop to wipe away Adoptionism. Mayke de Jong, “Charlemagne’s Church” in Charlemagne: Empire and Society, Joanna Story ed., (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p.111.

²⁹⁴ Einhard, Vita, Ch. 26.

²⁹⁵ Nelson, Aachen.

Charles' awareness of his solitary status, atop this earthly hierarchy, informs the very design of his palace chapel. [Figure 23] The two-storey articulation allowed for the king's elevated status to be if not witnessed, at least experienced, by all partaking to the liturgical celebration below. Enthroned on the upper floor, above the entrance, he could see all, without being seen, selectively appropriating a sense of omnipotence already facilitated by his use of the walkway connecting his chapel to his living quarters. Charlemagne's throne, on the second floor, faces the altar dedicated to the Savior. Both rulers are literally, and symbolically, enjoying a shared elevated status in the universal hierarchy, as they do in the *Laudes Regiae*, and are effectively closer to God. In addition, the dominant feature of the façade was a triumphal arch enveloping the ruler, already the center of attention as the focal point of the enclosed courtyard.

Trier 23's gospel frontispiece design engages the viewer by presenting him with the figure of Christ, appearing frontally, under an arch. [Figures 1-4] The arch is a marker of triumph and glorification, but also a two dimensional transcription of a three-dimensional architectural space. Therefore, the Trier codex frontispieces could not only pack multivalent biblical and exegetical meanings, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, but also intentionally reference the Christ in Majesty mosaic originally adorning the Aachen chapel dome. The extensive inscription unfolding along its inner octagon, between the ground and first floors, further strengthened Charles' status as chosen by God, and reads as follows:

Cum lapides vivi pacis conpage ligantur,
 Inque pares numeros Omnia convenient,
 Claret opus domini, totam qui construit aulam,
 Effectusque piis dat studiis hominum,
 Quorum perpetui decoris structura manebit,
 Si perfecta auctor protegat atque regat:

Sic deus hoc tutum stabili fundamine templum,
Quod Karolus princeps condidit, esse velit.²⁹⁶

Once the living stones have been joined together in peaceful union,
and all the measurements and numbers are in agreement throughout,
the works of the lord who created this great hall shall shine forth brightly.
The completed edifice crowns the pious efforts of the people, whose work
Shall stand as a monument of eternal beauty if the Almighty protects and
rules over it. May it therefore please God to watch over this temple which
Charles our prince (princeps) has established on solid ground.²⁹⁷

Reference to the “Opus Domini” reminds viewers that the splendor surrounding them was not for Charles’ aggrandizement but to glorify God. The inscription also confirms that only through God’s enduring support will this “temple” remain standing, although we are told that it is built on “solid grounds”, which likely refers to the Franks’ orthodoxy and the king’s piety and devotion. The final verse emphasizing ‘Karolus princeps condidit’ is located above the archway leading to the altar, effectively communicating to the congregation Charles’ special status as chosen by God and as builder of the temple, like Solomon in Jerusalem.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ MGH, *Poetae* I, 432. Die Deutschen Inschriften, (31. Band) Die Inschriften des Aachener Doms, 1992, p. 6.

²⁹⁷ As translated in Nicoletta Isar Celica Iherusalem Carolina: Imperial Eschatology and light Apocalypticism in the Palatine Chapel at Aachen, p. 322.

²⁹⁸ Additional references to the temple of Solomon emerge in the central plan design of the palace chapel and its potential indebtedness to the Dome of the Rock, the sacred building currently standing on the temple’s original location. Claims that the current throne recalls the throne of Solomon due to its stepped design may not be substantiated, as this might be a replacement. Allusions to the Heavenly Jerusalem are suggested in the 144 feet measurement of the perimeter, reflecting the 144 cubits of the heavenly city (Rev. 21:17). In addition, it is likely that Charlemagne always intended the Aachen chapel to be a burial site and as such, it fits into long standing traditions, including the Holy Sepulcher. These potential sources of inspirations present a refreshing alternative to

Trier 23 actively participates in Alcuin's inscription of the Carolingian dynasty in the line of divinely sanctioned kings, granting them much agency in the unfolding of salvation history. As will be addressed at length in Chapter 3, the manuscript opens with the earliest extant copy of Alcuin's exegesis on Hebrew Names forming the genealogy of Christ in Matthew's first chapter. Luke's genealogy focuses on world history, listing Christ's ancestors in reverse chronological order, ending with Adam. In contrast, Matthew begins with Abraham and arranges three groups of fourteen generations leading to the incarnation, thus focusing on God's covenant with his chosen people and stressing divine intervention in the transmission of kingship.

The elaborate miniature introducing Matthew's preface in the court-produced Lorsch Gospels (Alba Iulia, Biblioteca Documenta Batthyaneum, s.n., page 27), dating probably 810-820, [Figure 24] further corroborates contemporary (or at least only slightly later) interest in this biblical passage, and may constitute evidence of Trier 23's potential influence on court productions.²⁹⁹ The enthroned figure of Christ dominates the composition, as the focal point of both the artist's design and the culmination of the genealogy. Three groups of crowned figures gather around the framed depictions of

the forced and overstated but still widely accepted exclusive San Vitale model. See Nigel Hiscock, "The Aachen Chapel: A Model of Salvation?", in Science in Western and Eastern Civilization in Carolingian Times, Paul Leo Butzer and Dietrich Lohrmann eds., (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1993), pp.115-26.

²⁹⁹ The possibility of a connection with 'established' court productions was already suggested by Bonifatius Fischer in Lateinische Biberlhandschriften im Frühen Mittelalter, *Vetus Latina: Die Reste der Altlateinischen Bibel, Ause der Geschichte der Lateinischen Bibel* 11, (Verlag Herder Freiburg, 1985), p. 163 where he stated "Das Capitulare ist wie der Ada-Handschrift vom Typ Λ^a."

Abraham, holding a book, David, bearing a cross topped staff and Jechonias.³⁰⁰ All three point to Christ, drawing attention to the one who came to fulfill the promise. As noted earlier, Old Testament models including David and Solomon, as well as Josiah, with whom Charlemagne directly identified in the *Admonitio Generalis*' preface informed Carolingian concepts of kingship. However, these exempla, as confirmed in the Lorsh Gospels miniature, primarily operated as forerunners to better our understanding of the kingship of Christ. This interpretation echoes the Montpellier Psalter's depiction of David and Christ discussed earlier. The three-fold parallel between Charles as the new David, himself '*christus*', as a type of Christ through his coronation and anointing, was more fully expressed in the visual unfolding of the mid-ninth century Vivian Bible (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat. 1) frontispieces discussed at the beginning of this chapter. [Figures 8, 9, 10]

Bede's homily on Matthew's opening chapter explains: "Israel means 'a man seeing God'".³⁰¹ Identifying the Franks as the new Israel reveals Charles' privileged access to the divine. This belief visually materializes in the design of the Aachen chapel and in the Trier codex, where each of the gospel frontispieces confront the anticipated royal audience with a multi-layered composition where the bust-length figure of the youthful Christ emerges under an arch accompanied by the apocalyptic beasts in

³⁰⁰ Charlemagne identifies with Josiah in the preface to the *Admonitio Generalis*, stating that just like the OT king he sought to "restore to God's service, by inspecting, correcting, and exhorting, the kingdom that God had committed to him." Quoted in Pierre Riché, *The Carolingians: A Family who Forged Europe*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), p.117

³⁰¹ Bede the Venerable, *Homilies on the Gospels, Book One, Advent to Lent*, translated and edited by Lawrence T. Martin & David Hurst OSB, Cistercian Studies Series 110, (Homilies, 1.4, p. 40). This concept relates to Gregory's own homilies on Ezekiel, where he emphasizes that the elects will be the ones seeing God on the Day of Judgment. *Homilies on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, Translated by Theodosia Tomkinson, 2nd edition, (Etna, CA, 2008).

medallions. These frontispieces, which Frederick Van der Meer discarded as “curious”³⁰² in the two lines he devoted to this manuscript in his otherwise seminal work on *Maiestas Domini* imagery, eloquently convey the four gospels’ harmony and visually reflect the Trier manuscript’s elaborate assemblage of prefatory texts, stressing this unity. Christ’s constant presence is a reminder of the gospels’ origin, flowing from a single source, like the four rivers of paradise, while the four medallions recall the rings of the Ark of the Covenant.³⁰³

Christ’s identification as the Ark, proclaimed in Hebrew 9:11, was familiar to Carolingian visual exegetes as articulated in the Gundohinus Gospels (Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 3, fol. 12v) *Maiestas Domini* from 754, [Figure 25] whose evangelist symbols present the closest parallel in form and iconography to the beasts in Trier 23.³⁰⁴ Bede emphasizes Christ’s role of “*verus rex et pontifex*,”³⁰⁵ echoing also “*Rex et Sacerdos*” and referencing Augustine’s observation that “...the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one true King and the one true Priest, the former to rule us, and the latter to make

³⁰² Frederick Van der Meer, *Maiestas Domini: Théophanies de l’apocalypse dans l’art chrétien: Étude sur les origines d’une iconographie special du Christ*, (Vatican City: PIAC, 1938), p.323.

³⁰³ Jennifer O’Reilly has extensively investigated the numerous associations and symbolic meanings underlying these compositions in discussion of sacred quaternities in “Patristic and Insular Traditions of the Evangelists: Exegesis and Iconography of the Four-Symbols Pages”. [online file] Revised version of this article “Patristic and insular traditions of the evangelists: exegesis and iconography,” in A.M. Luiselli Fadda and É.Ó. Carragáin, eds., *Le Isole Britanniche e Roma in Età Romanobarbarica* (Rome: Herder, 1998), pp.49-94.

³⁰⁴ Lawrence Nees, *The Gundohinus Gospels*, *Medieval Academy Books*, No. 95, (Cambridge, MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1987), p.148.

³⁰⁵ Bede, *Homilies* 1.5, states that “Christ is a term of priestly and royal dignity.” p.50.

expiation for us, has shown us how His own figure bore these two parts together, ...”³⁰⁶

The unique depiction of Christ in Trier 23’s Matthew frontispiece, bearing a rectangular jewel or brooch across his chest visually inscribes these categorizations. [Figure 1] I believe this object intentionally recalls the breastplate, worn by High Priests, also found adorning Ezra’s chest in the famous frontispiece of the Codex Amiatinus (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Amiatino I, f.Vr)³⁰⁷ [Figure 26] This image’s established indebtedness to Bede’s commentary on Ezra,³⁰⁸ furthers the correspondence with the Trier frontispiece, for, as Bede explains:

Ezra surely is the type of the Lord Savior since he renewed Scriptures, recalled the people out of captivity to Jerusalem, enriched the house of the Lord with greater gifts, established leaders and rulers beyond the Euphrates who were familiar with the laws of God, ...In similar manner the Lord restored Holy Scripture, which scribes and Pharisees had soiled by their customs or interpreted only according to the letter, since he showed the writings of Moses and the Prophets to be full of deep spiritual meaning, and by sending the Holy Spirit upon them he caused the Apostles and apostolic men to write the New Testament. He led the people out of the Babylonian captivity, and after freeing them brought them to Jerusalem and into the promised land; dying once upon the cross, he redeemed the whole world through his blood, and descending into Hell, he

³⁰⁶ Augustine’s “Harmony on the gospels” Book 1, chapter 3, [www.newadvent.org/fathers]

³⁰⁷ Celia Chazelle has suggested that Alcuin’s familiarity with the Bede couplet atop the Ezra image, attested in his own writings and letters, was a result of his direct knowledge of the manuscript. “Ceolfrid’s Gift to St Peter: the first quire of the *Codex Amiatinus* and the evidence of its Roman destination,” *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 12, No 2 (2003) p. 146, n.49. Alcuin’s *Carm biblicum* “Dum primus pulchro”, *Clavis* (ALC 11.69), p. 87-88 directly quotes the Ezra page text. The *Clavis* authors remark that this poem may have been composed for the dedication of the Aachen chapel.

³⁰⁸ See especially Paul Meyvaert, “Bede, Cassiodorus, and the Codex Amiatinus,” *Speculum*, Vol. 71, No.4 (Oct., 1996), pp. 827-883, and “The Date of Bede’s “In Ezram” and his Image of Ezra in the Codex Amiatinus,” *Speculum*, Vol. 80, No. 4 (Oct. 2005), pp. 1087-1133.

snatched all true Israelites, namely the chosen ones he found there, and leading them in the precincts of the heavenly city, granted them the joys of their promised *heritage*; *daily he gathers the faithful from the tribulations of his earth into the fold of Holy Church and into the eternal kingdom.*³⁰⁹

These accomplishments resonate as powerful precursors to Charles's own reformative efforts including the correction of the biblical text, the education of the clergy, the correct performance of the liturgy, the endowment of churches and most importantly, the spreading of the Christian faith.

For Alcuin, Charlemagne's policies and reforms marked the dawn of a new age, which only distantly echoed the Roman imperial past. The sole acceptable model, which represented the hope of the Christian peoples in these dangerous times was Christ, whose kingship and priesthood had been articulated, explained and understood in a language reflecting Constantine, David and Solomon, but operated on an indubitably higher level. Scholarly fixation on Charles' imperial title has overlooked the actual locus of ideology in the unfolding of this event. The selection of Christmas Day for Charles' imperial coronation is a conscious sign of allegiance to the new era inaugurated by the Incarnation. The Carolingian promotion of the Anno Domini, to record and measure time, and its fairly systematic use in the various Frankish annals further testifies to their Christ-centered view of history.³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ Bede, *In Ezram* quoted in Paul Meyvaert, "Bede, Cassiodorus, and the Codex Amiatinus", pp. 881-882. For a complete translation of the commentary, see Bede on Ezra and Nehemiah, translated with an introduction and notes by Scott DeGregorio. Translated texts for historians 47, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006).

³¹⁰ McKitterick, *Perceptions of the Past*, p.66. She notes the impact of Bede who "made a very strong case for the use of the year of the Incarnation (*annus domini*) as a means of dating Easter." The various annals evolved from Easter tables, and "This dating according to *anno domini* (AD) is associated with the adoption of the Dionysian method

The Imperial Coronation

Pope Leo III's visit to Paderborn in 799, while in exile from Rome, set the stage for the events of Christmas Day 800. Einhard's report of Charles' surprise at the pope's placing the crown on his head ought to be nuanced rather than categorically dismissed as a humility trope. While the event likely resulted from an agreement, the ceremony's actual unfolding,³¹¹ overtly empowering the pontiff, may have not been to Charles' taste.³¹² Leo was in a precarious situation, and knew that Charles would not linger in Rome. Intent on reclaiming at least some illusion of authority, he symbolically gave away what was only his to dispose of following Frankish intervention.³¹³ The weakened papacy and the troubling news of a female ruler in Constantinople, interpreted as a vacancy on the Roman Imperial throne, provided a small window of opportunity for the pope and

for calculating Easter, with the consequence that uniformity in the rhythm of the Christian year was achieved across western [sic] Europe." McKitterick ultimately cautions that the issue of the adoption of AD and the issue of dating Easter should be kept separate. *History and Memory*, p.92ff.

³¹¹ The *Liber Pontificalis* records, "Then with his own hands the venerable pontiff crowned him with a precious crown..." *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis)*, Second Edition, translated with an introduction and commentary by Raymond Davis, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), p.187. For a discussion of the various accounts of this event see Janet Nelson, "Why are there so many different accounts of Charlemagne's Imperial Coronation?" in *Court, Elites and Gendered Power in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 1-27.

³¹² In 813, when Charles passed the title on to his sole surviving legitimate male heir, the ceremony took place at Aachen, and Louis was asked by his father "to take the crown from the altar and place it on his head." Nelson, *Aachen*, p.16. The contrasts with Charles' own imperial coronation are striking. This performance not only excluded the connection with the Eternal city, but it also excluded the pope.

³¹³ The Lorsch Annals report that following Byzantine practice where the patriarch would bow in reverence (*proskynesis*) in front of the newly crowned emperor, Leo knelt in front of Emperor Charles. As Pierre Riché points, out Leo likely regretted this gesture of overt submission and as such, this aspect of the ceremony is not mentioned in the *Liber Pontificalis*, *The Carolingians*, pp. 121-122.

Charles to seize upon this perceived transgression and turn it to their advantage. This political maneuvering possibly occasioned a rapprochement with the Abbasid Caliph,³¹⁴ Harun-al-Rashid. Harun allowed access to the holy sites and gifts from Jerusalem, which he controlled, to be presented to Charlemagne, a gesture of mutual respect echoing the old adage that the enemy of my enemy is my friend.³¹⁵ Isaac the Jew returns in 802 with luxurious gifts and an elephant, the famed Abul-Abbas.³¹⁶ Papal vulnerability and the unusual situation in Constantinople buttressed Alcuin's promotion of his *Imperium Christianum*, headed by a king deeply engaged in imitating Christ. In a letter addressed to Charles in 799, Alcuin reflects upon the three seats of authority, with the pope and the emperor in Constantinople occupying the first two, which they had lamentably disgraced. Alcuin continues:

[...] the third is a throne on which our Lord Jesus Christ has placed you to rule over our Christian people, with great power, clearer insight and more exalted royalty than the aforementioned dignitaries. On you alone the whole safety of the churches of Christ depends. You punish wrong-doers, guide the straying, console the sorrowing and advance the good.³¹⁷

³¹⁴ The title of Emperor, as King of Kings, becomes a sort of Christian counterpart to the Islamic Caliph. The c.800 Valenciennes Apocalypse manuscript, (Valenciennes, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 99) clearly depicts the king of kings sporting Carolingian garb and crown, while the Whore of Babylon looks decidedly Byzantine.

³¹⁵ Einhard, *Vita*, Chapter 16 referred to the old Greek adage that it is better to have a Frank as your friend than your neighbor.

³¹⁶ Einhard claims, likely erroneously, that the elephant was the only one Harun possessed and that he sent it to Charles following his special request. *Vita*, Ch. 16.

³¹⁷ Allott, *Letters*, letter 103, dated May 799, pp.110-111, #174 in MGH, *Epistolae Karoli Aevi*, vol.2, pp. 288-289.

Two of the pillars of this earthly triad of authority had now crumbled and it fell upon its last unfazed member to rise up and assume sole leadership of the Christian people. The emphasis “on you alone” adds to the sense of urgency, but also conveys Alcuin’s view of Charles’ sanctified destiny.³¹⁸

At the confluence of the evidence discussed here emerges an invigorated conception of christomimetic kingship, which infused Carolingian political discourse and ideology on either side of the year 800. While Old Testament and ancient roman models such as David, Solomon and Constantine undoubtedly permeated the fashioning of this new type of kingship, the Carolingian embraced the multi-layered complexity of their negotiating their Frankish, imperial and Christian pasts. Adapting earlier exegesis on the kingship of Christ elucidated via David’s accomplishments and writings, they formulated a model of kingship, which was the most worthy of emulation, the highest level of aspiration and yet remained relatable.

The Trier codex frontispieces provide the imagined and intended royal viewer with a reminder of the standard against which his own actions would be measured. Trier 23’s unique textual and visual components can only be truly appreciated when considered alongside other manifestations of this essential principle. Charlemagne’s royal *signum* communicated his and Christ’s common purpose, while also reminding the Frankish king of Christ’s omnipotence. The hierarchical articulation of the Aachen chapel informed those who experienced it that in pursuing their duty, the Franks endeavored to create an

³¹⁸ In another letter, also dated 799, Alcuin tells Charles of his happiness at the news the papal situation is being resolved satisfactorily. His wording implies that God guided Charles’ actions. Charles emerges as the primary agent of God on earth. “All is safeguarded by your judgment alone, so that by the wise counsel given you by God what is wrong may be prudently put right, and what is right preserved, and what divine goodness has mercifully done may be extolled...” Allott, Letters, letter 104, p.112.

Imperium Christianum, “on earth as it is in heaven.” As this evidence suggests, the concept of christomimetic kingship informed exegetical, political, and ideological discourse as early as the closing years of the eighth century. While these motifs permeated official proclamations, actions and artistic patronage, they were most prominently expressed in Alcuin’s works and thoughts and applied specifically to Charlemagne, and as such are essential to our understanding of Trier 23.

Chapter 3

SACRED GENEALOGY, HUMBLE TREASURES AND THE CAROLINGIAN LEADER OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD: TRIER 23'S TEXTUAL COMPONENTS

The previous chapter examined the political and ideological context favorable to the development of christomimetic kingship, as it applied to Charlemagne in the closing years of the eighth century. Trier 23's textual and decorative components, and their connections to the issues and concerns outlined in Chapter 2 will be addressed below and in Chapter 4 respectively. These parallel investigations will uncover additional details about the circumstances informing the creation of the manuscript and help determine its place and time of origin.

The Trier codex comprises two quarto-size volumes of approximately similar dimensions; the first contains 112 folios and the second 121. The extensive decorative program will be discussed in Chapter 4 and a detailed account of the contents of both volumes is located in the appendix. The first volume opens with introductory materials common to all gospels, and significant additions: Alcuin's commentary on Hebrew names (fols. 1r-4v) concluding with a dedication poem (fol.4v); Jerome's letter to Pope Damassus (fols.5r- 5v), introducing his new translation of the biblical text and, discussion of the Eusebian canon tables, beginning *Novum Opus*; his prologue to the four gospels,

beginning *Plures fuisse* (fols. 6v-7v); the preface to Matthew's gospel, opening *Matheus ex iudea*, (fols. 8r-8v); Eusebius' letter to Carpianus explaining his system of canon tables, beginning *Ammonius Quidem* (fol. 8v); the Pseudo-Jerome composition about the canon tables, beginning *Sciendum etiam* (fol. 9r),³¹⁹ attributed to him in the manuscript via the introductory HIERO NIMUS DAMASSO PAPAE titulus, and a twenty-line poem, sometimes attributed to Alcuin in the scholarship, opening *Matheus e sacro* (fols. 9v-10r). These prefatory texts not only introduce the manuscript's main components, but also elucidate their form and function and attest to their authenticity. Alcuin's exegesis on Hebrew names, and its appended poetic dedication follow this pattern. As will be demonstrated, the poem not only addresses its intended recipient directly, but also specifically references the commentary it accompanies. The redundancy emerging from this extensive assemblage ought not to be dismissed as a shortcoming, exposing the patron's assumed lack of discernment. On the contrary, when considered alongside Trier 23's elaborate decorative scheme, notably the recurring gospel frontispiece designs, this collection of introductory texts demonstrates the patron's intention to confirm the authenticity, orthodoxy and harmony of the four gospels.

The next opening marks the beginning of the lavishly decorated canon tables, displayed in a relatively rare sixteen-page cycle (fols. 10v-18r). The gospels of Matthew and Mark appear next in volume one, while Luke and John occupy volume two. Mark's,

³¹⁹ Robert M. Walker observed Samuel Berger's tone in his dismissal of this piece as written in poor style and ultimately useless as the information it provides already appears *Novum Opus* and Eusebius' letter. As this dissertation demonstrates, the very criticism Berger levied against this supposed undesirable redundancy may have been the source of its appeal to the Trier codex' creators. Robert M. Walker "Illustrations to the Priscillian Prologues in the Gospel Manuscripts of the Carolingian Ada School", *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 30, No.1 (Mar.1948), p. 1.

Luke's and John's gospels are uniformly introduced by a sequence comprising chapter lists, their respective prologues, each announced by a decorated initial, followed by full-page frontispieces, combined with the incipit for each, facing additional ornamented initials marking the start of the gospel texts. Matthew's gospel uniquely deviates from this format. Following the lengthy canon table series, folio 19v introduces Matthew's chapter lists with a full-page IN ligature. [Figure 28] This unusual feature is a compromise necessitated by Matthew's prologue appearing among the general prefaces, consequently denying the scribe the opportunity to devote an entire page to its opening initial, in contrast to the other three prologues. This resourceful adjustment testifies to the manuscript creator's concern for achieving a harmonious and balanced layout, anticipating the viewer's experience of the manuscript as it unfolds visually through space and time.

An additional feature distinguishes the opening sequence of Matthew's gospel from its counterparts. Folio 22r bears the last few lines of his chapter lists, and the verso, left blank at the time of the manuscript's creation, now features an exquisite *Maiestas Domini* miniature painted in the Ottonian period. [Figure 5] This transformation reflects the active appropriation of the vestiges of the Carolingian past at the turn of the first millennium, which will be the focus of Chapter 5.

Trier 23 ultimately devotes 18 folios to the general prefatory section, including the canon tables. This extensive assemblage promotes redundancy and evinces the patron's clear disregard for economy of parchment in the production of the manuscript. The inclusion of the arguably superfluous Priscillian prologues to introduce each gospel confirms this preoccupation, as the information they provide already concisely appears in

Jerome's *Plures Fuisse*.³²⁰ The *Matheus e sacro* poem, the last textual component of this common prefatory section, recapitulates this material yet again, albeit in verse and even more concisely than Jerome's text. Alcuin's own *Vita Willibrordi* was a reworking of earlier sources, presented in both a prose and a verse version. He tells Beornard in the dedicatory prologue that the prose version was intended for church readings and the verse one for private devotional use. This demonstrates Alcuin's understanding and embracing of the benefits of expressing the same information in a variety of ways for effect and to engage with specific audiences.³²¹ The poem seamlessly transitions into the unusual gospel frontispieces whose core design, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, showcases the multivalent harmony of the sacred accounts. This quasi-encyclopedic approach confirms the authenticity and orthodoxy of the gospels, verified in the seemingly endless modes of articulating this essential truth.³²² Supplemented by the high quality and clarity of the script, and the careful corrections, this feature suggests that Trier 23's patron may have

³²⁰ Michelle Brown noted the extensive assemblage of prefatory materials ahead of the gospel texts in the Lindisfarne Gospels, which like Trier 23, presents the canon tables over sixteen folios, but unlike the Trier codex, does not feature the *Sciendum Etiam* text. *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), p. 177. Patrick McGurk also remarked on the seemingly superfluous inclusion of the Monarchian or Priscillian prologues to each gospel in the presence of Jerome's texts. "Introduction to Latin Gospel Books from A.D. 400 to A.D. 800", reprinted in his collected studies, *Gospel Books and Early Latin Manuscripts*, (Aldershot : Ashgate/Variorum, 1998), VI, p.8.

³²¹ *Clavis*, (ALC 92), pp. 507-511.

³²² Alyce Jordan has demonstrated how later medieval modes of story telling not only embraced but actively sought to tell and retell stories in a variety of ways, a sort of modulations, or variations on a theme, which she saw being used with great success in the stained glass of Louis IX's Ste. Chapelle. "Seeing Stories in the Windows of the Saint-Chapelle: The Ars Poetriae and the Poetics of Visual Narrative", *Mediaevalia* 23 (2002), pp. 39-60. I believe a similar sensitivity to this confirmation of veracity and orthodoxy through the multiplicity of possible articulations may be at play here.

intended the manuscript to operate as a reference work. Donatien de Bruyne recognized the quality of Trier 23's prefatory texts by featuring the manuscript in his 1920 reference work, Prefaces de la bible latine.³²³ The two-volume format, which possibly serves a symbolic function elucidated in the dedication poem, as will be shown below, also facilitated copying.

These many textual and visual restatements of the gospels' authenticity and concordance additionally attest to the reliability and orthodoxy of the Latin translation they introduce. The Carolingian intelligentsia's promotion of the systematic diffusion of the corrected biblical text, and the concern for minimizing transcription errors, is documented in various sources including the *Admonitio Generalis*, likely redacted by Alcuin, as seen in Chapter 2. Charlemagne's concern with the revision of the biblical text, a task he had entrusted to Alcuin, has been established.³²⁴ While such lengthy prefatory sections are not the norm,³²⁵ any preliminary conjectures about the significance

³²³ Donatien deBruyne, Prefaces de la bible latine, (Namur, 1920).

³²⁴ Alcuin's letter (c.800) to Gisla, abbess at Chelles, and Rotrude, apologizing for the delay in sending the commentary on John he had promised them, specifically mentions he was occupied at the revision of the biblical text, on Charles' order. *Clavis, Expositio in Iohannis Evangelium*, (ALC 51), pp. 371-375. Allott, *Letters*, letter 93, pp. 104-105. See also François L. Ganshof, "Charlemagne et la revision du texte de la Bible", Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome 44 (1974), pp. 271-281.

³²⁵ Patrick McGurk points out that the makeup of the general prefaces commonly comprised *Novum Opus*, *Plures fuisse*, *Amonius Quidem* and the ten canon tables, often supplemented in the eighth century and beyond by the pseudo-Jerome's *Sciendum etiam*. The gospel texts per se were then equipped with their own respective *argumentum* and chapter lists. To these, Insular patrons supplemented lists of Hebrew names. "The Texts at the opening of the book" in The Book of Kells, MS 58, Trinity College Dublin: Commentary, edited by Peter Fox, (Luzern: Faksimile Verlag, 1990), pp.37. He also observed that pre-seventh century gospel books rarely included prefaces and chapter lists, with only the Irish pocket gospel books remaining attached to that earlier practice of

of such an elaborate assemblage must be mitigated by the fact that a large number of surviving manuscripts contain partially or extensively damaged or even entirely missing opening quires. Still, some tentative conclusions can be attempted on account of Trier 23's extensive selection of prefatory materials, the emphasis on Matthew's gospel, the attention to Hebrew names, and their placement at the start of the manuscript.

Matthew's Primacy

Matthew's gospel is given primacy through a variety of devices, including singling out the commentary on his opening chapter for presentation at the beginning of the manuscript, and inserting the gospel's prologue alongside the general prefaces. This privileged status is further communicated in Matthew's gospel frontispiece, which uniquely deviates from the otherwise standardized design through Christ's garment, featuring a large jeweled brooch, interpreted in Chapter 2 as a priestly breastplate. [Figure 1] In the context of the Trier manuscript, this iconographic oddity visually reiterates the core message of Matthew's selective genealogy, the transmission of the royal priesthood to Christ. Therefore, Christ emerges triumphant, under an arch, as the king of kings, but also as the high priest, at the culmination of the Davidic line, the literal embodiment of the fulfilled prophecy. The title of High Priest, as it applied to Christ, is uncovered in numerous biblical passages and their exegesis, most notably in the Psalms (110) and Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews to which Alcuin devoted a commentary.³²⁶ The

limited prefatory materials. McGurk, "The Irish Pocket Gospel book", reprinted in his *Gospel Books*, I, p.263.

³²⁶ *Clavis*, (ALC 53), *Expositio in sancti Pauli Epistulam ad Hebraeos*, pp. 375-377. Raffaele Savigni, highlight's Alcuin's emphasis on the superiority of Christ's High

concept of *Imitatio Christi*, discussed in the previous chapter, demonstrated how Christ's dual role as king and priest was in turn adapted and projected onto Charles as the sole desirable model of kingship worthy of his emulation. Charles' acclamation as "*Rex et Sacerdos*" at the Council of Frankfurt in 794 attests to this concept extending beyond Alcuin's own aspirations.

Matthew's symbolic depiction as an angel or man communicates his gospel's emphasis on Christ's humanity, as attested by the genealogy opening his account. This focus is championed in the Trier codex, not only in the placement of the commentary on this particular passage at the start of the manuscript, but also in the recurring representation of Christ in human form in the gospel frontispieces. His presence is a reminder that like the four rivers of paradise, the sometime disparate accounts flow from a common source. The decision to represent Christ in human form additionally corroborates the actuality of the incarnation. Christ's status as heir to the Davidic royal priesthood disproved (alleged or actual) contemporary heretical claims that he was the adopted Son of God. As Raffaele Savigni observed, Alcuin's rebuttal of Adoptionism purposely avoided referring to Christ as "subsistentia" and instead favored the term "persona", identifying Christ as the natural son of God, in contrast to all other Christians, who are God's adopted children.³²⁷ Alcuin played an active role in the formulation of the

Priesthood and on Christ as "the one called to calm God's wrath". The emphasis resides on Christ as the true sacerdotal and sacrificial model. This interpretation is reflected most compellingly in the opening of the Prayerbook of Charles the Bald where the kneeling ruler tells the crucified Christ to forgive his wounds. "Le commentaire d'Alcuin sur L'Épître aux Hébreux et le thème du sacrifice" in *Alcuin de York à Tours, Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de L'Ouest*, Tome 111, No. 3 (2004), pp.245-267.

³²⁷ Savigni, *Sacrifice*, p.254. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Carolingians' timely and vigorous response to this perceived heresy intended to provide them with the opportunity

official Carolingian refutation of Adoptionism, and redacted two tracts against Felix of Urgel and Elipandus of Toledo,³²⁸ and directly engaged the former in a debate at the Council of Frankfurt in 794. Alcuin's composition of a commentary on the gospel passage celebrating Christ's earthly genealogy seems most appropriate and timely. It is not coincidental that the same event where Charlemagne presided over the resolution of both secular and religious matters in the realm was the locus of Tassilo's last public appearance and the stage for the Frankish rebuttal of Adoptionism. The acclamation "*rex et sacerdos*" was consequently publically validated.

Sacred Genealogy: The Commentary on Hebrew Names

Trier 23's extensive collection of canonical prefatory materials is supplemented by two texts of debated Alcuinian origin. The three-part commentary on the Hebrew names listed in Matthew's opening chapter (1:1-17) which opens the manuscript is immediately followed by a poetic dedication naming Albinus as its author and by extension as the donor of a gift the poem also mentions. The concise titulus IN TER PRE

to reclaim the aura of guardians of orthodoxy tarnished by the papal rejection of the *Opus Caroli*. John C. Cavadini claims that the Carolingian misunderstood and to some degree misrepresented the Adoptionist position, adding that "Thus, from 799 until the present, it is the perspective of Alcuin that has dominated our reading of the Spanish adoptionists." The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul 785-820, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), p. 105.

³²⁸ *Adversus Elipandum Toletanum*, Clavis, (ALC 5), pp. 12-14 extensively lays out in the last two books of this treaty the orthodoxy position on Christ's dual nature and the veracity of his incarnation, and *Adversus Felicem Urgellitanum episcopum*, Clavis, (ALC 6), pp. 14-16. To these must be added the various letters of presentation accompanying these tracts and as well as two additional missives Alcuin wrote to the abbot of the monastery of Liébana in Spain, Clavis, (ALC 45. [312]), and to Elipandus of Toledo and other bishops of Spain in Charlemagne's name, Clavis, (ALC 45. [313]), pp. 348-350. See also Cavadini, Adoptionism, esp. Ch. 4. Felix and Alcuin, pp. 71-102.

TA TIO NOMINUM introduces the text at the top of folio 1v.³²⁹ [Figure 28] A simple outlined initial H, indented left, occupies five lines of text in height, and appears underneath, and somewhat disconnected from this heading. This layout suggests either an incomplete title occasioned by the absence of the last word of *Interpretatio Nominum Hebraicorum*, itself a later title for the commentary,³³⁰ or a deliberate, albeit unusual, spelling of the opening word “abraham” as “Habraham”. While the former explanation reasonably accounts for a transcription error, a scribal occupational hazard, in this instance, the second interpretation must be favored on account of the unusual spelling’s reoccurrence in the commentary. At the top of folio 2v, the conflation “cumhabraam” is corrected to “cumhabraham” by way of inserting a small “h” above and between the two “a”s. This correction was performed in the same ink and hand as the rest of the text and is consequently contemporary to the transcription of the commentary. The spelling, thus adjusted, must have satisfied the conscientious corrector who might have otherwise altered the patronym further had he found additional errors. Further support for this interpretation emerges in the commentary’s appearance in the later ninth century gospel

³²⁹ Extensive mold damage on this first folio renders part of the text, especially in the bottom half, barely legible.

³³⁰ The *Clavis* uses the longer title, *Interpretationes nominum hebraicorum progenitorum Iesu Christi*, (ALC 62), pp. 4468-469, which according to Olivier Szerwiniack relies on Migne, *PL*, volume 100 (col. 725-734) which transcribes the Munich Ms (lat. 14311), itself with no title, but rendered pretty much illegible on account of the insertion of the 17th century edition by Duchesne, of a now lost manuscript. Olivier Szerwiniack, *Les Interpretationes nominum Hebraicorum progenitorum Iesu Christi* (ALC 62): une oeuvre authentique d’Alcuin”, *Alcuin de York à Tours*, p. 291. The two earliest known manuscripts of the commentary, Trier 23 and Wolfenbüttel, Herz.-Aug.-Bibl., Weiss. 26 (4110), both gospel books, only include “Interpretatio Nominum”.

book, now in Wolfenbüttel, Herz.-Aug.-Bibl., Weiss. 26 (4110), which repeats Trier 23's condensed *titulus*, and the unusual "Habraham" spelling.³³¹

Spelling idiosyncrasies occur throughout the commentary, and reveal the scribe's tendency to insert "h's" where they are not usually found. This characteristic has been recognized as an insular symptom³³² and may consequently help elucidate the circumstances surrounding the manuscript's creation. However, determining exactly how and when these spelling incongruities infiltrated the text is challenging. Their presence may be indicative of the author's or the scribe's origin or may reflect practices at the writing center where the manuscript was produced. To complicate matters, original compositions began their existence on loose parchment leaves at the hand of their respective authors, or as transcriptions from oral dictations, committed to parchment by loyal scribes or secretaries, a practice famously captured in the *Registrum Gregory* fragment (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 171/1626) depicting Pope Gregory and his curious and eager scribe, peering from behind a curtain, and taking dictation on a wooden tablet.

³³¹ C. Grifoni, *Otfidi Wizanbvurgensis Glossae in Matthaem, Corpus Christianorum, continuatio Mediaevalis CC*, (Turnhout, Brepols Publishers, 2003), p. 38. In this manuscript, the commentary appears on folio 11r, and does not repeat the second instance of the "habraham" spelling found in Trier 23. Szerwiniack further noted that Trier 23 and W26 "sont apparentés, sans toutefois être la copie l'un de l'autre." *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 292.

³³² Julian Brown has discussed spelling and scriptural incongruities and their likely origins, oddities. *A Paleographer's View. The Selected Writing of Julian Brown*, J. Batley, M.P. Brown and J. Roberts, eds., (London, 1993), see especially, "Tradition, Imitation and Invention in the Insular Handwriting of the Seventh and Eighth Centuries," pp. 179-200 and "The Irish Element in the Insular System of Scripts to c. A.D. 850," pp. 201-220. Michelle Brown, "Preaching with the Pen: the Contribution of Insular Scribes to the Transmission of Sacred Text, from the 6th to 9th Centuries", The University of London, Annual Paleography Lecture, Thursday, 22 January 2004.

The presence of *Hebrew names* in gospel books has also been identified as an insular feature.³³³ This broad category encompasses materials ranging from complete or abbreviated lists of names, gathered at the beginning of manuscripts or divided at the front of each gospel, to more or less extensive interpretations. The focused exegesis ahead of the Trier codex must be distinguished from more straightforward lists of names, arranged in columns, alphabetically or in order of appearance, as in the Book of Kells (Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS 58, A. I. 6).³³⁴

The presence of Hebrew names accompanied by systematic interpretations uncovering their literal, allegorical, moral, or spiritual significance epitomizes an insular practice of early medieval book production, possibly originating in the seventh century, with a continental counterpart localized especially at the monastery of Echternach, situated only a few miles from Trier. Nancy Netzer's study of this writing center further established Echternach's predilection for placing these commentaries at the beginning of codices.³³⁵ The very presence of a commentary on Hebrew names and its location at the front of the Trier codex may therefore reflect this practice whilst concurrently showcasing the text's novelty, distinct from the first canonical composition that immediately follows, Jerome's *Novum Opus*, contrastingly introduced by an elaborate initial "B". [Figure 29]

³³³ See Olivier Szerwiniack, "Des recueil d'interprétations de noms hébreux chez les Irlandais et le Wisigoth Theodulph", *Scriptorium* XLVIII, 2 (1994), pp. 187-258. Netzer notes that this Insular practice (with a possible Italian antecedent) has a continental continuation in Echternach. *Interplay*, pp. 22-23.

³³⁴ McGurk, "An edition of the abbreviated and selective set of Hebrew names found in the Book of Kells", *Gospel Books*, IX, pp. 102-132,

³³⁵ Netzer, *Interplay*, p. 22.

The Clavis Scriptorum Latinorum Medii Aevi-Auctores Galliae volume devoted to the works attributed to Alcuin lists the commentary and its appended dedication in a single entry (ALC 62) under the heading *Interpretationes Nominum Hebraicorum Progenitorum Iesu Christi*.³³⁶ As noted, this title does not reflect the text's introduction in either the Trier codex, the earliest known copy of the commentary, or the later ninth century Wolfenbüttel manuscript. The latter also contains the dedication and the *Matheus e sacro* poem concluding Trier 23's prefatory section. The commentary's only other surviving ninth century occurrence, in a manuscript devoted to exegeses on Matthew's gospel, is now München, BSB, lat. 14311.³³⁷

The Clavis names Jerome's *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum Nominum*³³⁸ as the primary source for Alcuin's exposition. Jerome's influence undoubtedly trickled down in various exegeses on Hebrew names composed throughout the early medieval period and beyond. However, this oversimplification ignores the range of literal and conceptual sources discernibly at play in this particular case.³³⁹ The exclusive focus on

³³⁶ Clavis p.468-469.

³³⁷ The manuscript is dated to the second half of the ninth century and originated from St Emmeram, Ratisbon. According to Szerwiniack, this is the version printed in Migne's edition. To the manuscripts listed in the Clavis and *Carindex* [<http://www.tcnj.edu/~chazelle/carindex.html>] Szerwiniack has recently added Kassel, Gesamthochschulbibliothek, Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt, 2° Ms. Theol.60, f°3, which he dates the second half of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century. Szerwiniack, *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 290.

³³⁸ Clavis, p.468.

³³⁹ The Clavis also mentions the core of the text as comprising the Pseudo-Bede homily (number 55) recited on the celebration of the Virgin's birth. Szerwinack has argued instead that this work post-date Alcuin's commentary and is actually influenced by it. Aiden Breen made a similar observation in his edition of *Ailerani Interpretatio Mystica et Moralis Progenitorum Domini Iesu Christi*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995), p.69.

Matthew's opening chapter challenges claims of an unmitigated dependency on Jerome, who appends a discrete commentary to most of the sacred names found in each of the four gospels. The alphabetical groups of names are then arranged and interpreted in their respective order of appearance in each gospel text. Alcuin's condensed interpretations, limited to a single word or phrase in the opening round of literal interpretations, recall Jerome's, but the range of sources must be expanded.³⁴⁰

The Trier commentary appends to the Hebrew names first a literal, then a spiritual or mystical and finally a moral interpretation. As Olivier Szerwiniack points out, the second layer of interpretation applies to Christ, and the third to all Christians.³⁴¹ In the context of the Trier codex, it can be inferred that these interpretations, while applicable to all Christians, were specifically directed at the commentary's intended recipient, Charlemagne. Like Abraham, literally defined as "pater multarum gentium," Charles ruled over various peoples assembled under his Christian leadership through God's will and ongoing support.

Szerwiniack's comprehensive investigation of *Hebrew Names* exegeses has uncovered more pertinent sources while confirming Alcuin's authorship. Noting only a superficial dependency on Jerome, Szerwiniack highlights Alcuin's use of the eighth century *Liber questiones in Evangelliis* as a primary source for his literal interpretations.

³⁴² The *Liber* is itself indebted to Frigulus' commentary on Matthew from c.700.³⁴³ These

³⁴⁰ Although Szerwiniack suggested that, "il est probable qu'Alcuin n'a pas utilisé Jérôme directement pour écrire sa première partie", *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 295

³⁴¹ Szerwiniack, *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 297.

³⁴² The *Liber*'s format, may have appealed to Alcuin, fond of questions and answer texts as seen for example in Chapter 2's discussion of the Rhetoric of Alcuin and

sources may bear witness to the presence of Hiberno-Latin exegesis on the continent and their diffusion through absorption in new compositions.³⁴⁴ These elusive sources' availability on the continent may be circumstantially substantiated on account of the suggested influx of 'obscure' insular compositions upon Alcuin's personal request.

An additional avenue of investigation consists of isolating potential inspirations in texts focusing on the Matthean genealogy, and exploring Alcuin's motivation for singling out this particular biblical passage for his exegetical exposition. The *Interpretatio*

Charlemagne. See E. Ann Matter, "Alcuin's Question-And-Answer Texts", *Rivista di Storia della Filosofia*, No. 4 (1990), pp. 645-656. Szerwiniack references Jean Rittmueller's recent edition of the *Liber questionum in Evangeliiis*, "un commentaire hiberno-latin anonyme écrit dans la première moitié du VIII^e siècle (ca. 725) peut-être à Bangor." *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 296. *Liber Questionium in Evangeliiis*, edited by J. Rittmueller, *Corpus Christianorum*, Series Latina CVIII F, *Scriptores Celtigenae*, Pars V, (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2003).

³⁴³ Known today from a single manuscript from the second half of the ninth century, now Halle, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt, Quedlinbur 127. Szerwiniack, *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 296.

³⁴⁴ Bernhard Bischoff's influential 1954 article "Wendpunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter," *Sacris Eruditio* 6 (1954), pp. 189-279, available in an English translation by Colm O'Grady, "Turning -Points in the History of Latin Exegesis in the Early Middle Ages," in *Biblical Studies: The Medieval Irish Contribution*, edited by Martin McNamara, (Dublin, 1976), pp. 74-160, established the basis for the recognition of a discrete Hiberno-Latin tradition of biblical exegesis in the early medieval period. Michal Gorman has been the most vocal opponent of this concept, questioning the very existence of reliably identifiable and distinctively Insular symptoms that would allow for the proposed compendium. The tone and nature of the accusations levied against Bischoff and his scholarship appear sometime disrespectful and have in turn generated virulent retorts from Bischoff supporters. Michael Gorman, "The Myth of Hiberno-Latin exegesis", *Revue Bénédictine*, 110 (2000), pp. 42-85. For a counterpoint to Gorman's article, see Dáibí Ó'Cróinín, "Bischoff's Wendpunkte Fifty Years On", *Revue Bénédictine*, 110, (2000), pp.204-235. As noted in Chapter 1, Gorman has also taken aim at seemingly indiscriminate attributions to Alcuin of a number of dubious compositions. He laments this scholarly laissez-faire and its consequences for our understanding of Alcuin's true contributions and impact. He identifies almost "one hundred inauthentic works" in the 1999 *Clavis* volume devoted to Alcuin. "Alcuin before Migne", *Revue Bénédictine*, 112, No.102 (2002), pp. 101-130.

*Mystica et Moralis Progenitorum Domini Iesu Christi*³⁴⁵ attributed to the seventh century Aileranus Sapiens, also known as Aileranus Scottus, stands out as a compelling source.³⁴⁶ This elusive figure has been identified as the exegete Aileràn,³⁴⁷ from the monastery of Clonard, where he died during an outbreak of the plague in the seventh century. His composition is a two-part interpretation of the list of names in Mt 1:1-17.³⁴⁸ Donald Bullough's posthumously published *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation*, briefly mentioned Alcuin's *Interpretatio Nominum Hebraicorum*, suggesting a possible dating to the period between 790 and 793, to coincide with the deacon's journey back to England.³⁴⁹ Bullough added that this text's undeniable reliance on Aileràn's exegesis necessitated this latter's availability at the time of composition.

³⁴⁵ Breen, *Ailerani*.

³⁴⁶ Michael Gorman lists Alcuin's *Interpretatio* under *Dubia* in "Alcuin before Migne", thus questioning Alcuin's authorship but does acknowledge that it is "perhaps related to the work traditionally attributed to Aileran", p. 129. Gorman, however, questions the assertion of this reliance in "The Myth of Hiberno Latin Exegesis", where he states "Breen asserts that Alcuin and Hrabanus Maurus knew and used the work, but offers no evidence in either case." p.71.

³⁴⁷ Breen, *Ailerani*, p.1 and Donatien DeBruyne, "Une poesie inconnue d'Aileran le Sage" in, *Revue Bénédictine* 29 (1912), pp. 339-340.

³⁴⁸ C.F. "Eighth-century Hiberno-Latin Matthew Commentary in Orleans, Bib. Mun. MS 65 (62) give Jerome's brief interpretation for every name in the genealogy but then applies to each name the same mystical interpretation and scriptural texts used by Aileran in his first treatise" Jennifer O'Reilly, "Gospel Harmony and the Names of Christ, in *The Bible as Book: The Manuscript Tradition*, John L. Sharpe III and Kimberly Van Kampen, eds., (London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 1998), p.76.

³⁴⁹ Donald Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation, Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, Volume 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2004) p.274-275.

Bullough's observation is especially sound with regard to the spiritual and moral sections of Alcuin's work, as Szerwiniack has confirmed.³⁵⁰ However, his ensuing assumption regarding the time and place of the commentary's creation must be questioned, as this indebtedness does not inevitably preclude Alcuin's *Interpretatio* from having originated in the mid or later 790's following his return to the continent. The scarcity of known manuscripts containing Aileran's works, and particularly his *Interpretatio*, hinders our ability to conclusively ascertain this eventuality. Breen's edition mentions manuscripts G, (St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 433), "a collection of sermons for feast days and Sundays" from the ninth century and C, (Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Augiensis CCXLIX), dated to the ninth or tenth century, both of continental origin.³⁵¹ Breen marveled at the minute divergences between these manuscripts and added that further knowledge of the commentary is attested by its survival in a later abbreviated version penned by Sedulius Scottus, a former student of Alcuin's.³⁵²

Breen acknowledged lingering uncertainty regarding the circumstances surrounding Aileran's composition of the *Interpretatio* and its purpose. A brief yet revealing notice appears in St Gall 433, citing the work's liturgical use during the

³⁵⁰ Szerwiniack, *Oeuvre authentique*, p.297.

³⁵¹ Breen, *Ailerani*, pp.8-9. A 14th century paper version is also housed in St. Gall (Stiftsbibl.776).

³⁵² Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibl., Philipps 1600 (second half of the ninth century) and Vienna, Oesterreichische Nationalbibl.740 (third quarter of the ninth century) contain Sedulius Scottus' version. Breen, *Ailerani*, pp.10-11.

celebration of the birth of the Virgin.³⁵³ Alcuin's commentary's dependence on Aileràn's text and its own recognized influence on the later pseudo-Bede homily 55,³⁵⁴ itself intended to serve a similar purpose, reasonably indicates that Alcuin's composition also operated in this liturgical context. While this extrapolation cannot be confirmed, it is worth noting that a commentary, intended for use during liturgical celebrations of the birth of the Virgin, would have been particularly well suited for presentation to a king whose own palace chapel was dedicated to the Mother of God.

The availability on the continent of Aileràn's poem on gospel harmony opening *Quam in primo Speciosa*, is attested in the Augsburg Gospels, (Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. I.2.4°2), from the 730's,³⁵⁵ and the impressive Gospels of Ste. Croix de Poitiers, (Poitiers, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms.17), from c. 800.³⁵⁶ Netzer suggested that this composition circulated alongside a set of beast canon tables, which it may have inspired.³⁵⁷ This second Aileràn text possibly influenced the poem concluding

³⁵³ “*In nativitate sanctae genitricis ipsius legenda.*” Breen, *Ailerani*, p.2, Douglas Mac Lean, “Scribe as Artist, not Monk: The Canon Tables of Aileràn ‘the Wise’ and the Book of Kells”, *Peritia* 17-18 (2003-2004), pp. 433-468. See also Paul A. Underwood, “The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5, (1950), pp. 41-138, (p. 62)

³⁵⁴ Breen, *Ailerani*, pp.2-4, and Szerwiniack, *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 291.

³⁵⁵ On the dating of the manuscript, see Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Evangeliarium Epternacense Evangelistarium* (Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg, Cod. I.2.4°2), (Munich: Helga Lengenfelder, 1988), p. 11.

³⁵⁶ Poitiers 17 is outfitted with two sets of canon tables, including a rare set with verses, reflecting an early type. Their coexistence combined with the inclusion of Aileràn's poem establishes their importance. This text, like many others, also appears in the Alcuin Clavis volume, although Aileràn's authorship is acknowledged. (ALC 11 [127.1]) *Carmen [Ailerani]* “*Quam imprimis speciosa*”, p. 107.

³⁵⁷ Netzer, *Interplay*, p. 61

Trier 23's prefatory section, as well as the design of the gospel frontispieces. *Quam in primo Speciosa* showcases the four evangelist symbols engaged in conversation, with each of the ten stanza revealing the number of comparisons laid out in each of the ten canon tables. The privileging of the concordance tables, as visual purveyors of the gospels' harmony and unity, and the selection of the four living creatures to voice these fundamental truths resonate in light of the Trier codex' textual contents and layout of images, privileging balance and harmony and favoring the symbolic depictions of the evangelists.

At least one, and maybe more, manuscripts containing Aileràn's works were available on the continent, possibly in the hands of missionaries from the British Isles, as early as the beginning of the eighth century. The presence of *Quam in primo speciosa* in the Augsburg Gospels, recognized as having originated at Echternach, confirms this assertion. Alternatively, they could have arrived in the latter part of the century, perhaps even upon Alcuin's own documented request to have books brought back from England. In a letter dated c. 796, and addressed to Charles, Alcuin urged the king to allow people to be sent to England to copy and bring back "some of the rare learned books which I had in my own country" in order to "bring the flowers of Britain back to France."³⁵⁸ The "rare books" Alcuin mentions must have been unavailable or maybe even unknown, not only at Tours, but also in the better-stocked libraries of his many prominent continental

³⁵⁸ Allott, *Letters*, letter 8, pp. 11-12.

acquaintances. These books' categorization as "the flowers of Britain" confirms their insular authorship.³⁵⁹

The availability on the continent, and demonstrably at Echternach, of a manuscript containing some of Aileràn's works in addition to the *Quam in primo speciosa*, at a relatively early date, must be considered. Alcuin's ties with the monastery have been documented, and are attested in his composition of the *Vita S. Willibrordi*, its founder and Alcuin's distant relative, probably written in 796-797, at the request of its abbot and future bishop of Sens, Beornard. Alcuin may have visited the monastery in order to fulfill this commission and an early manuscript of the *Vita*, originating from Echternach, is still preserved in Stuttgart.³⁶⁰ In addition, Echternach was very near to and in the realm of influence of Trier, where Alcuin's friend, former pupil and frequent correspondent Ricbod, (d.804) was archbishop.

Debated Authorship: Alcuin's Contribution and Legacy

The commentary on Hebrew names' authorship and its relevance in the Carolingian court milieu at the end of the eighth century will be examined here and contextualized in light of the concerns outlined in Chapter 2. The commentary and the Trier codex as a whole, exemplify contemporary biblical exegesis' echo of partisan perspectives on current events. In this particular instance, Alcuin's understanding of

³⁵⁹ Alcuin's poem "On the Saints of the Church of York" provides an extensive list of authors and exegetes (esp. verses 1540-1555) which scholars have mined to elucidate available sources. Allott, *Letters*, p.165.

³⁶⁰ Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek H.B. XIV.1 from the ninth century.

universal history as defined by biblical narrative, extended through the present day via Frankish leadership, altered his response to the current political situation.

As noted, the commentary's presentation, ahead of all other materials, serves a twofold purpose. This placement calls attention to the composition's originality, and its role as a gift within a gift. As such, it reflects contemporary court practices as evinced in the luxurious Dagulf Psalter, (Vienna, Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1861), dated c.795 and intended as a gift to Pope Hadrian, where two dedication poems open the manuscript of folio 4. The commentary on Hebrew names' simple titulus and unassuming initial visually announce Alcuin's exegesis' non-canonical status, and novelty, in contrast to the large decorated "B" introducing the next, and first canonical text of this prefatory section, Jerome's *Novum Opus*. The commentary unfolds in the same hand and in the same dark brown ink used throughout the manuscript. Codicologically, it appears on the same quire as the other prefatory texts, and is therefore not a later addition. Its relative modesty was part of its original conception, and accords with the humility theme of the dedication poem that follows immediately upon it.

The commentary's Alcuinian authorship has been generally accepted, yet, some outspoken scholars have steadfastly rejected this attribution. A text approximating the commentary, as it is found in the Trier and Wolfenbüttel manuscripts, appears twice in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*. The Bede volume in the series reproduces a version accompanied by a lengthy introduction and conclusion, identified there as the pseudo-Bede's homily on Matthew's opening chapter.³⁶¹ Szerwiniack and Breen independently resolved that the pseudo-Bede's homily on the birth of the Virgin is a later composition

³⁶¹ Migne, PL 94, col.413-419.

inspired by Alcuin's commentary rather than an earlier source for it.³⁶² The second occurrence, in the volume devoted to Alcuin,³⁶³ presents a "messy" edition, which Szerwiniack recognizes as based upon the Munich manuscript with numerous intercalated additions. It also features a lengthy introduction and conclusion absent from Trier 23 and Wolfenbüttel 26 and whose core deviates in significant ways from these two earlier versions.³⁶⁴

The dedication poem announcing Alcuin's authorship is unsurprisingly absent from the edition in the Bede volume and is only partially reproduced in the Alcuin tome, where the closing pair of verses is omitted.³⁶⁵ Samuel Berger's *Histoire de la Vulgate*, originally published in 1893, accepts the commentary's Alcuinian authorship while rejecting Alcuin's suggested connection with the *Matheus e sacro* poem closing Trier 23's prefatory section. Additionally, and as noted in Chapter 1, Berger categorically refused to contemplate the possibility that Trier 23 might be identified as the gift mentioned in the dedication, although he provides no specific reasons for this opinion.³⁶⁶ Michael Gorman dismissed as "dubia", and "spuria" thirty-six works attributed to Alcuin in the *Clavis*, and questioned Bernhard Bischoff's methodology and assertions in his

³⁶² Breen, *Ailerani*, p.69.

³⁶³ Migne, PL 100, col. 725-734.

³⁶⁴ Szerwiniack rightfully characterizes this edition as "illisible car il [Migne] a inséré à la fois entre crochets dans le texte du manuscrit de Munich et en notes le texte de l'édition de Duschesne. *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 291.

³⁶⁵ Szerwiniack proposed that those last two verses address the letter/parchment. This has been noted in other Alcuinian composition, as noted by Stéphane Lebecq, "Alcuin sur la route" in *Alcuin de York à Tours*, p.1. These verses function as well wishes or prayers that his letters who would reach the hands and ears of his messages' intended recipients.

³⁶⁶ Berger, *Histoire*, p. 194.

influential articles on Hiberno-Latin exegesis.³⁶⁷ Gorman lamented the problematic perpetuation of unfounded attributions, sustaining Alcuin's systematic aggrandizement as exegete and driving force behind the Carolingian renaissance, thus perpetuating the flattering portrayal already emerging in the ninth century.³⁶⁸ Gorman's reaction aligns with his general skepticism regarding the possibility of reliably and definitively identifying distinctively Hiberno-Latin characteristics within the larger corpus of early medieval exegesis. Gorman's forceful and indignant tone has in turn drawn opinionated responses from Bischoff's supporters. These heated exchanges have delineated strong party lines while bringing attention to the necessity for an objective, albeit challenging, review of Bischoff's conclusions in his seminal "Panorama" and "Wendepunkte" articles.

Alcuin's role as friend and advisor and his service as *missus* to Charlemagne rendered him particularly susceptible to scholarly aggrandizement, casting him as the key agent of change in the humanist paradigm privileging the agency of great men in bringing about a renewal of thought and learning. The relative abundance of primary sources associated with him, especially letters, provides a false sense of familiarity, even intimacy, with the Anglo-Saxon deacon. It is consequently tempting to allocate to Alcuin a much larger role than he may have played in all aspects of the running of the Frankish kingdom and discern his influence on all perceptively positive developments in the arts and thoughts of the period. Even granting that Alcuin's role has been and should not be

³⁶⁷ See above, note 344.

³⁶⁸ There is value in an inclusive approach to the presentation of this material as the *Clavis* is intended to function as a reference work. As such, it provides a point of departure for anyone studying this material and includes revised authorship when warranted, as in the case of the *Opus Caroli* and the *Quam in Primo Speciosa* poem discussed here.

exaggerated, such a recognition does not mean *ipso facto* that evidence of his activities should be either belittled or even denied.

Significance of Matthew's Genealogy

Mathew's opening chapter is an abbreviated genealogy, not a birth narrative, and thus contrasts with the longer genealogy found in Luke's gospel (3:23-38). It presents a modified list of the generations of Christ's ancestors arranged chronologically from Abraham to the Incarnation. Some names are omitted, and some appear twice to produce three groups of fourteen generations. The biblical passage's culmination in Christ's advent renders this selection most appropriate to serve as the focus of a commentary possibly intended as a Christmas gift as will be seen below.

Alcuin articulates his commentary around three layers of exegesis, literal, spiritual and moral, thus echoing the tripartite division of the biblical passage it interprets. Matthew's first dynastic listings range from Abraham to David, the second, from David to the sole historical mention on verse 11 of the "transmigration of Babylon" and the third grouping of fourteen generations connects this pivotal historical event to the birth of Christ. This breakdown emphasizes the start and culmination of the genealogy as well as two of its intermediaries and brings attention to the destruction of the Temple of Solomon, to which, as will be addressed below, Charlemagne's chapel at Aachen can be ideologically and symbolically related. Four names stand out: Abraham, David, Jeconiah and, ultimately Christ. Matthew's layout of the genealogy and its emphasis on these four important figures is the compositional principle behind the elaborate miniature marking the beginning of Matthew's prologue in the Lorsch Gospels (Alba Julia, Biblioteca

Batthyáneum, Ms. R. II. I, page 27, c.800-820?), which if not necessarily produced for Charlemagne or during his reign, as usually assumed, was certainly closely associated with the royal Frankish Court.³⁶⁹ [Figure 24] This unique design attests to the importance of the genealogy for the Carolingian elite in the early decade of the ninth century. It substantiates the interpretation proposed in Chapter 2, that the Old Testament kings and ancestors of Christ, depicted here with golden coronas, are not simply interchangeable models of royal behavior, worthy of the current ruler's emulation, but allegories of the one true king, Christ, to whom they point as the focus of the miniature's composition, the culmination of the genealogy and the ultimate model of kingship to emulate.

The purposeful omission of some generations to preserve this isometric arrangement sharply contrasts with Luke's genealogy, which enumerates the sacred names in reverse chronological order from Jesus back to Adam, and thus creates a universal history. Matthew's genealogy features four women, all excluded from Luke's. He mentions three by name, Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth while only alluding to the fourth, Bathsheba (Bersabee) through the phrase "her that had been the wife of Uriah", thus emphasizing her unlawful relationship with David and his great sin.³⁷⁰ Aileràn excludes

³⁶⁹ The Lorsch Gospels. Facsimile edition, with introduction by Wolfgang Braunfels. (New York: George Braziller, 1967). This luxurious manuscript is currently bound in two volumes. This layout may well represent its original format and consequently provide an additional parallel to Trier 23.

³⁷⁰ See Frederick Dale Bruner's discussion of the genealogy in, "Matthew: A commentary, Volume 1: The Christbook Matthew 1-12", (Grand Rapid, MI, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), p.9.

all these women from his commentary³⁷¹ while Alcuin's *Interpretatio* not only includes all four, but also mentions Bathsheba by name.

Bathsheba's inclusion by name may operate as a barely veiled admonition. Charlemagne's pseudonym, King David, immediately draws parallels between the Old Testament ruler's forbidden relationship and Charles' own notorious behavior, including multiple wives and concubines resulting in his fathering numerous illegitimate children. Alcuin may have feared his ambitions for the Carolingian dynasty could be thwarted or at least jeopardized by Charles' conduct. Bathsheba's inclusion in the genealogy can be interpreted as a potent reminder to the current ruler of the repercussions of David's great sin, including the revolt of his son Absalom.³⁷² The learned audience witnessing the gift's unveiling and hearing the commentary read out loud would not have failed to draw parallels with the recent events involving Charles' eldest and "illegitimate" son Pippin, known as "the Hunchback" who had rebelled in 792.³⁷³

Bible scholars have attempted to elucidate Matthew's motives for including these women, particularly as he omits certain generations, subordinating expectations to preserve this equilateral arrangement. It has been proposed that these women "... all

³⁷¹ Aileràn even excludes the name Uriah and Alcuin only includes it in his first part. Alcuin also excludes all four women's names from his third section.

³⁷² Nathan informs David of God's displeasure and passes along the Lord's message, "Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house." 2 Kings 12:11.

³⁷³ If this is indeed the passage's intended meaning, it is worth noting the irony of the parallel created between Pippin "the Hunchback" and Absalom, whose beauty is praised in 2 Kings 14:25.

represent an “irregularity” in the Davidic line,”³⁷⁴ arguing that Matthew’s aim resides in emphasizing Christ having “originated from both the just and the unjust.”³⁷⁵ What transpires from these anomalies is God’s intervention and control over the transmission of the royal line, his all-inclusive plan for salvation, and mercy. God brought “foreigners” into the Davidic line, from which the Savior ultimately originated. These women’s role in the unfolding of salvation history resonated in the Carolingian court milieu where Charles’ female relatives with whom Alcuin regularly corresponded occupied influential positions.³⁷⁶ In addition, the Carolingians’ own disruption of the Frankish royal line’s transmission, with papal support, could be interpreted as a sign of divine intervention.

Matthew’s genealogy opens with Abraham, bypassing dozens of generations to prioritize the man who inaugurated God’s covenant with his chosen people. God told the patriarch “kings shall come from you” (Gen.17: 6) and changed his name to

³⁷⁴ Krister Stendhal, “Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Mt 1-2” in The Interpretation of Matthew, edited by Graham Stanton, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, Edinburgh), (1983), 2nd ed. 1995) p.101.

³⁷⁵ The Ancestry of Jesus, edited by Greti Dinkova-Bruun, (Toronto: Medieval Latin Texts, 2005), p.3. Ruth, who is a ‘good’ woman appears in the company of these others to stress this point.

³⁷⁶ Alcuin corresponded with Gisla and Rotrude, sister and daughter of Charlemagne, at the monastic community of Chelles. On the role of women in court circles in the early medieval period see Anton Sharer, “Charlemagne’s Daughters” in Early Medieval Studies in Honor of Patrick Wormald, edited by Stephen David Baxter, Studies in Early Medieval Britain, (Ashgate, 2009), pp. 269-282, and Janet Nelson, “Women at the Court of Charlemagne: a Case of Monstrous Regiment?” in Medieval Queenship, edited by J.C. Parsons (London, 1993), p.43-61 and “Making a difference in eighth-century politics: the daughters of Desiderius” in After Rome’s Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History. Essays presented to Walter Goffart, edited by A.C Murray (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1998), pp. 171-190.

commemorate the dawn of a new era.³⁷⁷ The compartmentalization of the genealogy in three groups of fourteen allows for a pause at the advent of King David, the quintessential model of Old Testament rulership, which particularly resonated in light of Charlemagne's own nickname. As seen in Chapter 2, in the late eighth century court milieu, be it Charlemagne's or Tassilo's, references to King David primarily promoted a relatable, warrior-like prefiguration of Christ, the King of Kings.

Alcuin's predilection for assigning nicknames of biblical and classical origin to his friends and fellow courtiers, as well as his patron, and his documented interest in etymology likely contributed to stir his interest in this biblical passage.³⁷⁸ By the 790's, this genealogy additionally resonated in light of contemporary political circumstances and developing codifications and expectations of rulership, applied to the current David. These nicknames resulted from familiarity, fondness and occasional dislike, tailored to expose characters or physical traits and quirks. Mary Garrison investigated the practice of assigning nicknames, noticing that while Alcuin may not have been its instigator at the Carolingian court, he most certainly popularized it. These pseudonyms' absence from official exchanges and documents testifies to the informal and personal nature of this practice.

³⁷⁷ Genesis 17:2, "And I will my covenant between me and thee." Genesis 17:5, "Neither shall thy name be called any more Abram: but thou shalt be called Abraham: because I have made thee a father of many nations."

³⁷⁸ Mary Garrison, "The Social World of Alcuin: Nicknames at York and the Carolingian Court", in *Alcuin of York: Scholar at the Carolingian Court*, Proceedings of the Third Germania Latina Conference held at the University of Groningen May 1995, edited by L.A.J.R. Houwen & A.A. MacDonald, Germania Latina III, (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1995), p.59-79.

The bonds of camaraderie and friendship developed at court also engendered rivalries and competition. The desire to position oneself favorably in the eyes of the king and benefactor was only increased by the determination to upstage a rival courtier, and sometimes motivated by sheer vanity. This transpires in the veiled literary references and other pointed allusions woven into the verses of poems intended for the learned courtly audience.³⁷⁹ These overt or coded remarks primarily showcased the intellectual superiority of their creators, quoting scriptures, patristic exegesis as well as classical authors. This scholarly banter likely continued in absentia, and appears at play in the veiled biblical and literary references featured in Trier 23's dedication poem, as will be discussed below.

Chapter 2 uncovered Alcuin's ambitions for the Carolingian monarch as they unfold in the pages of the *Vita S. Willibrordi*, where he obliquely encouraged Carolingian promotion of the slow and peaceful conversion of all peoples whom God allowed to be brought under Charles' dominion. Alcuin's concept of *Imperium Christianum* placed upon the Frankish leader a heavy burden of responsibilities in anticipation of the Last Judgment. Alcuin voiced his displeasure, frustrations and concerns over Charles' handling of the Saxon campaigns, and summoned the king to discontinue the practice of forced mass conversions, which in Alcuin's eyes, besides being cruel and demonstrably ineffective, also jeopardized God's ongoing support of the Carolingian dynasty.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁹ Peter Godman, *Poets and Emperors: Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987). See especially, pp. 68-72 with regard to Theodulf's poetic attacks on fellow courtiers, including Alcuin, a prime target.

³⁸⁰ Allott, *Letters*, pp. 75, letter 56 addressed to Charles, and letter 57 addressed to the treasurer Megenfrid, both dated 796.

As entrenched in Matthew's genealogy, God exerts absolute control over the transmission of the royal title. This model directly related to the Carolingian dynasty's experience in the Frankish political landscape of the eighth century, where God, through the agency of his papal representative, sanctioned the Carolingian takeover of the Frankish throne. Alcuin reminded Charles of God's hand in his success, telling him that, "[y]ou know well how divine providence fought for you..."³⁸¹ The destiny of the chosen Carolingian royal line materialized in the pages of the *Vita S. Willibrordi*. The sense of obligation and gratitude Charles was encouraged to display to a higher authority's favorable intervention is highlighted:

He (Willibord) baptized Pippin the Short, son of the valiant Charles Martel, King of the Franks and father of the present illustrious Charles, who governs the Franks at the present day in triumph, dignity and glory. Of Pippin, father of the last named, Willibrord uttered the following prediction in the presence of his disciples: "Know that the child will be highly exalted and renowned. He will be greater than all the kings of the Franks who have gone before him." The truth about this prophecy has been fulfilled in our times and there is no need to prove what is universally acknowledged throughout the whole kingdom. For all the people know what wonderful victories this illustrious conqueror has gained, how widely he has extended the bounds of his empire, how devotedly he has promoted the Christian religion and how he has defended the Holy Church of God abroad.³⁸²

³⁸¹ Dutton, *Carolingian Civilization*, p.114. Cathwulf's letter to Charlemagne (774-775), discussed in Chapter 2, lists eight signs indicative of God's support, which he then juxtaposes with eight obligations of the Christian ruler, thus reminding Charles that his success was not all his own, and reminded the king of his obligations. See Joanna Story, "Cathwulf, Kingship, and the Royal Abbey of Saint-Denis", *Speculum*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (Jan., 1999), pp. 1-21. Story notes how this simultaneous praise and admonition informs the development of later *Via Regia* and *Speculum Principis* texts, and is already present in Alcuin's thoughts and writings, as this dissertation contends. Nees has discussed this aspect of Cathwulf's letter with regard to the design of the Fountain of Life/Baptismal Font, featuring eight clearly visible columns, in the Godescalc Evangelistary. Lawrence Nees, "Godescalc's Career and the Problems of 'Influence'", in *Under the Influence: The Concept of Influence and the Study of Illuminated Manuscripts*, edited by John Lowden and Alixe Bovey, (Brussels: Brepols, 2007), pp. 21-43, (esp. p. 27).

This celebration of Pippin's achievements encouraged Charles to continue in his father's footsteps, and honor his legacy. The Franks, under Carolingian leadership, emerged as the primary defenders of the faith, the guardians of orthodoxy and by extension of the papacy, a function needing reiteration following the unhappy episode of the *Opus Caroli* in 793-794. The *Vita* positions Willibrord as more than a saint and miracle worker, by casting him as the impetus behind the peaceful conversion of the Frisians. The passage quoted above subtly imparts upon the saint an aura akin to John the Baptist's, by reminding the readers that not only had Willibrord baptized Pippin, but also, like the Old Testament prophet's foretelling of Christ's coming glory, he had anticipated Pippin's achievements. Potential accusations of blind sycophancy, or dismissal of this flattering presentation as a trope are preemptively neutralized by Alcuin's quick mention that Pippin lived up to this potential, as confirmed in ongoing Frankish prosperity. The simultaneous exaltations of Willibrord and Pippin and the demonstrated success of their collaboration provide a *modus operandi* that Alcuin aspired to reprise, Charlemagne willing. As Willibrord's relative, Alcuin benefited from an associative aura of authority. As such, Alcuin and Charles emerge as contemporary embodiments of these famous and successful precursors.

The concept of the Franks as chosen people, a New Israel, first emerged in the rhetoric of outsiders, particularly insular scholars.³⁸³ The Franks and their rulers are thus

³⁸² Alcuin, *Life of St. Willibrord*, in *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany*, translated and edited by C.H. Talbot. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), pp. 17-18.

³⁸³ Mary Garrison, "The Franks as the New Israel", in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, edited by Yitzhak Hen & Matthew Innes, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 160 quoting from a letter Alcuin addressed to Charlemagne, (MGH, Ep. IV, 299, p.373; Allott, *Letters*, letter 67, pp. 83-85) where Alcuin directly

inscribed within a biblical historical framework, in the tradition of Abraham and David. The Franks are cast as “the people chosen by God for salvation,”³⁸⁴ whose privileged status among all Christians imparted upon them great prestige, but also great responsibility. The latter rendered the Franks and their leader susceptible to admonition, thus preserving at least the illusion of some sort of balance of power.

Old Testament models of kingship, particularly David and Solomon, which as demonstrated in Chapter 2, ultimately operated as allegories for Christ the King, challenge reductive typological constructs of Frankish resolve to revive the Roman Empire, even Constantine’s. The re-issued prologue to the *Lex Salica*, revealed a more ambivalent attitude toward ancient Rome and its legacy than the secondary literature would suggest. The current members of the Frankish ‘race’ boasted about their original orthodoxy, deliberately defining themselves as separate from the Roman ‘Other’, twice categorized as enemies of the faith in this brief introduction. This prologue to an old Frankish law, first issued by Pippin in the 760’s, then reissued by Charlemagne a generation later, exemplifies the Carolingian elite’s desire to carefully articulate their power along both innovative and traditional lines as seen in Chapter 2.

By the end of the eighth century, the distinction between the relatives of the Franks and or the Romans, as a dichotomy contrasting the former’s orthodoxy and the latter’s erring beliefs, shifted the Romans’ identification further East, to signify the residents of Constantinople, suspected of idolatry. The concern to define contemporary

references the people of Charlemagne as ‘beata gens’ and ‘felix populus’ recalling the appellation of Israel in the psalms [32:12, 143:15] and Deuteronomy [33:29].

³⁸⁴ Quoted in Mary Alberi, “The Evolution of Alcuin’s Concept of *Imperium Christianum*” in *The Community, the Family and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*, J.M. Hill and M. Swan eds., (Brussels: Brepols, 1998), p.5.

authority as a continuation of cherished Frankish customs, while taking on the responsibilities of leadership imparted upon them by God, as leaders of the Chosen people, is inherently imbedded in the very attention given this old law. Even after the imperial coronation of Christmas Day 800, Charles' authority and identity remained primarily defined by his status as *Rex Francorum*.³⁸⁵ An enduring emphasis already communicated in Charlemagne's seal, as discussed earlier.

The Dedication Poem: Friendship, Holy Days, and the Most Humble Treasures

The poetic dedication, unknown independently of the exegesis it directly references,³⁸⁶ is the primary source of information regarding the commentary's authorship. It also provides additional, albeit cryptic, clues concerning the circumstances surrounding the presentation of a two-part gift on the occasion of holy days. It reads as follows:

Suscipe, rex, parvum magni modo munus amoris,
Quod tuus Albinus obtulit ecce tibi.
Magna ferunt sac(u)li gazarum dona potentes,
Fert mea pauperies ista minuta duo.
Ne vacua in sacris venisset dextra diebus
Ante piam facieum, rex venerande, tuam.
Nomina sanctorum signavi sancta parentum
Hebrea depromens ore, Latine, tuo.
Fer mea, carta mea, suplex munuscula domino.
Corpore premodico viscera Magna gerens.

³⁸⁵ Rosamond McKitterick has noted that Charles' imperial title likely had limited impact on his actual power and authority, although she remarked that his new title figures almost immediately on the capitularies and charters issued after the coronation, Charlemagne: *The Formation of a European Identity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 116.

³⁸⁶ *Clavis*, [ALC 62], pp. 468-469.

Receive king, the little gift of great love
Your Albinus has presented to you here.
The mighty of the age bring great gifts from their treasures
My poverty brings only these two small pieces.
Lest anyone come with empty hands
Before your pious face, venerable king, during holy days
The sacred Hebrew names of the holy forefathers I have
Marked down in your tongue, (King Latinus/or In Latin, your tongue).
Bring my letter, my little gift, humbly to the Lord
Bearing great contents within a modest body.³⁸⁷

This poem addresses the recipient, as “king” (rex) and “venerable king” (rex venerande). The lack of overt imperial referent is inconclusive as to date, as Charles did not systematically employ his new imperial title until about 804, as such, the reference to king rather than emperor does not provide a *terminus ante quem* of late 800. The absence of a proper name, identifying the king as Charles, does not suffice to negate this logical interpretation as the recipient of the “little gift of great love” originating from “(your) Albinus.” The identity of the intended recipient would have been self-evident to both parties, but the name of the patron, particularly if not in attendance at the time of the gift’s unveiling, needed reiteration and commemoration. Furthermore, a presentation letter likely accompanied the manuscript’s delivery and elucidated the fragmentary information provided in the dedication.

Szerwiniack’s response to Gorman’s rejection of the commentary as a genuine Alcuinian composition logically addressed the dedication poem. He noted compelling wording similarities with the preface to the second book of the *Vita S. Willibrordi*, strengthening his point of view.³⁸⁸ Szerwiniack acknowledged the assistance of

³⁸⁷ I wish to thank Judith Frieda for her work in this translation.

³⁸⁸ Szerwiniack, *Oeuvre authentique*, p. 294.

colleagues in translating the second half of the problematic verse: “*Nomina sanctorum signavi sancta parentum Hebrea depromens ore, Latine, tuo.*” He observed that the vocative “Latine,”³⁸⁹ might actually reference Charles, rather than the language spoken at the court, as Richard Laufner’s and ultimately Szerwiniack’s own translations have proposed. I believe his suggestion ought not be so readily abandoned, as the learned audience would have recognized a relevant reference to King Latinus, from a passage in Virgil’s *Aeneid*:

King Latinus,
Now grown old, had ruled his settled towns
And countryside through years of peace. Tradition
Makes him son of Faunus by a nymph,
Marica of the Laurentines. The father
Of Faunus had been Picus, who in turn
Claimed you for sire, old Saturn, making you
The founder of the dynasty.³⁹⁰

This passage addresses genealogy and dynastic concerns while celebrating King Latinus’ bringing about a golden age of peace and prosperity. The dedication’s possible allusion to this classical text may have been primarily intended to showcase Alcuin’s knowledge of Virgil, and by extension test the audience’s own familiarity with the classics,³⁹¹ whilst

³⁸⁹ Between *comas*, and with capital “L” in the Trier codex.

³⁹⁰ Book VII, v.45-51, “Rex arva Latinus et urbes iam senior longa placidas in pace regebat. hunc Fauno et nympha genitum Laurente Marica accipimus; Fauno Picus pater, isque parentem te, Saturne, refert, tu sanguinis ultimus auctor.” *The Aeneid, Virgil*, translated by Robert Fitzgerald, (New York: Random House, Vintage Classics, 1990), pp.196-197.

³⁹¹ Nees has discussed the Carolingians’ familiarity with, and use of Virgil’s works extensively, stating, “For Theodulf and for the other figures at Charlemagne’s court who constituted his intended audience, Vergil’s *Aeneid* was the single best known and highly regarded work of pre-Carolingian ancient literature.” *Tainted Mantel*, p. 28. Nees convincingly traced various references and allusions in texts intended to be read at the

evoking Charles' imperial status, whether actual or impeding. For Alcuin, Charles' imperial title pertained to his leadership of the *Imperium Christianum*, the true empire that had supplanted Rome, like Christ's kingship had superseded David's. Manuscript and epistolary evidence testify to the Carolingian court's familiarity with Virgil. Alcuin's own acquaintance with the Roman poet's body of work is attested by direct quotes, paraphrases, allusions as well as overt references to Virgil by name in numerous letters addressed to former students and to Charles.³⁹² Nees has proposed that a famous illustrated Virgil manuscript, preserved at St. Denis, might have inspired some aspects of the Godescalc Evangelistary of 781-783, which Alcuin must have known well.³⁹³

The presentation of a gift intended for the king would have been at least a semi-public event, with prominent members of the court in attendance. The presentation miniature in the Vivian Bible, (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat. 1, fol. 423r) from the mid ninth century, [Figure 10] depicts a large group of laymen and clergymen, assembled around Charles the Bald, witnessing the bible's offering to the king. It is likely that Trier 23's dedication poem, and its potential accompanying letter, would have been read out loud at

court, elucidating the "sophisticated and dynamic intertextual dialogue" characteristic of interactions among scholars assembled at Charlemagne's court. *Tainted Mantel*, p. 29.

³⁹² Louis Holtz, "Alcuin et la réception de Virgile du temps de Charlemagne" in *Einhard: Studien zu Leben und Werk*, Hessische Historische Kommission (Darmstadt, 1997), pp.67-80. The earliest known Carolingian Manuscript of Virgil originated at Lorsch, where Alcuin's friend and former pupil Richbod was abbot, (Paris, BnF, Lat. 5018 and 7906, from the late eighth century), p. 77. Interestingly, Alcuin's correspondence with Richbod reveals his knowledge and love of Virgil. The older and wiser Alcuin also cautioned his friend not to repeat his youthful mistake of devoting time to reading Virgil instead of studying the psalms. Allott, *Letters*, letter 122, pp. 129-130. Alcuin also mentioned Virgil to Charlemagne, Allott, *Letters*, letter 71, p. 86.

³⁹³ Nees, *Godescalc's Career*, pp. 29ff.

the time of the gift's unveiling. Even an obscure reference to Virgil's *Aeneid* and its implications would not have eluded the erudite audience. These same attendants were also expected to decipher the poem's allusion to a biblical passage addressed below.

The poem indicates that holy days occasioned the presentation of the "little gift" for propriety demanded that no one appear empty-handed in front of the king during such times. A similar concern is reiterated in two letters of Alcuin's, one addressed to a gift's recipient, the other to its messenger. Ernst Dümmler dated them to the period 798-803 and connected them to the dedication poem in Trier 23,³⁹⁴ although this pairing has not met with universal approval. The first missive, addressed to "King David" deserves to be quoted at length:

I have long wondered what I might think a worthy gift to do honour to your imperial power [splendorem imperialis] and add to the riches of your treasury, for fear my poor wits should have been dulled by idleness and my messenger appear before you empty-handed at a time when others were offering many costly presents. [...] So I felt, as I thought it over, that nothing could be found more suitable to mark the peace you have attained than a gift of the Scriptures [...]

The mention of "imperial power", when paired with the dedication, seems to confirm the proposed interpretation of "Latine", while practically referring to Charles' dominion over many peoples. Dümmler suggested a more literal reading, and supported a

³⁹⁴ MGH, *Epistolae*, 261 and 262, Allott, *Letters*, letters 72 and 73 respectively, pp. 88-90. PL 100, col. 368-9, epist. 131, and col. 374-5, epist. 135. Bonifatius Fischer and Samuel Berger have dismissed the Trier codex as the gift mentioned in the missive, for they identify the gift as a full bible. Allott notes the wording parallels with the dedication poem in Trier 23 which he characterizes as a "Fine MS (sic) of the gospels", p. 88. While this letter may or may not be the presentation letter intended to accompany the Trier codex, it certainly is not, as has sometimes been suggested intended to be understood as forming a pair with a letter from Alcuin discussing his revision of the Old and New Testaments on Charles' orders. C.J.B. Gaskoin, *Alcuin: His life and his works*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1904), p.239 and notes 2 and 3.

Christmas 801 dating. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, Alcuin mentioned “imperial” things from 797 on, well before the imperial coronation of 800. In addition, Charles continued to be addressed as king of the Franks even after this event.

Alcuin’s opening words clearly indicate that his gift is not a commissioned work, opening his missive with “I have long wondered [*deliberans*]...’ This unequivocal phrasing should have sufficed to definitively silence the strained connection drawn between this missive and a letter discussed earlier where Alcuin apologized to Gisla and Rotruda for the delay in sending them the commentary on John’s gospel he had long promised them. Alcuin explained that his attention was diverted by his revision of the Old and New Testaments on Charles’ orders.³⁹⁵ The eagerness to treat these two letters as a cohesive unit testifies to the longing for uncovering rare confirmation of a work’s commission and proof of its delivery. This enthusiasm is such that supporters of this pairing fail to address the start of the letter, rarely reproduced, which clearly precludes this interpretation. In addition, viewing these two letters as a unit ignores the compelling wording parallels between the dedication poem in the Trier codex and the presentation letter. These analogies cannot be discarded solely on account of the inherent formulaic nature of these interactions, although it is logical to assume that gifts were exchanged on numerous occasions, marking both public events and celebrations and more private commemorations.

The dedication poem does not survive independently of the commentary on Hebrew names, which it references directly. This exegetical work is not known to appear in any bible, whether with or without the dedication. Compelling wording analogies

³⁹⁵ Allott, Letters, letter 92, p.104.

include the letter's referencing the king's treasury and the inappropriateness of appearing before him empty-handed, particularly, on holy days, which perfectly echoes the concerns formulated in the dedication poem.³⁹⁶ Alcuin's language, specifically the mention of "others [who] were offering many costly presents" reflects the poem closely. The reference to "scriptures" [*divinorum munera librorum*] could arguably encompass seemingly infinite combinations of biblical texts, and in this instance may refer to the four gospels presented in a single manuscript, as "one body", [*unius clarissimi corporis sanctitatem connexio*] although, as Nees remarked, this interpretation unsatisfactorily addresses the tension occasioned by the interpretation of the "minuta duo" reference in the dedication as a clear allusion to the Trier codex' two-volume format.³⁹⁷ As will be seen below, this biblical passage references the current, and likely original, state of the Trier codex, bound in two volumes. It is therefore unlikely that a purposeful allusion to the gift's format in the dedication could be accompanied by a presentation letter effectively undoing this loaded connection. It could be a mere coincidence of course, but there is not reason, compelling or otherwise, to dismiss it as such.

The presentation letter was seen by Dümmler, who reproduced them in sequence, to form a unit with a second missive addressing Nathaniel, identified as Alcuin's student

³⁹⁶ The letter opens, "Diu deliberans quid mentis meae devotio ad splendorem imperialis potentiae vestrae atque augmentum opulentissimi thesauri vestri, muneris condignum reperire potuisset, ne ingeniolum animi mei, aliis diversa divitiarum dona offerentibus, otio torpuisset inani, et vacuis minibus parvitas meae missus ante faciem beatitudinis vestrae venisset: tandem Spiritu sancto inspirante inveni, quod meo nomine competeret offerre, et quid vestrae prudentiae amabile esse potuisset."

³⁹⁷ Lawrence Nees, "Alcuin and Manuscript Illumination", in *Alcuin von York (um 730-804) und die geistige Grundlegung Europas: Akten der Tagung vom 30. September bis zum 2. Oktober 2004 in der Stiftsbibliothek St. Gallen*, Ernst Tremp and Karl Schmuki, eds., (St Gall: Verlag am Klosterhof, 2010).

Fridugis, who would succeed him as abbot of St. Martin's. The second letter shows that Alcuin entrusted his student with delivering a gift to Charlemagne on Christmas day. This letter concludes with the following lines:

Give my lord David my letter and my gift of the Scriptures on Christmas day with the greeting of peace. We give him as much thanks and praise for all his kindnesses to me and my boys as the book has syllables, and pray as many blessings upon him as it has letters.³⁹⁸

The letter's specific mention of Christmas day "*Natalis domini*" potentially elucidates the vague temporal reference of "holy days" in the poem and the "time when others offer presents" in the letter addressed to Charles.³⁹⁹ The identification of the "gift of the Scriptures" does not resolve the exact nature of the manuscript offered, whether a full bible, a new testament or a book of the gospels, but it certainly does not exclude a manuscript of the gospels, or indeed Trier 23 itself, although, as noted above, it oddly contradicts the poem's conscious allusion to the gift's very format.

Trier 23's identification with the two-part gift Alcuin intended for Charlemagne, referenced in the dedication poem, cannot be definitively determined. However, the alternative explanation, purporting that Trier 23 is a copy of this now lost original, is a stretch, especially in the absence of any precedent, or parallel, for this practice. It remains, that contemporary dedication poems or colophons are by their very nature context specific, and usually known from a unique source. These also often allude to

³⁹⁸ Allott, *Letters*, letter 73, p.90.

³⁹⁹ The need for specific references to the time of year or occasion in the dedication poem or the letter of presentation manifests contemporary longing for information, which would have been superfluous to people at the time.

certain memorable aspects of their intended container.⁴⁰⁰ In that regard, Trier's dedication both fits and disrupts expectations. As mentioned earlier, the poem reappears in later manuscripts, but does so exclusively alongside the commentary on Hebrew Names whose authorship it reveals and whose origin it helps authenticate. On the other hand, the inclusion of "*minuta duo*" in the dedication poem, possibly referencing Trier 23's two-volume format, seemingly complies with this practice.

As will be discussed in Chapter 4, the manuscript was most likely not created at Tours and thus exemplifies the practice of patronage in absentia. It is improbable, however, that even if commissioned by Alcuin to be executed elsewhere, the project would have been carried out after his death in May 804. Accepting this scenario inevitably puts the dating suggested by Bischoff's relegating its script to the period "just after the age of Charlemagne" into question.⁴⁰¹ Alcuin's death sets a *terminus ante quem* for the commentary and dedication poem's redaction, and for the manuscript's commission, although not necessarily but most likely for its creation. As the manuscript is complete and the decoration finished, it is probable that its execution occurred prior to May 804, although we cannot absolutely exclude the eventuality that a close friend or former pupil entrusted with this important task would have carried out the project, in Alcuin's memory, had the news of his passing reach them ahead of the manuscript's completion, although the absence of an allusion to the death of Alcuin would be in such circumstances, strange.

⁴⁰⁰ This is the case for both the Dagulf Psalter and Godescalc Evangelistary, from and for Charlemagne, respectively.

⁴⁰¹ Bernhard Bischoff, *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne*, translated by Michael Gorman, *Cambridge Studies in Paleography and Codicology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 24, footnote 17.

A few possibilities for the dating of the manuscript and its presentation can be deducted from this fragmentary evidence. First, if the use of “*Latine*” intentionally references Charles’ new title, after the imperial coronation of Christmas day 800, the manuscript, could have been presented on the occasion of Christmas 801, 802 or 803, maybe even 804, but doubtfully after that. Second, if Dümmler’s suggested pairing of the Trier dedication with the presentation letter and the missive to Nathaniel is sound, more could be deducted from establishing the exact whereabouts, and potentially intersecting itineraries of the king and Fridugis, the messenger entrusted with the gift’s delivery. However, if that connection is to be rejected, our interpretation of “holy days” may be increased to include both Christmas and Easter,⁴⁰² as well as other potential feast days of particular relevance to the Franks in general and the Carolingian in particular, as well as the dedication of the Aachen chapel. Chapter 4 elucidates how Trier 23’s gospel frontispiece design, featuring evangelist symbols in four corners, alludes to contemporary baptism rituals. In addition, Alcuin’s preoccupation with conversion and baptism, as documented in Chapter 2, suggests that “holy days” may also refer to Easter, for the celebration of Christ’s death and resurrection remained the preferred context for the performance of this initiation ritual.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰² Although Christmas remains a more likely choice, on account of its identification as the ‘gift-giving’ holiday par excellence, the Annals usually provide information as to the kings’ whereabouts on both Christmas and Easter, attesting to these two holiday’s equally special status.

⁴⁰³ These assumptions ought to be mitigated by the possibility that while completed, the manuscript was never delivered to its intended recipient, or that upon its presentation it was rapidly ‘re-gifted’ and left at a nearby location, whether church or monastic community. If created in Trier or Echternach or their vicinity, it is possible that the manuscript never travelled far from its place of origin.

Dümmmler was once again the first to draw attention to the poem referencing a biblical passage by means of the expression “*minuta duo*” in the fourth verse.⁴⁰⁴ The incident, perhaps also a parable, it recalls appears in Luke 21:1-4, and Mark 12:41-44. The story takes place during the holy days leading to the Passover and extols a poor widow who made an offering at the temple of “*minuta duo*,” the smallest denomination coin and by extension the smallest acceptable donation. Still, her extreme poverty transforms this seemingly insignificant offering into the greatest possible sacrifice, through the total surrender of all that she owns. As Jesus observes, in the eyes of God she has offered much more than the greatest treasures that wealthy donors could ever contribute.

Through this loaded allusion, Alcuin, as the gift’s donor, identifies with the poor widow, thus increasing his gift’s status and stressing his own adherence to one of the fundamental principles of monastic rule, the vow of poverty. The Anglo-Saxon deacon’s piety and devotion render him seemingly more respectful and obedient of the monastic ideals than any monk. His devotion, piety and humility lead to his ultimate exaltation. This depiction coincides with the false claims of unworthiness and humility emerging from contemporary dedications and colophons, as formulated by Godescalc, Gundohinus and Dagulf, and even Pope Leo III, whose inscription in the *arca cipressina*, in the Sancta Sanctorum calls him “*indignus*”.⁴⁰⁵ On a practical level, this biblical reference of

⁴⁰⁴ Dümmmler, MGH, *Poetarum Latinorum Medii Aevi*, 1, (1881), p.294

⁴⁰⁵ “The inscription reads: LEO INDIGNUS EPISCOPUS DEI FAMULUS FECIT (Leo III, unworthy bishop and servant of God made this)” quoted and translated by Erik Thunø in *Image and Relic: The Mediating in the Sacred in Early Medieval Rome*, *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici: Supplementum*, Danske Institut Roma, Vol. 32, (Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 2002), p.161.

two small pieces or tokens corresponds with the Trier manuscript's appearance, bound in two volumes.

An additional, highly meaningful equation is generated by the use of this biblical reference. For, if Alcuin identifies with the poor widow and the Trier codex is substituted to the "*minuta duo*" she offers, then the enlightened recipient, who recognizes its grandeur and the extent of the donor's sacrifice, is in turn a mirror for Christ. In the gospel story, the Lord recognizes the splendor in humility and total surrender. Charles is therefore encouraged to reflect Christ's judgment and wisdom. This encouragement of *imitatio Christi*, explored at length in Chapter 2, is at the center of Alcuin's rhetoric of power, as it applied to Charlemagne in the changing landscape of the late eighth century.

Gospel Harmony

The last textual component of the manuscript's prefatory section, ahead of the canon tables, is a poem of uncertain origin and authorship opening *Matheus e sacro* (9v-10r). It appears in the *Carmina* section of the *Clavis* (ALC 11.71.1)⁴⁰⁶ and is reproduced by Dümmler, from the version in Trier 23, alongside the dedication poem discussed above, as well as Stephan Beissel in his study of gospel books in the early medieval period.⁴⁰⁷ The Trier codex maintains the unity of the poem and presents all twenty verses,

⁴⁰⁶ MGH, *Poetarum Latinorum Medii Aevi*, tomus 1, (1881), LXXII, p.293-4.

⁴⁰⁷ *Clavis*, (ALC 11.71.1), p. 90-91 states that the Nancy manuscript presents the poem on folio 18v. Willhelm Köhler, *Die Karolingische Miniaturen, Die Schule von Tours. Die Bilder* (Berlin, 1933) reproduces the poem divided into four stanzas, laid out over four folios, placed in front of their respective gospels. On this fascinating manuscript which also contains a *Maiestas Domini* type image featuring codices arranged around a large XP topped staff and its relation to Alcuin verses referring to the gospels as "fons vitae", see Paul A. Underwood, "The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels",

divided into four stanzas of five lines uninterrupted. Each stanza succinctly reiterates the pairing of each evangelist and his symbolic representation, on account of their respective gospel's focus. Therefore, it contributes to the Trier codex' already redundant textual and visual emphasis on gospel harmony as already expounded in Jerome's *Plures Fuisse*, itself an abbreviated restatement of the prologues introducing each gospels. In the Trier codex, adjacent to the lavishly decorated canon tables, it loosely recalls Aileràn's *Quam in primo speciosa*'s relationship with the beast canons. As the last textual component of the prefatory section, the poem seamlessly transitions the viewer into the gospel frontispieces designs, as it elucidates the focus on symbolic depictions of the four evangelists, and their connections to the four aspects of Christ's nature.

This composition's attribution to Alcuin has been accepted by some and vehemently rejected by others, including Samuel Berger who characterized it as "insignifiant" and adding that the poem "n'a rien qui rappelle le style d'Alcuin."⁴⁰⁸ Berger added, in a footnote, with similar condescension, that the Trier codex was erroneously identified as the gift mentioned in the dedication.⁴⁰⁹ It is worth noting, that the Gospels of St. Gauzelin (Nancy, Trésor de la Cathédrale, s.n.), from about 830, allocate four full pages to the poem's presentation. Each folio depicts an evangelist and his corresponding symbol at the center of a three-part composition placing the opening two verses of the stanza devoted to his account in a vertical band above the miniature,

Dumbarton Oaks Papers 5 (1950), pp. 41-138, and "Appendix A", esp. pp.127- 131. Most manuscripts containing this text have ties to Tours or can be securely localized there, thus strengthening a possible Alcuinian connection. Dümmler and DeBruyne recognized the Alcuinian authorship. De Bruyne, *Préfaces*, p. 192.

⁴⁰⁸ Berger, *Histoire*, p.194.

⁴⁰⁹ Berger, *Histoire*, p.194.

and the concluding two below. Regardless of modern scholars' opinions, the poem, and possibly its author, held great significance to the Nancy manuscript's creators who would otherwise not have devoted this much space to its presentation. In addition, the majority of manuscripts containing this poem, as listed in the Clavis, can be connected to Tours, which may be additional evidence of an Alcuinian connection.

Matheus e sacro totus spiramine fretus,
Ordine iucundo volitans per nomina partum,
Qualiter exierit, cecinit generatio Christi.
Et quoniam sobria hoc potuit ratione videre,
Humana meruit signari rite figura.

Marcus divini, Petro⁴¹⁰ narrante, repletus
Faminis effremuit, vox et deserta ferarum.
Quo pingi torva decuit sub fronte leonis.
Dogmata post fidei tuta est Aegyptus ab ipso,
Norman et apostolicae copmplevit legis utrimque

Lucas ore dei medicina fultus, at inde
Scribens gesta dei novit moderamina mentis,
Quodque sacerdotum meminit praesumere iura,
Aligeri faciem novit gestare iuvenci.
Tandem et apostolicos scripsit feliciter actus.

Virgo supra pectus Christi accubitare Iohannes
In caena meruit viva exanclando⁴¹¹ fluentia.
Scilicet hinc aquile petiit trans aethera pennis
Divinam retegens naturam hominum rationi,
Qualiter et populus habitans verbum caro factum est.

⁴¹⁰ Not capitalized in the Trier manuscript.

⁴¹¹ I want to thank Evan Smith for bringing to my attention Cicero's frequent use of the word "Exanclō." Alcuin's familiarity with Cicero has been documented, and he has been recognized as a primary source, along with Isidore, of Alcuin's *De Rhetorica*. The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne, translated and edited by Samuel Wilbur Howell, (New York: Russell & Russell, (1941), 1965), p. 23, and Matthew S. Kempshall, "The Virtues of rhetoric: Alcuin's *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus*", Anglo-Saxon England 37 (Dec. 2008), p. 7-30.

Matthew, relying on the sacred spirit,
Pleasantly orders the names of the fathers,
How it comes out, sings the birth of Christ.
And since he was able to see this clearly,
He deserves to be the human figure.

Mark narrating divine things from Peter, filled
With the roaring utterances, the cry of the wild beast,
Depicted fittingly under the front of the lion.
He safeguarded the faith in Egypt,
In accordance with the law and apostolic doctrines.

Luke, medicine from the mouth of God,
Writing the deeds of God, knows the rules of the mind,
And remembers the rights of priests,
He wears the face of the winged ox.
At last he faithfully wrote the acts of the apostles

John, the virgin, reclines on the breast of Christ,
At the Last Supper, earned a living draining the streams.
This is to say the eagle soared across the sky
Revealing the divine nature of human reason,
And how the Word was made flesh, and lived. ⁴¹²

In each of the four stanzas, the gospels are reduced to a brief synopsis, drawing heavily on the last section of Jerome's *Plures fuisse*, and elucidate each of the gospel authors' pairing with their respective symbols, the four living creatures of the vision of Ezekiel and the book of Revelation. This emphasis directly reflects the four symbols' essential prominence in the frontispieces introducing each gospel. As such, Berger's dismissal of the poem as "insignificant" failed to understand its function and purpose in the Trier codex, which he never addressed.

Aileràn provides, yet again, a compelling precedent for this composition. His poem on gospel harmony, mentioned above, similarly substitutes the evangelists for their symbols, engaging them in lively conversation. This composition, whose presence on the

⁴¹² My translation.

continent is attested in the Augsburg Gospels, from Echternach, so important to Alcuin, and Poitiers 17, closely associated with the court, probably circulated on the continent accompanied by a set of canon tables, which influenced the design of beast canons in the Echternach connected Augsburg and Maeyseck Gospels. Each of the poem's ten stanzas, reflecting the number of canon tables, reveals the number of comparisons appearing under each of them.

The poem perpetuates the theme of harmony and homogeneity within the seemingly disparate accounts of the gospels. It is therefore a suitable conclusion to a lengthy prefatory section, primarily concerned with reiterating this essential unity. The following section, the extensive sixteen-page layout of the canon tables pursues this introductory concern, which it articulates visually. Chapter 4 addresses how this preoccupation with harmony, expressed in the various prefatory texts, both canonical and non-canonical, unfolds visually in the canon tables, and the repetitive design of the gospel frontispieces. The discussion of Trier 23's decorative scheme will corroborate the insular affinities already uncovered in the emphasis on harmony and redundancy, and in the interest in Hebrew names, celebrated at the very beginning of the manuscript and further suggest a place of origin in the vicinity of Trier and Echternach.

Chapter 4

FLOWING FROM A SINGLE SOURCE: GOSPEL HARMONY AND THE ANTICIPATION OF THE DIVINE

This chapter shifts the focus of this dissertation to Trier 23's meticulously planned decorative program and celebrates the creativity and resourcefulness of its scribe/illuminator. This inquiry uncovers additional clues elucidating the manuscript's place of origin, and complements Chapter 3's investigation of its textual components. The following discussion will problematize Trier 23's guarded scholarly reception, which undermined its recognition as the gift to Charlemagne mentioned in the dedication poem. This reconsideration will also allow for the nuancing of traditional art historical definitions and expectations of luxury, as they apply to Carolingian artistic production.

The Decorative Program: An Overview

Trier 23 contains both figurative and non-figurative ornaments, articulated in vibrant shades of blue, red, green and yellow.⁴¹³ Four full-page gospel frontispieces, ten

⁴¹³ The blues, also found more prominently in Christ's robes (but not on all of the frontispieces) are bright and vibrant, see Cheryl Porter "The Medieval Blues- A simple technique for basic identification" in *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts 3*, ed. by Gillian Fellows-Jensen and Peter Springbord, p.107-113 and plates. For color symbolism, see also Genevra Kornbluth's discussion of the "sapphire" Christ which will be discussed

large decorated initials, and sixteen pages of canon tables unfold in the manuscript's two volumes. Smaller initials, delicately penned in brown ink, complete this elaborate decorative scheme.⁴¹⁴ Of the ten large decorated initials, four mark the beginnings of gospel texts, (Volume I, fol. 24r, 80r and Volume II, fol. 6r and 63r), three grace the openings of Mark, Luke and John's prologues, (Volume I, fol. 76r and Volume II, fol. 1v and 60r) [Figures 30, 31, 32] and one welcomes Matthew's chapter lists (Volume I, fol. 19v). [Figure 33] An elaborate "B" announces Jerome's *Novum Opus*, (Volume I, fol. 5r) by far the most extensive initial among the common prefaces, while a more subdued decorated "I" introduces "*In XPI Nomine, Incipit Capitulare evangeliorum de anni circuli*" (Volume II, fol. 104r) [Figure 34], the calendar of liturgical feasts, to complete the manuscript's decorative scheme.

In its current state, the manuscript includes one additional decorative feature not part of its original Carolingian design. A full-page miniature depicting Christ enthroned in majesty, surrounded by the evangelist symbols, added during the Ottonian period (Volume I, fol. 22v), adorns a previously blank folio, on the verso following the conclusion of Matthew's chapter lists. [Figure 5] This important testament to the manuscript's later medieval reception will not be considered in the context of the current discussion, but will be addressed in the concluding chapter of this dissertation. Chapter 5 contextualizes the Ottonian period's multifaceted engagement with the ideological, political and material vestiges of the reclaimed Carolingian past. Trier 23 belongs to a

further in this chapter, "The Heavenly Jerusalem and the Lord of Lords: a sapphire Christ at the court of Charlemagne and on the Shrine of the Magi," *Cahiers Archéologiques* 49, (2001), pp. 47-68. Of note is the presence of blue in numerous decorated initials of the Vatican manuscript of the *Opus Caroli*, (Vatican, lat. 7202,)

⁴¹⁴ See Appendix.

significant group of Carolingian objects that were selectively appropriated, transformed and sometimes mended, or perceptibly completed in this later period.

The Script

The Trier codex has never been subjected to a systematic paleographical inquiry. As my own area of expertise does not reside in that highly specialized field, I will restrict my remarks to a few pertinent observations and address the repercussions engendered by the few published references on this matter.

As noted in Chapter 1, Bernhard Bischoff briefly mentioned the Trier codex in a footnote to his influential 1965 essay, “Panorama der Handschriftenüberlieferung aus der Zeit Karls des Grossen.”⁴¹⁵ First published as part of the seminal series of volumes Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben, surrounding the Aachen exhibition of the same year, this important contribution’s availability in translation in the posthumously published collection of essays titled Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne has further ensured its lasting influence.⁴¹⁶ Bischoff asserts that the minuscule in the Trier codex originated “in der Zeit nach Karls entstanden.” This pronouncement’s location, in a footnote, frustratingly precluded any elaboration on this most consequential ruling. Bischoff’s established authority has impacted the manuscript’s

⁴¹⁵ “...nach ihrer Schrift beurteilt, meines Erachtens erst in der Zeit nach Karls entstanden.” Bernhard Bischoff, “Panorama der Handschriftenüberlieferung aus der Zeit Karls des Grossen” published in the second of four volumes surrounding the 1965 *Karl der Grosse* exhibition at Aachen. Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben, Band II, Das Geistige Leben, Düsseldorf (Verlag L. Schwann, 1965), p. 236, footnote 17.

⁴¹⁶ Bernhard Bischoff, Manuscript and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne, translated by Michael M. Gorman, Cambridge Studies in Paleography and Codicology 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

dating, usually listed as originating from the first quarter or first third of the ninth century. These ranges still allow for the possible identification of Trier 23 as the gift to Charles mentioned in the poem, but also refrain from engaging with Bischoff's opinion.

The text consistently unfolds in twenty-three lines per page, framed by generous margins.⁴¹⁷ Dendochronology dates the oak from the current binding, which features centered rectangular recesses possibly to accommodate ivory plaques as Laufner suggests, to the twelfth century.⁴¹⁸ This alteration appears to have only minimally impacted the codex' original format, as substantial margins remain, and none of the extensive decorations are truncated or trimmed. The corrections and punctuation marks appearing throughout the manuscript are in the same dark brown ink as the text, and therefore likely contemporary with its copying.

Various Trier Stadtbibliothek-related publications have repeated or echoed the characterization of Trier 23's script as a "vollentwickelte Karolingische Minuskel von geradezu klassischer Regelmässigkeit".⁴¹⁹ This categorization adequately captures the viewer's first impression of the script, as it unfolds in elegant, homogenous lines across the smooth surface of the creamy white parchment. Yet, it overlooks numerous instances where uncial letters, predominantly "a" and "d", interrupt the otherwise even flow of Caroline minuscule. This peculiarity offers potential clues as to the scribe's origin and training and supplement Chapter 3's observations regarding unusual spellings. The

⁴¹⁷ The text block measures 17.8 x 10.5 cm, Laufner, Herkunft, p.46.

⁴¹⁸ Laufner, Herkunft, p.51.

⁴¹⁹ Kostbare Bücher und Dokumente aus Mittelalter und Neuzeit, Katalog der Ausstellung der Stadtbibliothek und des Stadtarchivs Trier, (1984), p. 12. See also Birgit Ines Harand, "Das Evangeliar von St. Maria ad Martyres – Schadensbilder, Restaurierung und Konservierung" in Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch 41, Jahrgang 2001, p. 291.

monotony and tediousness of his occupation may have led him to involuntarily revert to the bookhand he first mastered.

The *Admonitio Generalis* of 789 promulgated Charles' program of reform⁴²⁰ and advocated entrusting the most experienced scribes with copying the sacred text to minimize, if not eradicate, any inadvertent infiltration of potentially dangerous, even heretical, transcription errors. The passage reads: "And do not allow your boys to corrupt them [the catholic books], either in reading or in copying; and if there is need to copy the gospel, psalter or missal, let men of full age do the writing, with all diligence."⁴²¹ The wording hardly specifies a preferred age or given years of practice, but in the earlier years following the emergence of Carolingian minuscule, it can be reasonably assumed that an experienced, mature scribe had learned his skill in a different hand, and become proficient in the newer script only relatively recently.

The rate at which Carolingian minuscule was disseminated throughout the territories under Frankish rule is difficult to ascertain. Regional, local and individual preferences and needs greatly impacted the rate and scope of the new script's absorption. Its characteristics of clarity, speed of copying, legibility, but also economy of space, and therefore expense -although the latter was clearly not a concern of Trier 23's patrons- made its use particularly appealing, but insufficient to permanently supplant all other

⁴²⁰ Known today from "over 40 manuscripts" Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 242. Edited by Boretius, Alfred, "Capitularia regum Francorum, MGH, Bd. 1 (Hannover, 1883), p.52ff and more recently, Mordek, Hubert, Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, and Michael Glatthaar, eds. *Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Grossen*. Series: MGH, *Fontes iuris germanici antiquae in usum scholarum separatim editi* 16. (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2012).

⁴²¹ King, *Charlemagne*, p. 217.

scripts. The luxurious late eighth century Gospels of Ste. Croix, in Poitiers, (Poitiers, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 17), whose likely patron was the court-related bishop Jesse of Amiens, was entirely written in uncial, although convincingly localized to the famed Corbie scriptorium, recognized as the birthplace of Carolingian minuscule.⁴²²

Any manuscript exists at the confluence of specific circumstances and parameters including available resources, intentions and personal taste, which predicated decisions regarding contents, layout, script and ornamental schemes. The end results embody more than the manuscripts' creators' vision and reflect the precarious balance between the patrons' wishes and the creators' skills and limitations. In this context, the selection of Carolingian minuscule may have been intended as a signifier of allegiance to Charlemagne's program of reform. As will be suggested below, this loaded visual discourse possibly extended to the use of interlace as a visual mode of communication of the donor's identity and insular origin.⁴²³

The qualifier "klassischer," applied to the Trier script, befits a manuscript whose custodians would welcome a strengthened connection to Charlemagne, and aligns with expectations and projections consistent with scholarly fixation on Carolingian art as a "renaissance." Notwithstanding its loaded implications, the term actually reveals very little about the possible dating of the manuscript but somewhat captures its elegance and

⁴²² On the development of this distinctive script, see David Ganz, "The Preconditions for Caroline minuscule" *Viator* 18 (1987), pp. 23-44 and his study of the scriptorium of Corbie and its manuscripts, David Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, Beihefte der Fancia 20, (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1990). For a detailed discussion of Poitiers 17's engagement with key court figures and court-related issues, see Herbert, *LUX VITA*.

⁴²³ This possibility challenges constructed expectations that as the 'mastermind' behind the Carolingian renaissance, Alcuin would have favored more classicizing forms of visual expression.

flow. As noted, the advent of a distinctive Carolingian minuscule script has been localized to Corbie and dated to the 770's, where it evolved from charter hand. Its appearance in the Godescalc Evangelistary (Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. lat. 1203) colophon, dated on internal evidence to c.783, operates as a visual signifier of that text's separate function, distinct from the sacred and canonical contents it accompanies. The essential tool of the court chaplain when celebrating mass for the itinerant court, this particular gospel lectionary must have been familiar to not only Charlemagne and Alcuin, but other courtiers whose presence at the time of the gift's offering was anticipated. The occurrence of mixed script in the Vatican *Opus Caroli* manuscript (lat. 7207), dated 793-794 and produced by the court, provides a compelling parallel to the infiltration of uncial letters, especially "d" in the Trier codex.⁴²⁴ It features numerous small decorated initials combining bird, knots and twisted rope designs as well as vegetal motifs, articulated in brown ink and various colors including expensive blue pigment, as does Trier 23. This parallel supports the possibility of an early dating for Trier 23 as well as a courtly connection. That minuscule was already thought appropriate for a luxury Gospel manuscript in the 790's is shown by the chrysographic Arsenal Gospels (Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 599), which further share with Trier 23 the presentation of the canon tables over sixteen folios.⁴²⁵

⁴²⁴ For example on fol. 91v., see Freeman, *Opus Caroli*.

⁴²⁵ The manuscript is also referred to as the Gospels of St.-Martin-des Champs. *Aachen* (1965), Cat. 412, pp. 248-249.

The Gospel Opening Sequence

Each gospel account begins following a consistent series of textual and decorative elements. The gospels of Mark, Luke and John are introduced by lavishly decorated initials at the start of their respective prologues, followed by chapter lists, leading to the recurring gospel frontispieces, adjusted to give pride of place, at Christ's right, to the symbol paired with the author of the adjacent text, itself introduced by a decorated initial. Matthew's opening uniquely deviates from this otherwise predictable sequence. This adjustment was necessitated by Matthew's prologue appearing alongside the common prefaces at the front of Trier 23's first volume (fol. 8r). To preserve the illusion of a symmetrical arrangement, across all four gospels, the scribe exceptionally outfitted Matthew's chapter lists with a full-page initial of their own (fol. 19v). [Figure 33]

These prefatory accessories' lengths vary significantly, while the manuscript consistently presents twenty-three lines of text per page. As such, the layout imperatives of placing frontispieces on the verso of folios, and minimizing undesirable blank spaces, are achieved via the relative elasticity of the transitional Incipit and Explicit sections. For instance, John's chapter lists conclude 20 lines down folio 62r (Volume II), allocating the marker *expliciunt capitulae*, in capital letters of alternating colors, sufficient space at the bottom of the page, without exceeding the three lines of text block allowance. [Figure 35] John's frontispiece occupies the following verso, framing "Initium sci evvangelii secundu iohanne". [Figure 4] In contrast, Luke's frontispiece only displays "Secundu Luca" [Figure 3] in the central square, as the preceding recto, left bare on account of Luke's chapter lists, concluding on folio 4r (Volume II), announces, in capital letters of alternating colors, the full "initium evangellium secundum lucam." [Figure 36] The

duplication of the phrase “Secundu Luca” could scarcely be avoided, as leaving this frontispiece section blank was evidently not an option.

The manuscript’s appearance reflects its creators’ interest in symmetry, balance and consistency, as these organizational features visibly manifest the gospels’ essential harmony, itself the leitmotiv behind the extensive assemblage of prefatory texts discussed in Chapter 3. Some meaningful additions enhance Matthew and John’s gospel frontispieces and prologues and communicate their privileged status, among this quartet of equals. Mark and Luke’s prologue openings emphasize the evangelists themselves by illuminating the first letters of their names (Volume I, fol. 76v and Volume II, fol. 1v). [Figures 30, 31] In contrast, John’s prologue (Volume 2, fol. 60r) [Figure 32] begins with a ligature intertwining the first two letters of its first word ‘hic’ underneath the “Incipit prologus second Iohann” which occupies the top fifth of the page. This design choice exploits the symbolic potential generated by the overlapping letters H and I, which create a pictograph evocative of a cross. The artist filled both the letter I and the intersecting crossbar of the letter H with the same faux interlace and crisscross pattern, thus encouraging the viewer to read them together, as a cohesive and meaningful unit. The inward curling snakehead, terminating the letter I at the bottom center of the composition strengthens this association by recalling how Christ’s sacrifice defeated death and evil, often symbolized by a snake.⁴²⁶ This composition purposely conjures crucifixion imagery in the mind of the learned audience, familiar with John’s privileged

⁴²⁶ As discussed earlier in this dissertation with regard to the Carolingian predilections for representation of the *Miles Christi*, and Christ trampling the beasts from Psalm 90 (91):13.

status as eyewitness to this momentous event.⁴²⁷ The prologue's essential function, as authenticator of the origin and reliability of the sacred text that follows, is thus visually reaffirmed.

The Decorated Initials

Trier 23's eight larger initials grace the beginnings of Matthew's chapter lists, (Volume I, fol. 19v), the remaining three gospels' prologues, (Volume I, fol. 76r, and Volume II, fol. 1v and 60r) and all four gospels' opening verses (Volume I, fol. 24r and 80r and Volume II, fol. 6r and 63r). [Figures 37, 38, 39, 40] They creatively combine seemingly endless modulations of a wide range of decorative motifs, brightly articulated in dynamic chromatic arrangements. The ornamental repertoire includes stylized vegetal, circular, geometric and crisscross designs, simplified knots with volute terminals, spherical protuberances encased in basket-like pattern capitals and most distinctively imitation interlace, created by interlocking zigzags overlapping circular, half moon or kidney shapes. Bird, snake and dog-head terminals further diversify this already extensive collection of decorative motifs and recall earlier Frankish book art of the seventh and eighth centuries.⁴²⁸ The Arsenal Gospels mentioned above offer an intriguing parallel to some of Trier 23's initials in the presence of facing dog heads (fol. 134) or birds with elongated necks (fol. 16) perched atop elaborate interlace capitals crowning

⁴²⁷ For a detailed discussion of crucifixion imagery in the Carolingian period, see Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁴²⁸ See the four-volume publication, *Vorkarolingische Miniaturen*, Herausgegeben von E. Heinrich Zimmermann, *Denkmäler Deutscher Kunst*, III Sektion. Malerei, (Berlin, 1916). Numerous examples emerge in manuscripts connected to Luxeuil and Fleury, see *Vorkarolingische*, Mappe I, Taf. 44-84.

the initials “I” (*In Principio*) and “L” (*Liber Generationis*) respectively. These echo the beasts found at the opening of Mark’s prologue (fol. 76) [Figure 30], and Matthew’s chapter lists (fol. 19v) [Figure 27], and recall the varied birds inhabiting Trier 23’s canon table capitals.

The intricacies of interlace construction clearly elude the Trier artist. However, his ingenuity remedied this shortcoming through his clever interlocking of circular and angular elements to generate a satisfactory “Ersatz” interlace, as can be seen on various folios (fols. 76, or 80), [Figures 30 and 2]. The left vertical stem of the “N” combined in the ligature announcing Matthew’s chapter lists (fol. 19v) [Figure 27] displays three versions of the artist’s rendition of this complex motif, which he appears to have abandoned in the subsequent initials in favor of a composite design approximating the visual effect of interlace. As previously suggested, the determination to prominently feature this particular decorative element throughout the manuscript, regardless of its inexpert execution or resourceful recreation, may have been intended to remind its anticipated audience of the donor’s origin and/or identity. This strategy resourcefully conjured the absent donor, at the time of the gift’s presentation and indeed ever after.

The presence of large, indeed nearly full-page, decorated initials at the start of the gospel prologues further enhances the manuscript’s visual impact and luxurious appearance, while simultaneously elevating the status of these often overlooked texts. Their very presence is rendered if not obsolete at least redundant by Jerome’s *Plures Fuisse*, which concisely provides the same basic information about the gospels’ authors

and origins, and authenticates the sacred accounts that follow.⁴²⁹ The prologues' preservation in the Trier codex, and the redundancy they generate, as well as their careful adornment align with the manuscript's demonstrated emphasis on prefatory materials, repetition and variations on a theme, as elucidated in Chapter 3.

The design and quality of execution of these large initial pages is relatively consistent throughout the manuscript. Only occasionally does the layout appear less carefully planned. A large initial "L" announces Luke's name at the start of his argumentum (Volume II, fol. 1v). [Figure 31] The oversized bulb lifting the top of the letter is encased in a mesh-like capital formed by interlocking figure eights. This bloated upper section outweighs the letter's comparatively slender horizontal component, itself awkwardly trailed by a simplified yet voluminous knot reaching into the margin. This visual imbalance is further accentuated by the relatively uncomplicated articulation of the initial's horizontal section, where three simple loops alternate with two rectangles, while the wider vertical stem contains a collection of rosettes. The substantial area of bare parchment separating the floating three-line block reading "INCIPIT ARGV MENTV" from the base of the initial, also contributes to this visual imbalance. The Arsenal Gospels once again provide a parallel for this layout in the presence of "INCIPIT EVANGELIVM SECVNDVM MATTHEVM" on the top right hand corner of the initial page marking the start of Matthew's gospel on fol.16.

In contrast, no such awkwardness permeates the initial immediately preceding, the "I" opening Mark's gospel, (Volume I, fol. 81r) which harmoniously balances the

⁴²⁹ Michelle Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality & the Scribe*, The British Library Studies in Medieval Culture, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), p.178.

polychrome cloisonné effect of the top capital, framed by four protruding volutes, with the inward looping acanthus terminal at the bottom. [Figure 38] The sprouting leaf transitions seamlessly from the letter's coiling tail in a convincing three-dimensional effect, enhanced by the artist's clever use of shading and outline. The vertical stem of the letter combines half circles and elliptical designs intersected by zigzag patterns creating tiles of contrasting colors.

The exquisite "Q" announces Luke's opening word "Quoniam" and showcases the Trier artist's skills, creativity and playfulness (Volume II, fol. 6r). [Figure 39] The initial features interlocking chevron patterns in its vertical section, topped by intersecting ovals forming a lattice capital with a vegetal topper. Two mirroring inward-looping acanthus terminals anchor the letter. The bowl of the Q is delineated by four alternating segments of loose interlace and three disks displaying interlocked semi-circular sections forming rosettes inscribed in squares. The central circular space thus demarcated contains four spirals, recalling a pinwheel, each combining three inward facing bird heads with elongated necks. The birds featured in the top two spirals, except for one, individually hold stylized leaves in their beaks; those inhabiting the bottom two collaboratively grab onto triangular forms, perhaps serifs. Simplified knots fill the spaces between the inward curling spirals and the edge of the bowl, impeding their motion. This dynamic composition recalls insular treatments, seen in metalwork, as for example in the famous Tara Brooch now in Dublin,⁴³⁰ and found on the pages of numerous manuscripts

⁴³⁰ The date and place of origin of the Tara brooch is still debated, see Janet Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, (London: Phaidon Press, 1981), p. 67. Other prominent examples of this design occur in decorated metal disks, Michael Ryan, "The Decoration of the Donore Discs" in *From the Isles of the North: Early Medieval Art in Ireland and Britain*, Cormac Bourke ed., (Belfast: HMSO, 1995), pp. 27-35.

including the Lindisfarne Gospels (London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero D.iv), notably in the corresponding Q marking the beginning of Luke's gospel (fol. 139r). This particular page also contains another motif replicated in Trier 23 in the shape of a dog-head terminal, seen in profile, with a large eye, downturn mouth, and a small nostril articulated via a slightly curved line. The face, combining two planes of contrasting colors, is prominently on display in two of the Trier manuscript's initials, announcing Mark's preface (Volume I, fol. 76r) and introducing Matthew's chapter list (Volume I, fol.19v).

The opening welcoming Mark's prologue combines on the verso (folio 75v), spread over five lines, the words "INCIPIT PROLOGVS SECVN DVM MARCV" in capital letters of alternating colors. The lavishly decorated initial M announces the author's name on the facing recto and leads into the first few lines of text (folio 76r). [Figure 30] The letter's inherent symmetry is reflected in the choice and distribution of the decorative motifs. These include undulating stylized vegetal strands, in complementary green and yellow sections, punctuated by triadic protrusions, and segments of imitation interlace. Facing kidney shaped outlines alternate with intersecting ellipses in yellow and red against a green background, intertwined with white "X" patterns. The color scheme is reversed, in the second section of faux interlace, with red and yellow zigzags interlocking over white ellipses and kidney shapes. Simplified knots of various sizes terminate each of the letter's five extremities, while two beast heads, facing each other atop the vertical posts, sprout volutes of acanthus leaves from their mouths, effectively filling the open triangular space between them. Large capitals A and

R occupy the bare areas of parchment below the letter to complete this compact decorative block.

Similar mirroring beast heads appear back to back atop the “I” at the center of the “IN” ligature, (fol. 19v) previewing Matthew’s chapter lists. [Figure 27] This motif and the Trier artist’s predilection for symmetrical compositions balancing geometric, pseudo-interlace and organic patterns echoes contemporary developments outside the Frankish kingdom, but well within its realm of influence. Attributed to a Greek scriptorium in Rome, a manuscript of the dialogues of Pope Gregory I, now preserved in the Vatican library (Bibliotheca Vaticana, MS gr.1666), and dated to c. 800,⁴³¹ displays on folio 136v, a large initial “M” combining imitation interlace in its vertical posts joined by a snake or dragon with heads at both extremities. These heads protrude over the letter’s vertical posts and operate as capitals, from which emerge smaller snakes swallowing fish. Both the Trier and Vatican initials combine rows of circles connected by symmetrical zigzags attempting to recreate interlace. The foot of the Vatican “M” ends with foliated acanthus leaf terminals, a motif common in the Trier codex. Pairs of beast-headed capitals crown both letters, with the Vatican scribe selecting biting dragons eating fish-swallowing snakes, and his Trier counterpart favoring additional foliated acanthus sprouting from facing dog heads. The biting beast headed capitals are reminiscent of earlier Frankish fish and bird initials as noted earlier.

⁴³¹ John Osborne, “The Use of Painted Initials by Greek and Latin Scriptoria in Carolingian Rome,” *Gesta*, Vol. 29, No.1 (1990), Figure 4, p. 79. Osborne recognizes late eighth century Western influences on the decorated initials marking the start of each of the four books of Dialogues, of which the “M” (fol.136v) discussed above is by far the most elaborate.

Although both artists borrow from a common visual repertoire, the Vatican manuscript's scribe is not as successful in his execution, lacking the linear precision and refinement of his Trier counterpart. This comparison defies the prevalent assumption of Carolingian artistic subordination to Rome. The presence south of the Alps, of such initials, combining animal and interlace motifs, was identified by André Grabar as a symptom of Northern influence.⁴³² Frankish participation in Roman affairs extended beyond the promise of assistance in return for papal sanctioning Pippin's takeover of the Frankish royal title. Charles' endowment of Roman churches, and the offering of gifts to St. Peter's, attests to Frankish ascendancy in the papal state, which was at a high point in the 790's and into the first decade of the ninth century.⁴³³

These elaborate initials contrast the understated opening of the Trier manuscript, as discussed in Chapter 3. The commentary on Hebrew names and its poetic dedication codicologically unfold on the same quire as the following text, Jerome's *Novum Opus*, introduced by a large insular half-uncial "b" on folio 5r. [Figure 29] This visual disparity intentionally differentiates between the novelty of Alcuin's contribution and the canonical status of Jerome's composition. His *Plures Fuisse* (fol. 6v) opens with a slightly enlarged "P" intruding on the left margin with a terminal consisting of a bird head holding a leaf in its beak. This subdued but elegant adornment exemplifies the penmanship of the Trier artist and recalls earlier eighth century exemplars including the

⁴³² André Grabar, *Les manuscrits grecs enluminés de provenance italienne*, (Paris, 1972), p.30.

⁴³³ The appropriation of the Avars' treasure in the 790's greatly contributed to this calculated generosity. Among these gifts to Rome and the papacy in particular are the luxurious Dagulf Psalter, discussed earlier, and the marble epitaph to Pope Hadrian, composed by Alcuin. See Collins, *Charlemagne*, pp. 89-101.

Trier Gospels (Trier, Domschatz, MS 61, folio 186v) from Echternach,⁴³⁴ or the *Opus Caroli* manuscript in the Vatican already mentioned (folio 9v). [Figure 41]

The Trier artist's predilection for combining and hybridizing his already extensive repertoire of decorative motifs is confirmed in the eight openings of canon tables. His fondness for inversion and chromatic permutations reflects long established practices, as compellingly exemplified in the first opening of the late seventh century manuscript of Pope Gregory I's homilies on Ezekiel, probably from Luxeuil, now in St Petersburg, (St Petersburg, National Library of Russia, cod. Q.v.i.14), which provided its viewers with clever reversals and permutations of lozenges, birds, rosettes, and most importantly the cross, the subject of the text introduced.⁴³⁵

The Canon Tables

Trier 23 devotes sixteen lavishly decorated folios (10v-18r) to the presentation of the Eusebian canon tables. The layout follows Nordenfalk's m-type arrangement; featuring a single row of arches connecting the columns' capitals.⁴³⁶ Sixteen page presentations of the ten canon tables are uncommon⁴³⁷ and Trier 23's may be the result of

⁴³⁴ Nancy Netzer, *Interplay*, plate 48. Other similarities with the Trier Gospels, including a shared emphasis on gospel harmony and Hebrew names have already been noted in Chapter 3.

⁴³⁵ Lawrence Nees, *Early Medieval Art*, *Oxford History of Art*, (Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 162-3 and Fig. 91.

⁴³⁶ Carl Nordenfalk, "The Apostolic Canon Tables" reprinted in his *Studies in the History of Book Illumination*, (London: Pindar Press, 1992), pp. 30-40 and his two-volume study, *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln*, Göteborg, 1938.

⁴³⁷ McGurk, "The Canon Tables in the Book of Lindisfarne and in the Codex Fuldensis of St. Victor of Capua," *Gospel Books*, III, pp. 192-198. Two manuscripts connected to the

an ad hoc expansion of a more common ten or twelve page layout, exploiting the numerical symbolism of four times four with its extensive connections to sacred quaternities, which incidentally corresponds to the number of jewels on the breastplate adorning the figure of Christ in the frontispiece to the gospel of Matthew. It is doubtful that a writing center, capable of producing such an elaborate manuscript, only possessed a single set of canon tables, which happened to follow this unusual layout. It is worth noting that from the small group of gospel books sharing this feature at least two are connected to the court, the Arsenal and St. Denis Gospels.⁴³⁸

In accordance with the manuscript's overall decorative program, great care went into creating varied and dynamic re-combinations of ornaments, while insuring that the underlying organizing principle of balance, symmetry and chromatic harmony were preserved. Decorative motifs such as rosettes, crosses, stylized vegetation, bird heads, and knots, mirror each other across the gutter, but are diversified with each consecutive opening, demonstrating an ever-present concern for sustaining the viewer's visual interest.⁴³⁹ [Figure 42] This essential organizing principle subordinates logic to symmetry in the layout of some canon tables. Canon 1 compares materials common to all four gospels, and is accordingly presented in a four-column format. Canon 1 concludes on folio 11v, and faces the start of Canon 2, which compares only three gospels. Either

Court of Charlemagne must be included, the Gospels of Saint-Martin-des-Champs, (Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 599) and St. Denis Gospels (Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 9387).

⁴³⁸ Trésors Carolingiens, Cat. 9, pp. 94-97.

⁴³⁹ Michelle Brown has characterized the decoration of the sixteen-page Canon Table cycle in the Lindisfarne Gospels in similar terms, additionally noting that there are no other known instances of Insular Gospel books displaying a 16-page layout. Lindisfarne, p. 304.

through poor planning, or, in the context of this carefully designed manuscript, to perpetuate the visual equilibrium, the scribe maintained this four-part arrangement on the facing recto (fol. 12r).

Carl Nordenfalk declared that canon tables presented in sixteen-page cycle exemplify “die erste grössere Lateinische Kanonfolge”.⁴⁴⁰ He further argued that these cycles derived from a sixth century Ravennate type, which included among the prefatory materials Eusebius’ letter to Carpianus, also present in Trier 23 and the Lindisfarne Gospels. This text, according to Nordenfalk, is always included in Greek gospel books and as Michelle Brown has suggested, likely reached the insular world via an Italian intermediate.⁴⁴¹ Trier 23 is not mentioned in McGurk’s brief discussion of the Lindisfarne canon tables, neither is the Codex Millenarius, and Cuthbercht Gospels, which shares this feature and add an additional layer to the possible Bavarian connection, already suggested in Chapter 2.⁴⁴²

For each new opening, a selection of ornaments consistently embellishes the columns’ shafts, bases, capitals and intermediary sections. The latter take the shape of elongated knots, and disks containing rosettes or crosses. Bird heads protrude from capitals and loose interlace and stepped bases, which sometime overlap, anchor the architectural dividers. Facing bird heads with intersecting beaks and foliated canopies add dimension to the upper sections. The intermediary capitals, interrupting the columns’ vertical thrust, may be vestiges of the model’s layout, in two superposed rows of

⁴⁴⁰ Carl Nordenfalk, Kanontafeln.

⁴⁴¹ Brown, Lindisfarne, p.180.

⁴⁴² McGurk, Canon Tables, pp. 192-198.

columned numbers as seen in the Augsburg Gospels, (Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. 1.2.4^o.2) already mentioned with regard to its inclusion of Aileran's poem, *Quam in Primo Speciosa*.⁴⁴³ [Figure 43]

The canon tables serve a practical as well as symbolic function. Beyond their basic (if often theoretical) usefulness as a cross-referencing tool, they make visually manifest the fundamental harmony of the four gospels.⁴⁴⁴ In this capacity, they operate similarly to the gospel frontispieces as conceived by the Trier artist. The predilection for redundancy and the emphasis on gospel harmony, at play in the textual elements of the prefatory section, find in the canon tables and frontispieces their visual counterparts. This symbolic, functional and exegetical overlapping of canon tables and four symbols pages is overtly on display in the late eighth century Flavigny Gospels (Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 4).⁴⁴⁵ Folio 8r [Figure 44] depicts the figure of Christ and the evangelist symbols, winged and holding books, as caryatids-like capitals, in the upper section of the first canon table, while their terrestrial counterparts occupy the bases. The four evangelists are shown with writing implements, with Mark and John contorting their necks to make eye contact with the sources of their inspiration. Bands of texts, encased in

⁴⁴³ Netzer, *Interplay*, plate 63, which also appear in London, BL, Ms. Additional 24142, reproduced in Nees, *Gundohinus Gospels*, p. 34ff and Fig. 5-9.

⁴⁴⁴ Nees has suggested that this very concept may be at the origin of the development of beast canon table, *Gundohinus Gospels*, p. 167. On this topic and its potential connection to Aileran's *Quam in Primo speciosa* poem, see Nancy Netzer, "The Origin of the Beast Canon Tables Reconsidered" in *The Book of Kells: Proceedings of a conference at Trinity College Dublin 6-9 September 1992*, edited by Felicity O'Mahony, (Scholar Press, 1994), pp. 322-332.

⁴⁴⁵ Nees, *Gundohinus Gospels*, p.168.

the column shafts connect the two rows of figures and affirm the pairings of evangelists and symbols.

The youthful Christ hovers over a bearded man, who not only looks up at him, but also points to him, and has consequently been identified as John the Baptist, showing the way to salvation. This interpretation is strengthened by the presence of a cross-topped staff in Christ's right hand and a book (the book of life?) in his covered left hand. Christ lifts his gaze to the heavens, extending the upward motion initiated by John the Baptist's gesture. Contemporary concerns about baptism and its orthodox performance were at the core of Alcuin's agenda in the last decade of his life, as discussed in Chapter 2, and emerged in his writings and correspondence.⁴⁴⁶ This concern also informs the contemporary redaction of a treatise on baptism by Jesse, the Bishop of Amiens, who reminded his readers that during their initiations, the novices learned how each gospel's opening verse reveals not only the grounds for their respective author and symbol pairings, but also uncovers aspects of Christ's nature, which every new Christian joins through baptism.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁶ Alcuin's writings on baptism can be found in a letter, c. 798, addressed to the priest Oduin/Odwin, which reprises the "Prima Paganus" text regarding baptism rituals. It appears in the Epistula section of the Clavis, (ALC 45. 134), pp. 252-253 and is reproduced in Migne, PL, 101: col. 611-614B. Alcuin also shares this text with the monks of Septimania to whom he writes about the dangers of Adoptionism, Clavis, (ALC 45.137), pp. 255-256. For an extensive discussion and analysis of baptism rituals in the Carolingian period, see Susan A. Keefe's two volume edition and commentary in Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in Carolingian Empire (Notre Dame Press, 2002).

⁴⁴⁷ Jesse of Amiens' text is reproduced in Keefe, Baptism, Volume 2, pp.405-428.

The Gospel Frontispieces

The extensive collection of prefatory texts, occupying the first ten folios of the manuscript, concludes with the *Matheus e sacro* poem (fols. 9v-10r). As seen in Chapter 3, these verses effectively transition from the textual components of the prefatory apparatus into the two elaborate visual articulations of the four evangelists' distinctive yet concordant accounts, the canon tables and the gospel frontispieces. The poem reiterates the reasons behind the symbolic pairing of each author with one of the four living creatures in Ezekiel's vision of the four living creatures and the glory of the Lord, and the Book of Revelation's vision of the Enthroned.

The Trier codex equips each gospel opening with a recurring frontispiece design, (Volume I, fol. 23v and 80v; Volume II, fol. 5v and 62v) which departs from modern scholars' expectations of seated evangelist portraits, accompanied by their symbols, and located in landscapes or schematic architectural settings, which occur in most illuminated Gospels manuscripts of this period. Trier 23's arrangement echoes the court produced Godescalc Evangelistary, which gathers all four evangelists next to Christ,⁴⁴⁸ in a sequence of decorated folios at the front of the manuscript,⁴⁴⁹ while reflecting the insular

⁴⁴⁸ All four evangelists, albeit of the standing type, are gathered at the back of the Gundohinus Gospels. A ninth century Gospel book now Paris, BnF, Ms. lat. 11959, presents the four evangelists in one opening, arranged in pairs under arcades, see Trésors Carolingiens, Cat. 30, pp. 147-148.

⁴⁴⁹ The Godescalc Evangelistary's opening sequence shows John facing Christ, possibly emphasizing his status as Christ's favorite apostle and his witnessing the crucifixion. The next opening presents a fountain of life/baptismal font image with eight clearly visible porphyry columns, likely referencing the Lateran Baptistery as Nees noted, in commemoration of Charles' two sons baptism by the pope in Rome in that very location as mentioned in the colophon. For a discussion of this imagery see, Paul A. Underwood, The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels, (Harvard University Press, 1950).

traditional of placing four symbol pages ahead of each gospel as a constant reminder of their fundamental harmony and concordance.⁴⁵⁰

Each frontispiece replicates a core design, which comprises the bust length figure of the youthful, beardless Christ, located under an arch, dominating a square frame containing text. Medallions, inhabited by haloed evangelist symbols holding books, anchor the frame's four corners. Vegetal motifs in shades of red, yellow and green, and sometimes blue, sprout from the vertical segments of the frame and from either side of the dominating arch over Christ's head. More or less extensive sections of Incipit texts (see above) unfold in the space delineated by the square frame, while each design is adjusted sequentially to allow the symbol corresponding to the author of the gospel account opening on the facing folio to occupy the top left hand medallion, at Christ's right, in the position of honor. Matthew's frontispiece (fol. 23v) thus opens with the man/angel in the top left hand corner medallion and the eagle, facing him, while the lion and ox occupy the bottom register. The four beasts rotate in a clockwise fashion to perpetuate this orderly arrangement. Meaningful alterations to this design occur in the form of the insertion of a rectangular jewel or brooch across Christ's chest in the Matthew frontispiece, [Figure 1] and the addition of exuberant foliage and vegetation, combined with vertical shoots topped by crosses in medallions to John's frontispiece. [Figure 4] The significance of these modifications will be addressed below.

Symmetrically arranged stylized plumes of acanthus leaves in shades of green, blue, yellow and red sprout organically from the vertical sides of the frames. An additional set protrudes from the upper medallions and project outward on either side of

⁴⁵⁰ Netzer, *Interplay*, pp. 104, and James Cronin, "The Evangelist Symbols as Pictorial Exegesis" in *From the Isles of the North*, pp. 111-117.

the arch, while their counterpart rests gently along the inner rim of the arch surrounding Christ's bust. These wing-like volutes visually recall the Gundohinus Gospels' *Maestas Domini* miniature (12v), [Figure 25] which operates as visual exegesis identifying Christ as the Ark of the Covenant, flanked by wing-touching cherubims, in accordance with Exodus 25:18-20.⁴⁵¹ The youthful, beardless Christ, with an oversized pearl-rimmed halo, and the evangelist symbols occupy medallions arranged in a quincunx pattern.⁴⁵² Nees observed that these particular symbols present the closest iconographic parallels to those appearing in the Trier codex, although the Trier artist is indubitably more skilled at their execution.⁴⁵³

The geometry underlying the frontispieces' design amalgamates simple yet symbolic forms: a square with four circles dominated by a semi-circle. The numerical symbolism associated with the use of a four-sided figure alludes to fundamental building blocks of the universe or eternal truths, including the four elements, four winds, but also four cardinal virtues, four rivers of paradise, and of course the four gospels.⁴⁵⁴ They combine with the eternal perfection of circles, having no beginning and no end, and the arch, the essential marker of glorification and triumph, which also invokes the dome of

⁴⁵¹ Nees, *Gundohinus Gospels*, Chapter 6, p.131ff. This interpretation also informs the design of Theodulf's Oratory apse mosaic at Germiny, as Ann Freeman and Paul Meyvaert have convincingly demonstrated, "The Meaning of Theodulf's Apse Mosaic at Germiny-des-Prés, *Gesta*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2001), pp. 125-139.

⁴⁵² Bianca Kühnel argues this design is a Carolingian invention, *The End of Time and the Order of Things: Science and Eschatology in Early Medieval Art*, (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2003), p.222.

⁴⁵³ Nees, *Gundohinus Gospels*, p.146 (and note 32), and p.150.

⁴⁵⁴ Jennifer O'Reilly, "Patristic and Insular Traditions of the Evangelists: Exegesis and Iconography of the Four-Symbol Page".

heaven. The composition showcases the essential harmony and equality of the four gospel accounts, as each individual evangelist's voice is acknowledged, but subordinated to this fundamental truth. The design confirms each gospel's accuracy by reminding the viewer of their common origin, in the constant presence of Christ, triumphant under the dominant arch. This seemingly straightforward arrangement packs complex visual exegesis on the evangelists, the natures of Christ, and the hopeful anticipation of the elects' vision of the Enthroned at the time of Judgment.

The Evangelist Symbols

The evangelists consistently appear in the guise of their respective symbols in all four frontispieces. The eagle varies in size but is always shown in profile, as is the lion, whose head contorts to look behind its shoulder in Luke's opening in order to keep the figure of Christ in its line of sight. The artist is not just copying a model but adapting to make a sensible composition. The man and the wide-eyed ox are always depicted frontally. The symbols are adorned with large haloes of varying colors and contrasting rims, and hold books of varied and changing hues. The connection between evangelist and symbol, elucidated in the prefatory texts, did not need restating. The addition of labels in the narrow spaces left bare around the large halos would have crammed the medallions and disrupted the streamlined, understated elegance and airiness characteristic of the Trier codex' overall decorative scheme. In addition, the juxtaposition of the rotating beasts, taking their turn at the place of honor on Christ's right, and their corresponding evangelist's name inside the frame diffused any potential for confusion. Nancy Netzer observed that starting each gospel with a full-page design combining the

four symbols, arranged in quadrants around a cross, or lozenge, such as found in the Books of Durrow, (Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS A. 4.5. (57)) and Kells, (Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS. A. I. (58)) and the MacDurnan, (London, Lambeth Palace MS 1370) and the Lichfield or St Chad Gospels (Lichfield Cathedral Library) is an ‘insular’ feature, with a continental counterpart centered around the insular foundation of Echternach.⁴⁵⁵

The pairing of the “four living creatures” appearing on the day of Judgment in Ezekiel’s vision of the Enthroned (Ezekiel 1:1-16) and witnessed by John on Patmos as recorded in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 4:6-7), with the four gospel authors, originated in the second century with Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyon. These visionary encounters, well suited for pictorial representation, foreshadow the expectant audience’s anticipation of a privileged access to the divine at the time of judgment. The Old Testament passage elaborates on various aspects of the living creatures’ appearance, including their anthropomorphic features and wings, distinct visual elements the Trier artist omitted. Rather than embrace a zooanthropomorphic iconography, as seen in the contemporary Gospels of St. Croix de Poitiers previously mentioned, the Trier artist elected to depict the living creatures in much simpler forms, yet their constant co-presence captures the essence of Ezekiel’s vision, “And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings” (1:6).

The exegetical pairing of each of the living creatures with their respective gospel authors was articulated, in the order presented here, by Jerome but was the subject of

⁴⁵⁵ Netzer, Interplay, p.104.

variations.⁴⁵⁶ Each gospel's opening verses provide the grounds for the symbolic pairing, as presented in Jerome's *Plures Fuisse* and restated in the poem beginning *Matheo e sacro* concluding the Trier codex' preface. Jerome's interpretation of Ezekiel and John's visions further relies on Isaiah's own vision of the Temple.⁴⁵⁷ This identification informs the visual exegesis unfolding in the representation of Christ as the Ark of the Covenant in the Gundohinus Gospels, which also feature the closest iconographic parallels to the Trier 23 evangelist symbols.⁴⁵⁸ The similarities are most striking in the man's gesture, with his right arm across his chest; the wide-eyed ox, gaping at the viewer, and an almost completely visible eagle, adjusted to fit the confined space of the medallion. The man and ox are shown frontally while the eagle and lion are depicted in profile in both manuscripts. Gundohinus uses a more muted palette than the Trier artist, and labels each symbol but gives them no haloes. His youthful enthroned Christ, also identified by an oversized crossed nimbus, is equally surrounded by stylized vegetation, in the form of a glorifying wreath.

Matthew's symbolic depiction as a man or angel communicates Christ's humanity, achieved through the mystery of the incarnation, and forever reminds the viewer of his very real suffering on the cross. The Trier artist's rendering of Matthew's symbol is essentially a smaller version of Christ, with the exception of the cross nimbus

⁴⁵⁶ The Book of Durrow, (Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS A. 4. 5. (57)), reflects the pairing favored by Irenaeus, or pre-Vulgate pairing, with Mark appearing as the eagle, and John as the lion.

⁴⁵⁷ See O'Reilly, *Patristic*, p.8/49

⁴⁵⁸ This allusion to the temple seemingly supports the proposed interpretation that the Trier frontispiece design intended to reference the mosaic in the dome of the Aachen chapel. As seen in Chapter 2, the inscription running around its base draws a parallel between the edifice and the temple built by Solomon.

and mantle, and of course without the brooch of the first frontispiece. Matthew opens his account with Christ's genealogy, which starts with Abraham and celebrates the culmination of God's covenant with his chosen people, and is the focus of Alcuin's commentary at the start of Trier 23's first volume. As Chapter 3 established, this biblical text's particular emphasis on Christ's divine and royal lineage resonated in light of the Frankish court's understanding of its role within the larger framework of universal history and its contemporary engagement against the heresy of Adoptionism. Mark is the regal lion whose voice is heard in the desert. Luke becomes the ox, as his account's opening references the high priest Zacharias, revealing Christ's dual role as the sacrificial offering and the high priest. John begins with the primordial proclamation of Christ's omnipotence and divinity and is therefore visually expressed as the eagle, rising up to the heavenly realm. Gregory's homily on Ezekiel⁴⁵⁹ complicates these pairings by expounding how these characteristics connect to four key events of Christ's life: Birth (Matthew), Death (Luke), Resurrection (Mark) and Ascension (John).⁴⁶⁰

Ezekiel's vision mentions 'wheels' and 'rotation', (1: 15-21), which the Trier artist possibly referenced in the underlying geometric design, the use of medallions and the clockwise movement of the symbols in each successive frontispiece.⁴⁶¹ Ezekiel witnessed the "glory of the Lord," a preview of the direct visual experience of the divine

⁴⁵⁹ O'Reilly, *Patristic*, p.7-8. Gregory the Great, *Homilies on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel by Saint Gregory the Great*, translated by Theodosia Tomkinson, 2nd edition (Etna, California, 2008).

⁴⁶⁰ Gregory's Fourth Homily, *Homilies*, pp. 73-82

⁴⁶¹ The wheels and the oddly fused four living creatures and their six wings are precisely rendered in the Ascension depiction of the Rabbula Gospels, Syria, 586, on folio 13v. (Florence, Bibliotheca Medicea Laurenziana, Cod. Plut. I.56).

the elect alone will reach on the last day. Trier 23's intended recipient is therefore provided with a tangible preview into his anticipated future, destined to come to pass as long as his resolve to carry out his God-assigned mission prevailed.

Jennifer O'Reilly has thoroughly investigated the multivalent symbolic and exegetical allusions underlying the concept of sacred quaternities, focusing her attention on their visual manifestation in four symbol pages in the insular tradition.⁴⁶² The learned audiences' unpacking of the veiled or overt references to the four elements, winds, cardinal virtues, rivers of paradise, complicated the basic message imbedded in these compositions, the harmony of the sometime disparate gospel accounts. The number 4 corresponds to the number of evangelists, and evidently the apocalyptic beasts of Ezekiel and John's visions with which they are symbolically and exegetically paired. The scriptural pairings are expanded to account for the fundamental organizational principles of the universe, under God's control. Bianca Kühnel has demonstrated how this approach led to the appropriation of computistical, astronomical and other scientific diagrams to serve as the underlying structures of *Maiestas Domini* images, thus contributing additional layers of exegesis.⁴⁶³ This sophisticated presentation of universal knowledge and fundamental truths elucidated and harmoniously confirmed God's plan for creation.

⁴⁶² Jennifer O'Reilly, *Patristic*, and "Gospel Harmony and the Names of Christ in the book of Kells," in *The Bible as Book: The Manuscript Tradition*, edited by John L. Sharpe III and Kimberly Van Kampen. (The British Library and Oak Knoll Press, 1998), pp. 73-88

⁴⁶³ Kühnel, *Order*, expanded upon the work of F. Van der Meer, *Maiestas Domini: Théophanies de L'Apocalypse dans L'art Chrétien, Étude sur les origines d'une iconographie speciale du Christ*, (Paris, 1938). Kühnel does not address Trier 23 and Van der Meer's only reference occurs on page 323, when in a paragraph devoted to other overlooked codices, not meeting expectations he lists "le curieux frontispice du ms. 23 de Trèves."

The equation of the four gospels with the four rivers of paradise, flowing from a singular sources is overtly broadcast in inscriptions gracing the folios of contemporary manuscripts,⁴⁶⁴ including the Ada Gospels, (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Ms. 22) and the later ninth century Gospels of St. Gauzelin (Nancy, Trésor de la Cathédrale, s.n.),⁴⁶⁵ of likely Tournonian origin. This manuscript was discussed in Chapter 3 in connection to its presentation of the *Matheus e sacro* poem over four full-pages, featuring miniatures of each evangelist accompanied by his respective symbol. This elaborate display testifies to the importance of this text, at least at Tours, the likely place of its creation. As suggested, Trier 23's emphasis on the four symbols design may reference contemporary debates regarding baptism and its performance. This issue was a primary concern of Alcuin's, preoccupied with bringing newly conquered peoples under the protective fold of the Church, and evidently anxious over Charles' ill-fated strategy of forced baptism to subdue the reluctant Saxons. The Life of St. Willibrord, which Alcuin composed for Beornard, abbot of Echternach, primarily focused on the saint's success at converting the Frisians, which did not entail the forceful conversion of uninitiated people, but promoted careful and dedicated catechism endeavors. Chapter 2 explored how this propagandistic composition reworked earlier sources to elevate Willibrord's status through tales of miracles and royal support, effectively providing a template after which current policies could be modeled.

⁴⁶⁴ Dümmler noted the similarities between the brief poem "hic liber est vitae, paradise" Clavis, (ALC 11. [127.12]), pp.111-112, found in the Ada Gospels (fol.172) and the "hunc ancilla Dei" poem, Clavis (ALC 11.67), p. 85-86. Alcuin is assumed to be responsible for both the longer work and the six hexameters extract.

⁴⁶⁵ Paul Underwood, "The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels", Dumbarton Oaks Papers (1950), pp. 43-148, (p. 49). See also Herbert Kessler's discussion in The Illustrated Bibles from Tours, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 42-58.

As noted earlier, the Godescalc Evangelistary's opening sequence juxtaposes the four evangelists and their symbols, followed by Christ enthroned, with a multivalent depiction of the Fountain of Life/baptismal font, specifically referencing the Lateran baptistery. Baptism, the initiation ritual granting full membership into the Church is the mandatory pathway to salvation, and eternal life. This is further emphasized by the pairing of the *fons vitae* with the liturgical reading announcing Christ's birth reminding the audience of the path to salvation via baptism and the study of the word of God.

Alcuin promoted catechism as the sole, albeit slower, and more challenging mean of achieving the genuine conversion of pagan adults. At a time when the majority of Christians had been baptized as children, his unusual focus on the conversion of adults is undeniably informed by his preoccupation with the situation in Saxony.⁴⁶⁶ His hopes were frustrated by Charlemagne's insistence on forced mass conversions to subdue the enduringly defiant Saxons. In Alcuin's eyes, this obstinate approach jeopardized God's plan for the expansion of Christianity, and threatened the eternal salvation of not only these newly conquered peoples, but by extension of all the *gentes* already gathered under Charles' dominion. Like Gregory before him, Alcuin's views on baptism were shaped by Augustine's writings, particularly "De Trinitate," which he liberally mined to formulate his rebuttal of Felix of Urgel's Adoptionism.⁴⁶⁷ Alcuin's concern for the proper

⁴⁶⁶ Alcuin's letter to Oduin/Odwin, mentioned earlier, clearly addresses adult conversions.

⁴⁶⁷ Through baptism, all Christians became members of Christ's body and in turn 'christus' as such the king, particularly the Carolingian kings, maintained their special status as they benefitted from a double anointing, as Christians and as kings. See Kantorowicz, in Baptism and Change in the Early Middle Ages, c.200-c.1150, edited by Peter Cramer, p. 155. Cavadini discusses Alcuin's indebtedness to Augustine in Adoptionism, pp. 88-102.

performance of baptismal rites is a logical extension of his endorsement of catechism as the non-believers' genuine desire for conversion could not be threatened by the improper performance of the neophytes' initiation, which would only risk their salvation.⁴⁶⁸

The Figure of Christ

The bust length figure of the youthful beardless Christ emerges under an arch in each of the gospel frontispieces. His long wavy locks cascade down the sides of his elongated face and over his shoulders. His oversized halo with a broad rim contains a *croix pattée*, a cross with the ends of each terminal expanded. Large almond-shaped eyes with heavy contours animate the face, as Christ looks aloof, directing his gaze up toward the heavens. Heavy eyebrows connect to the bridge of the nose, bisecting the face, accentuated by shading in blue and pink. A simple slit with a downturn stroke at the corner delineates the mouth. The figure wears a red tunic, topped by a blue mantle, except in Matthew's frontispiece, where Christ uniquely wears a reddish-brown garment, adorned by a large rectangular jeweled brooch across his chest. This adornment combines a central green rectangle surrounded by a white border over which emerge sixteen reddish disks.

The youthful, beardless Christ is the dominant type in early Carolingian depictions, as seen in the Gundohinus Gospels, Godescalc Evangelistary and Lorsch Gospels, as well as Corbie and Stuttgart Psalters (Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 18 and Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Bibl. Fol. 23). Godescalc locates the Savior in an elaborate setting, surrounded by a frame that combines alternating

⁴⁶⁸ Jean-Paul Bouhot, "Explications du rituel baptismal à l'époque carolingienne", *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 24 (1978), 273-301.

segments of stylized vegetal motifs and interlace, as does the Trier artist. This youthful type is also favored in contemporary ivory carvings such as the found on the covers of a Gospel Lectionary (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 176), the Lorsch Gospels (Vatican City, Museo Sacro) or the St. Denis Gospels (Paris, BnF, Ms. lat. 9387) and engraved gems, such as the sapphire Christ now inserted in the later medieval Dreikönigsschrein in Cologne, [Figure 45] possibly executed by the same artists already responsible for the illuminations of the most luxurious court productions.⁴⁶⁹

Rainer Warland's extensive investigation of the bust-length Christ motif⁴⁷⁰ recognized the closest iconographic parallel to Trier 23's frontispieces in the so-called Psalter of Charlemagne (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat. 13159, fol. 118v), generally dated to just before 800,⁴⁷¹ where it faces an enigmatic beast initial opening Psalm 109 (110), concerned with "Christ's exaltation and everlasting priesthood."⁴⁷² [Figure 46] As the only miniature in the manuscript, it brings emphasis to this particular psalm and its message. The juxtaposition of this particular text with Christ as a bust-length, youthful

⁴⁶⁹ Nees, Godescalc.

⁴⁷⁰ Rainer Warland, Das Brustbild Christi: Studien zur spatantiken und frühbyzantinischen Bildgeschichte, Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte, 41. Supplementheft, Herder, (Rom Freiburg, Wien, 1986).

⁴⁷¹ The manuscript was at St. Riquier from an early date although may not have originated from there. It contains one of the earlier versions of *Laudes Regiae*, which mention both Pope Leo and Charlemagne. Warland, Brustbild, Cat. A13, p.93 for the Psalter of Charlemagne with illustration and parallels, which include Trier 23 (Cat. E.20, p.260) and the Enger purse reliquary, depicting Christ flanked by angels, in a two-story composition delineating each figure by an arcade. (Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kunstgewebemuseum), dating from the late eighth century. The Psalter was on display in the Trésors Carolingiens, Cat. 26, pp. 136-137.

⁴⁷² Warland, Brustbild, p. 93.

figure, wearing an oversized halo with broad rim, flanked by mirroring angelic guards, resonates in light of Chapter 2's interpretation of the iconographic oddity in Matthew's frontispiece in the Trier codex, as a reference to contemporary rhetoric defining Charlemagne's authority in both secular and sacred terms. The psalm announces "The Lord will send forth the scepter of thy power out of Sion: rule thou in the midst of thy enemies" and "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech. The Lord at thy right hand hath broken kings in the day of his wrath"⁴⁷³ The passage exalts Christ's role as king and high priest, a double duty projected onto Charles in this exact historical moment. The text also emphasizes Christ's divinity, crucial to the refutation of Adoptionism. His rule, like the Frankish ruler's power, rests in the hands and will of God. As Chapter 2 demonstrated, Alcuin did not fail to remind the king that he owed his success to God's enduring support and generosity.

A compelling parallel to both the Psalter of Charlemagne and Trier 23's depictions of Christ emerges in an engraved sapphire, now inserted into one of the short sides of the Dreikönigsschrein in Cologne, and dated by Genevra Kornbluth to c.800.⁴⁷⁴ [Figure 45] The bust-length Christ holds a book in his left hand while his right hand is raised in blessing. Heavy lines articulate the planes of the face and delineate heavy eyebrows. The nose, has unfortunately suffered some damage. The gem's bright blue color, as Kornbluth revealed, "is the color of light passing through water, and its presence

⁴⁷³ Psalm 109, 2 and 4-5. Douay-Rheims Bible.

⁴⁷⁴ Kornbluth, Sapphire, p. 47.

in the heavenly Jerusalem prefigures the coming of Christ, who is both light and stone.⁴⁷⁵

Blue communicates Christ's royal power and references the celestial realm, in similar fashion to the blue background sprinkled with stars, appearing behind the figure of Christ in the Trier Gospels (Trier, Domschatz, Ms. 61, folio 1b) from Echternach, dated to the 720's.⁴⁷⁶ [Figure 47] Christ occupies a medallion, at the center of the page. He is surrounded by evangelist symbols in quadrants, framed by interlace-filled borders. The Trier Gospels share Trier 23's fixation with gospel harmony, which it expresses in both traditional and creative ways. The manuscript features evangelist portraits, accompanied by their respective symbols, as well as the four-symbol and Christ page just mentioned, reminiscent of insular practice, at play in Echternach. The Tetramorph miniature (5v), its scribe/illuminator Thomas' proud creation, is an innovative, albeit strange articulation of this same principle.⁴⁷⁷ The hybrid creature combines a human upper body with crossed arms, holding a scepter and a sword. The figure wears a bright blue tunic under an orange-red mantle, whose bottom section is lifted, like a curtain to reveal the living creatures' overlapping pairs of legs dangling oddly below. The artist labeled his composition with the names of the evangelists, possibly anticipating his

⁴⁷⁵ Knorbluth, *Sapphire*, p. 54. Kornbluth adds that the *Opus Caroli* and the Council of Frankfurt in 794 both inform us that the Carolingians' understanding of the various objects God had commissioned was to function as prefigurations of Christ. This interpretation resonates in light of Chapter 2's reformulation of their understanding of true kingship as primarily based in christomimesis as opposed to ancient Roman or even Old Testament models.

⁴⁷⁶ Netzer, *Interplay*, Plate 1. *Karl der Grosse*, (Aachen 1965) cat. 401, fig.48. This is also the case in the Valencienne Apocalypse and Codex Amiatinus' respective *Maiestas Domini*.

⁴⁷⁷ Netzer, *Interplay*, plate 3.

viewer's problematic deciphering of this unusual design, and proudly inscribed his signature "Thomas scribsit".⁴⁷⁸ The artist framed his creation in a heavy border of adequate interlace, executed in red, white and yellow. Loose knots anchor the corners of the frame. The bottom left and top right corners additionally feature double profile beast heads, with drawn tongues ending in smaller, elongated knots.

The arrangement of the four symbols around the central figure of Christ in Trier 61 is echoed in the late eighth century Essen Gospels, (Essen, Domschatzkammer, Ms.1, folio 29v) [Figure 48] where Christ inhabits a medallion, at the center of an interlace-filled cross whose arms divide the page into quadrants where truncated six-winged evangelist symbols dwell.⁴⁷⁹ The three visible arms of the cross behind Christ's head each bare a letter, spelling R-E-X, from left to right. The image thus created is infused with the same duality, more complexly and thoroughly expressed in the Gospels of St. Croix de Poitiers miniature. It essentially communicates the synchronicity of Christ's death on the cross, with his triumph over death and his anticipated Second Coming, as king of heaven and ultimate judge in fulfillment of scriptures and prophecy. The artist's outfitting the living creatures with six clearly discernible wings visually transcribes Ezekiel and John's descriptions and accordingly explicitly references the forthcoming Day of Judgment. A similar appeal for personal salvation informs the design of the seventh century, North Italian Valerianus Gospels colophon (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 6224, folio 202v), where the bust length figure of Christ emerges under an arch atop a *crux*

⁴⁷⁸ Nees, Originality, p. 95.

⁴⁷⁹ Only the eagle figure is shown in full at the bottom right.

gemata whose crossbar supports two birds and from which hang A and W.⁴⁸⁰ This unusual arrangement finds its most compelling equivalent in the intricate metalwork piece repurposed as the back cover of the Lindau Gospels, (New York, Morgan Library, Ms. 1) discussed at length in Chapter 2.

The iconography of triumph, associated with Christ's placement under an arch was a remnant of Roman imperial iconography long absorbed into Christian visual discourse, as is Christ's depiction flanked by spear bearing guards in Charlemagne's Psalter. Christ's depiction in medallions is a two-dimensional adaptation of numismatic representations where his partnership, if not quite equation, with the secular ruler on the reverse side, is made even more explicit.⁴⁸¹

The triumphant Christ adorns the cover of the St Denis Gospels, (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat.9387), from the late eighth century and is shown trampling beasts in the ivory panels adorning Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Douce 176 and the Lorsch Gospels, now in the Vatican. The Montpellier Psalter, previously owned by Tassilo as seen in Chapter 2, is known to have been in the possession of the Carolingian court by the late 780's or early 790's and contains two miniatures, one depicting Christ and the other David. Framed by interlaced-filled arches, they both trample the gates of hell and share identical facial features, including elongated beardless faces, and large almond shaped eyes, which echo the Tassilo Chalice to which they are related.

⁴⁸⁰ E.A. Lowe, *CLA* 9. 1249. The design recalls folio 149v of the Codex Usanianus Primus (Dublin, Trinity College Library, Ms. 55), from the early seventh century.

⁴⁸¹ As seen for example in the series of coins issued by Justinian II in the late seventh and early eighth century.

A problematic and fascinating carved ivory in Trier's Cathedral Treasury (possibly in Trier from an early date, 6th-7th century) and of uncertain, perhaps Constantinopolitan origin, depicts a scene interpreted as a *relic adventus*.⁴⁸² In the left hand corner, a bust length figure of a haloed, youthful, beardless Christ dominates the scene, located under an arch, emerging atop an architectural structure. Kenneth Holum and Gary Vikan have interpreted this iconography as a direct reference to the icon of Christ on the Chalke gate of Constantinople.⁴⁸³ In the context of the Trier manuscript, it is unclear whether the artist intended the arch to also conjure a specific monument or location beyond the exegetical interpretations noted above. However, this composition could also reasonably reference the original *Maestas Domini* design in the Aachen chapel dome, or allude to Christ's presence, in the altar dedicated to him, on the second floor, directly across from Charlemagne's throne.

These various works, related manuscripts and other objects, do not constitute a disparate assemblage. While many have established connections to the court milieu, most date to the period leading to the turn of the ninth century. As already established in Chapter 2, it is within this temporal window that Trier 23 was most likely conceived and created.

⁴⁸² Warland, *Brustbild*, Figure 56, Cat. A6, p.198. Kenneth G. Holum and Gary Vikan, "The Trier Ivory. Adventus Ceremonial and the Relics of St. Stephan", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 33 (1979): 113-133. They speculate that the ivory plaque functioned as the side on a reliquary box, likely containing some of the relics shown in the scene itself. The ivory has been in the collection of the Cathedral Treasury in Trier since 1844. On the provenance and an alternate interpretation see Suzanne Spain, "The Translation of Relics Ivory in Trier", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977): 279-304.

⁴⁸³ Holum and Vikan, *Adventus*, p. 125

The Matthew Anomaly

As noted above, the predictable frontispiece arrangement is supplemented in both Matthew and John's openings with subtle yet meaningful additions. John's frontispiece (Volume II, fol. 62v) [Figure 4] displays extensive vegetation sprouting from the vertical borders of the frame. The arch over the bust of Christ is uniquely flanked by vertical branches topped by small horizontal slabs surmounted by roughly symmetrical vegetal offshoots, capped by a pair of roundels bearing crosses. These echo the four crosses inserted at the top and bottom of the vertical posts of the letter N from the IN ligature announcing the start of the sacred text on the facing folio. [Figure 40] These enhancements allude to John's special status as witness to the crucifixion, already suggested in the design of the initial marking the beginning of his prologue. The juxtaposition of crosses and vegetation encourages the viewer to contemplate the life-giving power of Christ's sacrifice and the cross as the tree of life.

Matthew and John are often given special prominence on account of their bearing witness to Christ's earthly existence, as these two evangelists were also among the twelve apostles.⁴⁸⁴ Moreover, their respective accounts reveal the quintessential duality of Christ's nature, simultaneously fully human and fully divine, as encapsulated in their respective symbolic depictions. While Trier 23's creators elevate both Matthew and John's profiles via their enhanced frontispieces, Matthew, and by extension Christ's

⁴⁸⁴ Lawrence Nees, "Reading Aldred's for the Lindisfarne Gospels", *Speculum* 78 (2003), pp. 333-377. See also Rainer Kashnitz, "Matheus ex ore Christi Scripsit": Zum Bild der Berufung und Inspiration der Evangelisten," in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzman*, C. Moss and K. Kiefer eds., (Princeton: Department of Art and Archeology), 1995, pp. 169-180. Jeffery F. Hamburger has investigated John's special status among the four evangelists in, *St John the Divine: The Deified Evangelist in Medieval Art and Theology*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

humanity are prioritized. This emphasis coincides with the careful construct of Christ as a relatable model for the earthly ruler discussed in Chapter 2.

The Lindisfarne Gospels, like Trier 23, present the canon tables over sixteen folios, after an extensive prefatory section, which also includes Eusebius' letter to Carpianus. These similarities extend to the two codices' special treatment of Matthew's gospel frontispiece (fol. 25v) in contrast to the other three gospels. In the Lindisfarne Gospels, the enigmatic floating half-figure of a bearded man tentatively, and variously identified as Christ, Moses, or Ezra, emerges from behind a curtain.⁴⁸⁵ This mysterious man holds a book with covered hands, possibly the Old Testament,⁴⁸⁶ conceivably demonstrating the seamless transition from the old to the new law. This progression effectively materializes in the genealogy in Matthew's opening chapter given prominence in the Trier codex thanks to Alcuin's commentary presented at its onset. As seen in Chapter 2, the Codex Amiatinus' Ezra portrait, likely known to Alcuin, provides a compelling, and almost unique parallel to the unusual iconography of Trier 23's Matthew page.

Iconographic oddities permeate Matthew or other evangelists' portrait pages uncommonly frequently, as in the fragment of an Irish gospel book from the late eighth

⁴⁸⁵ Brown, *Lindisfarne*, p. 273, and p.349 and 360 ff. with regard to its potential connection to the Ezra miniature in the Codex Amiatinus. I propose that John the Baptist should be added to this list of possible interpretation. His dual role as the last Old Testament prophet and the first New Testament martyr, as well as his foretelling of Christ's coming, whose incarnation opens Matthew's first chapter would account for his appearance behind the curtain.

⁴⁸⁶ Objections to this reading include the fact that a scroll would make that point more obvious, however even Ezra is show writing in a codex.

century, now St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Ms.1395 (p.418)⁴⁸⁷ where the seated figure, engaged in the writing process and accompanied by the winged man begs to be read as Matthew. However, the clearly visible cross nimbus demands that a more complex visual exegesis be considered. This iconographic choice conveys that evangelist, and inspirational symbol, like the scribe copying the sacred word are only vessels facilitating the transmission of the message, which originates from Christ himself, the true author, source of the gospels.⁴⁸⁸ The juxtaposition and/or conflation of an author portrait and his inspiration with Christ is therefore not unusual and may also be at play in the Barberini Gospels (Vatican, Barberini 570), of debated origin in which, as noted by Nees, the bearded scribe's identification as Christ *and* Matthew must be considered.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁷ Nees has observed that this feature does not appear anywhere in the representations of evangelists extant from the Insular realm and suggested a continental origin. "The Irish Manuscripts at St. Gall and Their Continental Affiliations," in Sangallensia in Washington: The Arts and Letters in Medieval and Baroque St. Gall Viewed from the Late Twentieth Century, ed. James C. King (New York: Lang, 1993), p.115. Netzer, Interplay, plate 99.

⁴⁸⁸ Jeffery Hamburger has remarked that, "When medieval artists endowed a saintly figure regarded as a seer with God-like traits, it signaled less divinization per se than the saint's status as a vessel for divine inspiration." It is true that in this case as well as in the instance that Hamburger discusses, the John evangelist portrait page in the Book of Kells, and as in the Durham Cassiodorus, we should refrain from substituting a singular interpretation to the expected reading and instead embrace the multivalence the image thus created. Jeffery F. Hamburger, St John the Divine: The Deified Evangelist in Medieval Art and Thought, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p.9.

⁴⁸⁹ To this group must be added the "late eighth- or early ninth-century Italian Gospel book in Perugia, Biblioteca Capitolare MS 2," which depicts Christ alongside the evangelist and symbol, thus reinforcing the his identification as the ultimate source of their sacred accounts. Nees, Gundohinus Gospels, pp. 147-148 and Fig. 53.

The conflation may also be at play in the composition identified as the evangelist John in the Book of Kells.⁴⁹⁰ [Figure 57] Extensive trimming has almost totally obliterated the standing figure with outstretched arms, whose remnants protrude behind the elaborate frame encasing the seated figure.⁴⁹¹ This iconographic juxtaposition of an implied crucifixion and an enthroned figure finds its most compelling parallel in the contemporary full-page miniature of the Gospels of Ste. Croix de Poitiers, discussed above. [Figure 49] There, multilayered visual, textual and chromatic clues combine to fixate the perpetual duality and eternal coexistence of Christ's two natures, as well as his

⁴⁹⁰ Hamburger remarks in an endnote (#53, p. 237) that Jonathan J.G. Alexander's identification of the truncated figure as Christ has not been universally accepted. I ponder whether the figure sitting in the initial on the facing folio, as well as the figure appearing in Matthew's opening initial ought not be read as the actual evangelist portraits, consequently allowing for a reconsideration of the identification of the figures previously thought to be evangelists. Viewed as Christ, or a multi-layered conflation of the evangelists and Christ, communicating that Christ speaks through them, as Christ speaks through David in the Durham Cassiodorus images. The so-called Matthew portrait, appearing under an arch, could be reinterpreted as an enthroned figure bearing a cross nimbus. The upper section of his throne features lion heads while on either side of the throne, occupying the openings between the sides of the throne and the frame, an ox and an eagle face inward. The opening initial of Matthew's gospel depicts the symbol over the L of "Liber" and the evangelist underneath. Thus we find assembled around Christ the three other evangelist representatives. It is conceivable that each gospel opened with a recurring sequence: ornamental page, Christ portrait highlighting one fundamental aspect of his nature, four-symbol page and Initial. In this context, the arrest of Christ could function as the frontispiece to Luke, for Christ is arrested, taken away as the sacrificial victim but his hands are also in the orant gesture of the priest. The unresolved John portrait may reflect similar ideas as uncovered in Lynley Herbert's discussion of the Poitiers 17 *Maiestas Domini*, with the artist intending to show Christ on the cross and enthroned in heaven simultaneously. This relationship to continental developments would not appear in a vacuum as the canon Tables of the Book of Kells demonstratively present compelling parallels with the Carolingian Harley Gospels. (Kells Conference, 1994).

⁴⁹¹ This reading is strengthened by the possible reference to the holy sepulcher in the complex design of the throne behind the seated figure, consequently juxtaposing signs of death and rebirth while referencing the actual geographical location of their occurrence.

suffering and exaltation.⁴⁹² The Poitiers miniature alludes to the Crucifixion while overtly glorifying the Enthroned, while the Kells artist explicitly depicts these two aspects concurrently, but using two distinct bodies. These images formulate what is only suggested in the Essen and Trier Gospels frontispieces.

This proposed reinterpretation of the Kells miniature, as a concurrent depiction of the enthroned and crucified Christ should grant some consideration and hints at the additional complexity informing the design of these frontispieces. The traditional reading, identifying the seated figure as the evangelist, thus pairing John and Christ already informed the layout of the Godescalc Evangelistary (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. Nouv. acq. lat. 1203, folios 2v and 3r) where they occupy facing folios, and are therefore experienced by the viewer as a cohesive unit. This pairing evokes John's witnessing of Christ's crucifixion, but substitutes the triumphant Savior for the suffering Christ. This twofold reading lingers in the mind of the viewer and impacts his/her reception of the next and last decorated folio in this sequence, the Baptismal Font/Fountain of Life.

Christ's presence as a reminder to the viewer of his role as source of the sacred text in miniatures depicting the gospels' redaction, transcription or presentation is therefore not unusual, although its visual formulation takes varied forms. In the collection of sermons assembled for Bishop Egino of Verona, we find the figure of a youthful Christ in a medallion located under an arch overlooking the exchange between scribe and master (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Inv.-Nr. Ms. Phill.1676, 24r). As Carl Nordenfalk and others have observed, Verona was the locus of Carolingian

⁴⁹² Herbert, LUX VITA.

influence, noting the ‘classicist’ flavor of the author portraits, which Nordenfalk viewed as the sign of the presence of a Carolingian artist.⁴⁹³

As previously noted, the most compelling comparison to Trier 23’s frontispiece design and its treatment of Matthew’s opening can be found in the lavish gold and niello composition currently bound with the later ninth century Lindau Gospels, (New York, Morgan Library, M. 1). [Figure 16] Persuasively connected to the Tassilo chalice on stylistic and technical grounds, it is a fine example of Bavarian artistic production in the second half of the eighth century. Its style and iconography contrast sharply with the lavishly bejeweled, repoussée front cover of the manuscript, which has in large part overshadowed it in the scholarship. This earlier Lindau cover possesses all the markers of luxury in its material, the complexity of its design, and the quality of its execution, and it must have held a place of honor in its original context, as the front cover of a manuscript, or as a section of a portable altar or reliquary. The corner lunettes, inhabited by seated evangelists and their symbols, are later replacements, but may reflect in spirit, if not in style or iconography, the original subject matter of their precursors.

A central diamond inscribed into a square frames a large cabochon gemstone around which unfolds the abbreviated inscription IHS XPS DNS NOS, (IESUS CHRISTUS DOMINUS NOSTER) proclaiming Christ’s divinity. The overall composition is dominated by a *croix pattée*, which rises from a background of tangled,

⁴⁹³ Walter Berschin “An Unpublished Library Catalogue from 8th Century Lombardy,” The Journal of Medieval Latin 11 (2001), p. 205. The Egino Codex’ presentation to the Church of Santa Maria Matricolare in Verona by Egino in c.799 places it squarely in the era of Carolingian domination under Charlemagne. Charles Reginald Dodwell, The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800-1200, p.162. Carl Nordenfalk, Karl der Grosse, (Aachen, 1965), p.228, also Nees, Godescalc, for the manuscript’s connection to the Frankish court and to Godescalc.

biting beasts. This symbolic articulation of the triumph of good and order over evil and chaos is reminiscent of the ornamental pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels, particularly that found on folio 26v, ahead of Matthew's gospel. The A and ω pairings, appearing twice on the cross' vertical axis, support this eschatological reading. Four arches inscribed on each arm of the cross radiate from the central square, and recall the Valerianus Gospels' colophon. Each arch contains a bust-length figure of Christ, easily identified by crossed nimbi, chromatically articulated by contrasting gold and niello, echoing the Tassilo chalice. The figures carry neither book, nor scroll, and hold their arms folded. Their basic structural arrangement recalls diagrammatic representations of the four winds, as in Laon, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 422, (folio 5v and 6v), consistent with Bianca Kühnel's observations, and additionally communicates Christ's omnipotence, as ruler over the whole of creation.

Three of the Christ figures are virtually identical, with their robes falling vertically in heavy folds, while, the one at the right, the fourth's garment uniquely drapes across his chest in a crossing pattern. This distinctive figure protrudes between the XPS and DNS segment of the central inscription. Christ's simultaneous placement on the cross, recalling his crucifixion, and under an arch, in an iconography of triumph, visually reiterates the eternal life giving power of his sacrifice in anticipation of the Last Judgment as suggested by the presence of Alpha and Omega. This iconographic overlap transcribes Christ's two natures and his glorification through and in death. The abbreviated *titulus* "Jesus Christ, Our Lord" at the center of the composition, at the center of the cross where his body once hung, is a potent reminder of his ultimate triumph over

death. The clever interplay of iconographic elements and text indicate Christ's omnipotence, his two natures and the path to salvation.

The Lindau Gospels back cover's core design combines a square, containing text and anchored by medallions with triumphal arches, inhabited by bust-length figures of Christ. This composition is virtually identical to the Trier 23 frontispieces. In addition, the rotation implied by the repetition of the Christ figures materializes in the Trier codex through the movement of the evangelist symbols in each consecutive frontispiece. Furthermore, the iconographic distinction of one of the four figures of Christ on the cover echoes Trier 23's treatment of Matthew's opening.

The Color Scheme

All of the manuscript's decorative components, frontispieces, initials and canon tables, combine vibrant shades of blue, red, yellow and green. The additional expense occasioned by this liberal use of brightly colored pigments cannot be overstated. Their distribution throughout the manuscript sustains its audience's visual interest as the decorative program unfolds spatially and temporally. The use of the costly blue pigment communicates more than just expense, and carries symbolic value, as it references royalty but also the heavens and by extension Christ's omnipotence. The color blue rarely appears in manuscripts, and when it does it plays a crucial role, as in the Gellone Sacramentary crucifixion (Paris, BnF, Ms. lat. 1204, fol. 143 v), the only one of the manuscript's images to use a blue pigment in the entire manuscript. The cross onto which Christ is crucified, the very object of his martyrdom, appears as a constellated sky,

referencing his future resurrection and his forthcoming rule as king of heaven.⁴⁹⁴ The exquisite sapphire Christ, from c.800, a close iconographic equivalent to Trier 23 discussed above similarly encapsulates these associations in its very materiality. The green pigment has damaged the manuscript, notably in the canon tables, where the recent restoration was the most extensive.⁴⁹⁵ The copper content seems to have literally eaten at the parchment, causing the areas affected to lose thickness and opacity. Similar damage has been recorded in other contemporary manuscripts including the Antwerp Sedulius (Antwerp, Plantin-Moretus Museum, MS 17.4), assigned to Liège and dated to the early ninth century,⁴⁹⁶ as well as the lavishly decorated Corbie Psalter (Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 18) dated to c.800, and the Egino Codex (Berlin, Phillips 1676) mentioned above.

The Franco-Saxon Connection

Trier 23's decorative scheme, with its predilection for large initials, featuring oversized capitals, with extensive interlace in bright mélanges of primary colors relates to the so-called "Franco-Saxon" style, associated with St. Amand, where Alcuin's friend

⁴⁹⁴ Trésors Carolingiens, Cat. 7, pp. 78-83.

⁴⁹⁵ Birgit Ines Harand, "Das Evangeliar von St. Maria ad Martyres-Schadensbilder, Restaurierung und Konservierung," *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch*, 41, Jahrgang (Trier, 2001), pp. 291-314, with compelling before and after restoration pictures.

⁴⁹⁶ Carol Lewine "The miniatures of the Antwerp Sedulius manuscript: the early Christian models and their transformations", Ph.D. Dissertation, (University of Michigan, 1970). George Henderson, "Carolingian Art," in Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation, edited by Rosamond McKitterick, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.253.

Arno was abbot in the early ninth century.⁴⁹⁷ The manuscripts of this group are generally dated to the second half of the ninth and the tenth centuries and this visual parallel informed Stephan Beissel's noncommittal dating of the manuscript to the late ninth or tenth century.⁴⁹⁸ Nordenfalk assigned to the Trier codex the role of precursor to that later stylistic development, and consequently did not object to an early dating for the manuscript, adding that the area where a given style blossomed did not necessarily coincide with the locus of its first manifestation.⁴⁹⁹ Nordenfalk further observed that a substantial amount of time could elapse between a style's inception and its promotion and subsequent blossoming. Trier 23's relegation to a later ninth century manifestation of this style rather than one of its precursors ignores the compelling stylistic, decorative and circumstantial evidence discussed in this chapter and throughout this dissertation which points to the closing years of the eighth century as its most likely period of creation.

*Visualizing Harmony and Glorifying the King of Kings:
The Function of the Frontispieces*

The Trier frontispieces proclaim the harmony of the four gospels, whilst celebrating their common origin, like the four rivers of paradise, flowing from a single source. This visual restatement of the essential, orthodox message championed by the

⁴⁹⁷ The seventh volume in the series of studies on Carolingian manuscript illumination, inaugurated by Wilhelm Koehler, focuses on this group of manuscripts. Trier 23 is not included in this volume. Wilhelm Koehler and Florentine Mutherich, with Katharina Bierbauer, Fabrizio Crivello and Matthias Exner, *Die karolingischen Miniaturen*, 7: *Die frankosächsische Schule*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Reicherts, 2009).

⁴⁹⁸ Beissel, *Geschichte*, p. 157.

⁴⁹⁹ Carl Nordenfalk, "Ein karolingischer Sakramentar aus Echternach und sein Vorläufer", *Acta Archeologica*, Vol II, (1931), p. 232.

Carolingians reveals various concurrent facets of Christ's nature and earthly life. These essential truths were at the core of the teachings provided to neophytes prior to their official joining the body of the Church. The exegesis and symbolic imagery associated with the evangelists prominently featured in the very active contemporary discourse on baptism and its ritual performance, a documented concern of Alcuin's.

To the manuscript's anticipated royal audience, entrusted with the daunting task of promoting the word of God and encouraging conversion in anticipation of the Last Judgment, the vision of the quintessential model of apostolic endeavor and rulership was a potent reminder of the seriousness of the task at hand. Imitating Christ's generosity, tolerance, mercy and forgiveness as well as accepting sacrifices, is expected of all Christians who aspire to join the elect and by extension see the divine on the last day. This model of behavior was even more pressingly advocated for the ruler of the Christian people. This ideological parallel provided the essential context necessary for the production of Trier 23 and its visual manifestation of the christomimetic ideals uncovered in Chapter 2.

Trier 23's Challenge to Scholarly Constructs and Expectations

The preceding discussion has contextualized the Trier codex' style and iconography within the artistic milieu of the late eighth century and demonstrated its numerous affinities with insular tradition. References to insular practice are manifested in Trier 23's focus on gospel harmony, the presence of four-symbol pages ahead of each gospel, the elaborately decorated initials, and the abundance of interlace, as well as the emphasis on Hebrew names discussed in Chapter 3. These markers may have been

intended to communicate the identity and origin of the likely patron, Alcuin. They seamlessly integrate with the sacred text, transcribed in Carolingian minuscule, the potent visual signifier of Carolingian authority and inscription into the unfolding story of salvation. The preceding observations cumulatively reveal Trier 23 as a sophisticated creation, and hardly reconcile with the enduring misrepresentations of the scope and diversity of artistic production in the Carolingian territory c.800, which have led to its neglect and exclusion from most scholarly discussions.

Scholarly constructs have reduced the Carolingian elites' expectations of 'luxury' to the most ostentatious creations, thereby skewing our understanding and appreciation of the scope, range and diversity of artistic production in the Carolingian era. In addition, the prevailing view assigns to these privileged and discriminating viewers an inherent or learned predisposition to favoring modes of artistic expressions directly referencing ancient Roman aesthetics.

Trier 23: A Luxury Manuscript?

As noted in Chapter 1, Trier 23's guarded scholarly reception has resulted in the codex' relative absence from academic discussions addressing Carolingian artistic achievement. This treatment partially reflects the disinclination to identify the Trier codex as the present to Charles, mentioned in its dedication poem, on account of Bischoff's influential assessment of its script and in light of its appearance's manifest divergence from modern scholarship's sanctioned signifiers of luxury. This construct normalizes the most ostentatious displays, featuring gold or silver ink, and purple-dyed parchment, and perpetuates the misguided assumption that objects connected to the court

milieu publicized the elite's imagined preferred 'classicism'. This presumed aesthetic preference is seemingly confirmed in the presence of 'traditional' evangelist portraits- referencing seated author portraits- in illusionistic landscapes or 'roman'-type architectural settings, in various manuscripts. Figurative motifs are viewed as preferable to ornamental or geometric ones, as they channeled, even when maladroitly rendered, the supposedly prized Late Antique models.

This dissertation challenges this reductive interpretation and argues that the manuscript's creators were not only well aware of the luxurious appearance of the Trier codex, they fully anticipated its intended audience to recognize and appreciate it. The most overt markers of luxury cited above, are by no means the exclusive indicators of status and expense. Much of the financial burden of producing a manuscript pertained to the initial cost of securing the raw materials- parchment, ink and pigments- essential to carry out the project. Combined, Trier 23's two volumes gather 233 quarto-size folios, requiring conservatively 100+ animal skins.⁵⁰⁰ Next, logistical imperatives demanded that dependable exemplars from which to copy the desired texts and a skilled scribe/illuminator, versed in Carolingian minuscule, be available. The systematic use of the new script insured ease of copying and homogeneity throughout the manuscript, although the process was slowed by the demands of the elaborate decorative program.

The Trier codex originated in a writing center that not only met these basic criteria, but also satisfied the most elusive of parameters, the patron's confidence that this project would be carried out to his or her satisfaction. This trust could be the result of

⁵⁰⁰ The decision to not exceed 23 lines per page and to preserve generous margins (thus reducing the length of each line) caused additional expense, as did the decision to include so many redundant prefatory texts and layout the canon tables over sixteen pages.

long-term familiarity and even friendship with the person selected to oversee this commission. As discussed below, the manuscript was not produced at Alcuin's own monastery at Tours. Potential candidates emerge from the ranks of Alcuin's former students and favorite correspondents, such as Ricbod, the abbot of Lorsch and Archbishop of Trier (d. 804), Beornard, the abbot of Echternach, from whom Alcuin had just composed a new *Life of St. Willibrord*, and of course Arno, the abbot of St. Amand, and Archbishop of Salzburg. Arno's familiarity with some of the objects that offer the most compelling comparisons to Trier 23's style and iconography, such as the Tassilo Chalice and the back cover of the Lindau Gospels, on account of his employment by the Bavarian Duke, should not be overlooked. This connection can be pushed further as St. Amand was one of the centers of production of the Franco-Saxon style, from which Trier 23 might be a precursor.

Alcuin notoriously deplored the limited resources at his disposal at Tours.⁵⁰¹ This assessment's accuracy should be questioned, as the famous monastery and its many dependencies enjoyed a sensible if not substantial income. However, Alcuin's displeasure may reflect legitimate concerns about the availability of learned scribes, and a well-stocked library, at the time of his relocation to St Martin's in 796. Alcuin's arrival did not result in the immediate blossoming of an effervescent writing center and the heyday of manuscript production at Tours occurred well after his death in 804. Alcuin's delayed impact can also be measured in his many students' accomplishments and lasting influence. Epistolary sources document Alcuin petitioning the king to allow him to send

⁵⁰¹ This was most likely an exaggeration for effect with regard to pecuniary matters, as Tours had many dependencies and also benefitted from donations on account of its housing the relics of a very special Frankish saint.

for books from his native England. This evidence supports claims that Tours was lacking in the necessary resources to promote learning, and carry out the mission with which he had been entrusted. It also exposes the unavailability on the continent of some of the known works he had access to at York.⁵⁰²

In the absence of adequate resources at Tours, if he wished to present a splendid gift to the king, Alcuin may well have relied on his extensive network of former colleagues, friends and pupils, for favors and assistance. Many of the prominent scholars and advisors, once assembled at Charles' court, were dispersed throughout the Frankish territory by the closing years of the eighth century. Most occupied prestigious positions, as just noted, which granted them access to the resources necessary to produce manuscripts and other liturgical objects. The bonds of friendship, strained by time and distance, were nurtured by frequent correspondence. These exchanges bear witness to a thriving community of scholars and patrons who operated independently of the king's approval or even awareness, but not necessarily without his support or encouragement. Charles' perennial engagement in political and military ventures occasioned his constant travelling. As such, expecting him to be privy to every decision and actions undertaken by the men he had elevated to the most influential posts in his territory is both impractical and unreasonable. As various aspects of this dissertation's inquiry into the contents and

⁵⁰² The early scholarly interest in Tours as a center of book production is evidenced in Koehler devoting the first volume of his series on Carolingian manuscript illumination to this scriptorium soon after the publication of Edward Kennard Rand's A Survey of the Manuscripts of Tours, (Cambridge: The Medieval Academy of America, 1929). Wilhelm Koehler, Die karolingischen Miniaturen: Die Schule von Tours, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1930). This should not make us lose sight of the fact that the bulk of Tournian book production occurred well into the ninth century, and well after Alcuin's death, although it likely still attests to his impact. For a recent discussion, see Nees, Alcuin, where he addresses the possibility of patronage in absentia and Trier 23.

appearance of the Trier codex, as well as Alcuin's personal connection, have alluded, a possible place of origin near Trier or Echternach much be considered.⁵⁰³

Another Case of False modesty: The Dedication Poem

As already discussed at length in Chapter 3, the poetic dedication, appended to the commentary on Hebrew names, (fol. 4v) announces Alcuin's patronage and articulates the donor's concern about not providing his "venerable king" with a "suitable gift" on the occasion of "holy days". The two-part gift is described as "bearing great contents within a modest body" and is compared to the widow's sacrifice of two brass mites. The poem manipulates its audience into rejecting the clichéd apology for the gift's supposed modest appearance, and instead praising its unsurpassable greatness on account of its undisputedly glorious contents. The dedication's reliance on the humility trope and its allusion to the codex' appearance reflects contemporary trends in luxury manuscripts associated with the Carolingian court, including the Dagulf Psalter and the Gosdescale Evangelistary. These texts urge their readers to contemplate the objects in which they appear; they are self-referential. The Dagulf Psalter dedication specifically references the iconography of its lavish ivory cover, while the Gosdescale Evangelistary's colophon evokes its use of gold/silver ink. The Trier dedication aligns with this practice through the self-reference to the Hebrew names exegesis opening the manuscript and the two-part gift, coinciding with the Trier codex' very format.

⁵⁰³ For a discussion of this important writing center see Netzer, *Interplay*, and Michaele Camillo Ferrari, *Sancti Willibrordi venerantes memoriam. Echternacher Schreiber und Schriftsteller von den Angelsachsen bis Johann Bertels*. (Luxembourg: Publications du Cludem, 1994).

As discussed earlier, Alcuin exploits the biblical parallel of the widow's mites to highlight his absolute devotion, and the greatness of the gift. The poem anticipates that its intended recipient will recognize, like Christ in the widow's story, that the gift presented to him supersedes even the most lavish expenditures his wealthy contemporaries bestowed upon him. This careful construct casts the king as a Christ-like judge, mirrored in the frontispieces, able to easily discern between the true and everlasting gift of divine wisdom, contained in the word of God, and the transitory and unfulfilling deceit of even the most dazzling displays of earthly materiality. The donor and his offering are exalted, as "the little gift of great love" in the opening verse and the mention of "my poverty" in line 4 sharpen the contrast with the wealthy patrons and their gifts. As the container for the authenticated word of God, the Trier manuscript inevitably becomes the most precious reliquary and prized possession.

In Alcuin's absence from court, it fell upon his gift to effectively communicate the nature and depth of his devotion and the strength of the bond of friendship uniting him to his beloved king. The degree to which the public performance occasioned by the gift's presentation effectively captured the desired degree of intimacy Alcuin wished to communicate to the recipient and those in attendance is difficult to ascertain. The gift had to do the talking, and it would be misguided on our part to assume that Trier 23's message as deciphered here, was not heard loud and clear by the king and its audience.

Chapter 5

APPROPRIATION AND AGGRANDIZEMENT: CONTEXTUALIZING TRIER 23' NACHLEBEN

This chapter focuses on the last component of the manuscript not yet discussed in this dissertation: the full-page illumination depicting Christ enthroned in majesty, surrounded by evangelist symbols, painted during the Ottonian period on a blank folio (22v) in Trier 23's first volume. [Figure 5] This addition belongs to the considerable body of evidence attesting to the Ottonians' active engagement with the tangible, material remains of the Carolingian past. A few examples of this practice of appropriation will be addressed in order to contextualize its occurrence in the Trier codex and uncover its patrons' possible intentions. This inquiry into the manuscript's *Nachleben* will sharply contrast Trier 23's medieval and modern receptions and validate the observations made in Chapter 1 regarding misplaced modern prejudices, which have generally hindered the development of genuine appreciation for the manuscript.

The term appropriation is used here to refer to the more or less extensive transformation of various Carolingian objects, or their reuse into new creations.⁵⁰⁴ This

⁵⁰⁴ This practice of appropriation is not an Ottonian singularity. A prominent example of Anglo-Saxon engagement with the Carolingian past occurs in the so-called Galba Psalter, (London, British Library, Cotton Galba A.xviii). This early ninth century Carolingian codex underwent extensive reworking and additions in the early eleventh century. Those include full-page miniatures of the Nativity and the Ascension, and Christ with saints. See Robert Deshman, "The Galba Psalter: pictures, texts and context in an early medieval prayerbook" in *Anglo-Saxon England* 26 (December 1997), pp. 109-138. For a

custom relates simultaneously to the act of spoliation and the cult of relics, themselves linked concepts.⁵⁰⁵ This practice extended beyond the realm of manuscript illumination, although they will be the focus of this discussion. Notable examples include the Lothar Cross (c.1000), [Figure 50] featuring at its base a rock crystal seal of the Carolingian king Lothar II (r.855-869) from which its modern name is derived,⁵⁰⁶ and the later medieval Dreikönigsschrein in Cologne Cathedral, in which the carved sapphire depicting Christ, [Figure 45] discussed in Chapter 4, is inserted.⁵⁰⁷

discussion of the various aspects of this complex dynamic of appropriation, transformation, and referencing the past see, Lawrence Nees, “Aspects of Antiquarianism in the Art of Bernward and its Contemporary Analogues,” in 1000 Jahre St. Michael in Hildesheim. Kirche-Kloster-Stifter, edited by Gerhard Lutz and Angela Weyer. (Petersburg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2012), pp. 153-170.

⁵⁰⁵ Jas Elsner has provided an insightful discussion of these two concepts’ connection in his contextualization of the denigrating responses to the Arch of Constantine’s design and juxtaposition of eclectic styles. See his “From the Culture of Spolia to the Cult of Relics: The Arch of Constantine and the Genesis of Late Antique Forms,” in Papers of the British School at Rome 68 (2000), pp. 149-84. For a discussion of the history and historiography of spolia see Dale Kinney, “The Concept of Spolia,” in Conrad Rudolph, ed. A Companion to Medieval Art, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp.233-252.

⁵⁰⁶ Peter Lasko favored an earlier dating to the 980’s. Peter Lasko, Ars Sacra, 800-1200, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2nd edition, 1994), p.99-106 (esp.101). For a contextualization of this processional cross, now in the Aachen Cathedral Treasury as well as Henry II’s ambo, a stunning gold pulpit featuring various spoliated gems, (ca. 1003) see Eliza Garrison, Ottoman Imperial Art and Portraiture: The Artistic Patronage of Otto III and Henry II, (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2012). Color plates 2 and 3 for the Lothar Cross and 4 for the Ambo. Nees brought attention to some lingering problems with the interpretation of the Lothar cross. He noted that Lothair was never emperor and that the inscription on the seal “*Christe Adiuva Hlotharium Regem*” is an appeal for divine protection, adding that the ruler is effectively at the foot of the crucified Christ etched on the cross’ reverse side. Antiquarianism, pp. 156-160.

⁵⁰⁷ The magnificent reliquary, completed by 1225, is believed to contain the relics of the Magi. It is attributed to Nicholas of Verdun, although as Lasko pointed out that this was not the work of a single artist. Lasko, Ars Sacra, 800-1200, p.262ff and Plate 367. See also Genevra Kornbluth, The Heavenly Jerusalem and the Lord of Lords: a sapphire

While closely related to the culture of spolia, the practice of appropriation, as it is understood here, deviates from it in meaningful ways. Narrowly defined, the long-standing tradition of recontextualizing certain valuable objects, often from Antiquity, complete or fragmented, into new creations relied heavily on preserving their ‘otherness’ in order to effectively communicate dominion or conquest. The early medieval period witnessed the enthusiastic reclaiming of ancient cameos and other carved or precious gems and their placement in book covers, reliquaries, processional crosses, and other objects closely associated with Christian worship.⁵⁰⁸ The tension between these objects’ non-Christian origin and in some cases imagery and their new contexts and functions needed to be resolved. The challenge of neutralizing these objects’ original power, even drain them of any remnant of religious, “pagan” potency, while preserving their otherness, inadequately defines the dynamics at play in the works discussed here.⁵⁰⁹

Complex visual articulations of identity, authority and legitimacy incorporated historical and biblical references, and often featured luxury objects such as cameos and carved gems, but also architectural elements such as porphyry columns or marble slabs.

Christ at the Court of Charlemagne and on the Shrine of the Magi”, Cahiers Archéologiques 49 (2001), pp.47-68.

⁵⁰⁸ Prominent examples include the book covers of Theodelinda, from the late sixth or early seventh century, see Nees, Early Medieval Art, p.107, Plate 64; and the Enger Reliquary from the late eighth century, which prominently features carved gems with pagan subject matter. Genevra Kornbluth has suggested some of them were purposefully inserted into this new creation upside down in order to effectively communicate power and dominion over the false, pagan gods depicted. 45th *International Congress on Medieval Studies*, Kalamazoo, May 13th, 2010, Session #35, “Gemstones in the Middle Ages,” respondent. For excellent color images see [<http://www.kornbluthphoto.com/images/Enger-comb.jpg>].

⁵⁰⁹ Certain aspects of this practice, notably the concern with preemptively neutralizing any remnant of religious potency relates more closely to iconoclasm.

These objects' value originated in their materiality, but also their antiquity, rarity, skilled execution as well as their origin and in some cases even their iconography.⁵¹⁰ The Augustan cameo serving as the focal point on the front of the processional Lothar Cross just mentioned, presents the crowned profile head of Augustus, as a counterpoint to the crowned suffering Christ on the reverse.⁵¹¹ [Figure 50] In the hands of proponents of christomimetic kingship, its antiquity, contemporaneous to Christ's earthly life, and its design conjure thoughts of eternal rulership and triumph, applicable to both the heavenly king, and his current earthly counterpart, the Ottonian ruler, heir to the Carolingian legacy, whose own role as the intermediary transmitter of this concept is recalled by the presence of the crystal seal. Fully drained of any pagan significance, the cameo harmonized with its new surrounding to generate the cross' message. This setting contrasts the visually striking, but ultimately bizarre Herimann Cross whose spoliated

⁵¹⁰ For an overview of the complex, and multilayered issues at play see Dale Kinney, "Ancient Gems in the Middle Ages: Riches and Ready-mades" in Reuse Value: Spolia and Appropriation in Art and Architecture from Constantine to Sherrie Levine, Brilliant, Richard and Dale Kinney eds., (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), pp. 97-120. A more focused discussion of the issues at play in this Ottonian material, see chapter 5 "The use and reuse of the past: The cult of relics, the cult of *spolia*, and the imperial image in the Ottonian period," in Garrison, Imperial Art, pp. 165-172. Garrison expands the conception of *spolia* beyond the materialistic to include stylistic and iconographic quotations. (p. 138). If that is the case, we pay ponder to what degree the select audience was expected to recognize these references. This has direct implications for some of the material discussed here, such as the Gregory Master's Christ in Majesty miniature in the Sainte-Chapelle Gospels (Paris, BnF, Ms. lat. 8851, folio 1v), and its direct quotation of Touronian models.

⁵¹¹ Garrison has connected the Lothar Cross, and the Liuthard Gospels to Otto III's invention of Charlemagne's tomb at Aachen and squarely inscribed it into the discourse on christomimetic rulership. "Otto III at Aachen: The encounter with the divine" in Garrison, Imperial Art, pp. 39-86.

lapis lazuli head distracts from the piece's devotional function.⁵¹² Access, opportunity for acquisition, actual means of sponsoring the creation of new settings to showcase these objects, and anticipated gain from their use and display were the exclusive prerogatives of an elite few.

Unlike gems, cameos, statuary or architectural features, manuscripts cannot be easily retrofitted into larger works. In addition, in contrast to the study of the medieval reuse of antique *spolia*, which must negotiate their “trajectory, conversion, *interpretatio christiana*, use or reuse?, and appropriation,”⁵¹³ the Carolingian objects discussed here were not only undeniably Christian, but I argue that their Carolingian identity was the very basis of their appeal, and therefore not subject to repression. The ‘implicitly triumphalist’ discourse imbedded in the use of *spolia*,⁵¹⁴ and the selective silencing or neutralizing of their original message through their insertion into new works aimed at glorifying their conqueror, inadequately captures the intentions of the patrons responsible for the appropriation of Carolingian objects.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹² For a discussion of the Herimann cross and its patron's desire to intentionally showcase the contrast between old and new in this striking juxtaposition, see Kinney, Ancient Gems, especially pp.97-103 and Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3.

⁵¹³ Kinney, Ancient Gems, p.99.

⁵¹⁴ Ilene Forsyth has favored this interpretation by stressing that ultimately it is the message communicated by the entire, composite work, as its patron and creator intended, that dominates. “Art with History: The Role of Spolia in the Cumulative Work of Art.” In Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzman, ed. Doula Mouriki, Christopher Moss, and Katherine Kiefer, (Princeton: Princeton Department of Art and Archeology, 1995), pp. 153-62.

⁵¹⁵ Kinney has problematized Anthony Cutler's ideas of “use” vs. “reuse” with regard to these composite objects. “Reuse” implicitly broadcasts the ‘otherness’ or the ‘distinctive’ nature of the objects or fragments inserted, “staged” into new creations, as such, the Herimann cross' spolia is clearly an example of “reuse”. Kinney, Ancient Gems, p. 112.

The Ottonian elite's relationship with the Carolingian past was a multilayered combination of reverence and inspiration. In their complex politics of identity construction, the Carolingians were not conquered as much as preserved, referenced, idealized, and exploited, in a matrix of positive associations where contemporary achievements were cast as the logical continuation of their earlier successes.⁵¹⁶ In this context, ownership of the tangible, material remnants of the Carolingian past operated as an instrument of legitimization and propaganda. This interpretation is confirmed by the oft-repeated tale of Otto III's providential discovery of the 'lost' tomb of Charlemagne, as will be discussed below. Otto's ability to find what others could not established, and even confirmed, Charlemagne's approval, support and recognition of the Ottonian dynasty as his rightful and legitimate heirs.

The Carolingian Past: Selective Recollection and Emulation

By the 930's, Otto, Duke of Saxony, emerged as a viable candidate to restore a prosperous and sovereign dominion reminiscent of the Carolingians'. His long-term ambitions were on full display at his coronation and anointment as king in 936, at Charlemagne's palace chapel at Aachen, a location not technically under his control. Widukin of Corvey's later account of this event emphasized how Otto preemptively relegated prominent dukes-and potential rivals- in attendance to the status of

⁵¹⁶ The extent to which the primary inspiration was provided by the selective Carolingian past, assuming such a definable entity could even be reconstructed, or was an amalgamation of Carolingian, Byzantine and conscious *renovatio* of Roman practice is still debated. See David Warner's "Introduction", especially pp. 10-16 in Ottonian Germany: The *Chronicon* of Thietmar of Merseburg, edited and translated by David A. Warner. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

subordinates.⁵¹⁷ The selection of Charlemagne's palace chapel and burial site as the location for Otto's coronation, but also anointing, a Carolingian custom, as discussed in Chapter 2, testified to this ideological alignment. Otto's discovery of a large source of silver in his home territory of Saxony, and his defeat of the pagan Magyars in 955, recalled Charlemagne's appropriation of the Avars' treasure in the 790's and his hard-earned victory and ultimate conversion of the Saxons. Both rulers' military successes and promotion of Christianity were the hallmarks of great leaders. The anticipation of a new golden age, and the Ottonian promise of a return to relative stability, and prosperity were a welcome prospect after years of uncertainty.⁵¹⁸ Otto I reclaimed the imperial title, left vacant since 911, from the hands of Pope John XII, in Rome in early 962, thus confirming his conscious emulation of Charlemagne, the ideal and idealized Christian ruler.

Otto's strategic positioning as the rightful successor to the Frankish ruler, at least on his side of the Rhine, inaugurated his dynasty's systematic exploitation of the Carolingian legacy.⁵¹⁹ Otto III's untimely death in 1002 and the Ottonian line's relatively short-lived rule do not negate this venture's lasting impact, as is attested in Albrecht

⁵¹⁷ Widukind's account, *Res Gestae Saxonicae sive annalium libri tres* (probably 967-968), must be read with the same degree of caution applied to Einhard's *Vita*, as they were both at the service of the royal houses their respective accounts glorify. Die Sachsengeschichte des Wikukind von Korvei, MGH, Bd. 60. Paul Hirsch and Hans E. Lohmann, eds. (Hannover, 1935).

⁵¹⁸ Although, as see in Chapter 2 for Charlemagne, Otto I also had to quell a variety of challenges to his rule and internal strife. It seems clear that the Ottonians never aspired to reclaim the entirety of Charlemagne's territory.

⁵¹⁹ The practice of aligning oneself with the 'good' rulers of the immediate or more distant past was a favorite practice of Roman emperors, and is attested in their portraits. Chapter 2 noted Charles the Bald's purposeful emulation of his illustrious grandfather, which came to life in his very depictions as well as the contents of his Prayerbook.

Dürer's double portraits of Emperors Charlemagne and Sigismond, from 1512, now in Nuremberg's Germanisches Nationalmuseum. Charlemagne is depicted wearing the imperial crown of the Holy Roman Empire, the distinctive hoop crown made for the Ottonians in the late tenth century.⁵²⁰

The Ottonian dynasty's resolve to strengthen its hold on the imperial title was reaffirmed in 972 by the arrival of Theophanu, whose overstated "princess" credentials nevertheless imparted upon the freshly minted Roman Emperors the prestige of an alliance with the uninterrupted Roman imperial line.⁵²¹ The extent to which her arrival coincided with an influx of Greek people, culture, and most of all goods of various kinds, is still debated.⁵²²

Otto III's coronation at Aachen on Christmas Day 983 deliberately exploited this date and location's Carolingian connection in an attempt to preemptively defuse anticipated challenges to his rule. His father's death, only a little over two weeks earlier,

⁵²⁰ The distinctive crown was modified on various occasions throughout the later medieval period. It is currently housed in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.

⁵²¹ Thietmar, bishop of Merseburg and ally of the Ottonian, observed in Book 2, Chapter 15 of his *Chronicon* (1012-1018) that "...this ruler sent across the sea to our emperor, not the desired maiden, but rather his niece, Theophanu, accompanied by a splendid entourage and magnificent gifts." *Ottonian Germany*, p.103

⁵²² Rosamond McKitterick has lamented scholarly attempts to assign to Theophanu's arrival and the supposed influx of "Greek" culture and objects that accompanied this even, the reason behind any noticeable manifestation of Late Antique or Byzantine elements in Ottonian art. The presence of these elements, iconographic or stylistic can be reasonably explained without resorting to the default explanation of an influx of Byzantine objects at that particular time. "Ottonian intellectual culture in the 10th century and the role of Theophanu" in *Early Medieval Europe*, Volume 2, Issue 1 (March 1993), pp. 53-74. This article is also reproduced alongside a wider range of consideration of the impact of Theophanu's presence on various aspects of Ottonian life and culture in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*. Adelbert Davids, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

had left the three-year old heir vulnerable and the Ottonian territory under the co-regency of his mother, Theophanu, and grandmother Adelaide. This situation could have precipitated the early demise of the dynasty, as evinced in the attempted takeover orchestrated by Otto's uncle, Henry II, Duke of Bavaria, nicknamed *der Zänker*, or “the Quarrelsome”. As suggested in Chapter 2, the selection of Christmas Day for a coronation insured the new ruler would be associatively empowered, through the concrete manifestation of christomimetic kingship, created by the symbolic overlapping of the dawn of his new regime with the commemoration of the beginning of the age of Grace inaugurated by Christ's birth.⁵²³ This connection transpires from the famous presentation opening in the Liuthar Gospels (Aachen, Cathedral Treasury, fol. 16r) where the ruler is substituted to the figure of Christ in a lavish Majesty page. [Figure 5] This luxury manuscript was possibly created to commemorate this very occasion.⁵²⁴ Otto III secured the imperial title, which he received from the pope in May 996, after resolving the tumultuous situation in Italy, in a distant echo of Charlemagne's own interventionism prior to his imperial coronation in 800.

Otto III's rhetoric of power amalgamated selective references to the roman imperial past to support his *Renovatio Romani Imperii*, which also celebrated

⁵²³ In this particular instance, we may ponder about the impact of the potential exploitation of the compelling image of the child ruler, enthroned, surrounded by adults, dependents and courtiers, paying homage and most likely bringing gifts. This powerful image would immediately conjure the Magi's long voyage to present their offerings to the Christ-child, whose very birth they were simultaneously commemorating. This multilayered ceremony would have further strengthened Otto's identification with Christ.

⁵²⁴ Garrison, *Imperial Art*, especially, pp.46ff, and color plates 11 and 12. Garrison engages with the more ‘traditional’ dating of the manuscript to ca. 1000. I believe the presence on the facing folio (15v) of Liuthar, presenting the book to the enthroned ruler, is both a traditional expression of this action and a confirmation of the allusion suggested in footnote 20.

Constantine,⁵²⁵ while primarily emulating Charlemagne. In retrospect, the culmination of Otto III's carefully crafted construct occurred during his visit to Aachen in 1000, to celebrate Pentecost.⁵²⁶ His rightful occupancy of the imperial throne, and his very suitability to rule, were confirmed by the young ruler's providential finding of the tomb of his most illustrious predecessor. This event additionally evoked Augustus' discovery of Alexander the Great's burial as told by Suetonius, and illustrates Otto's familiarity with classical culture.⁵²⁷ In Chapter 47, of his *Chronicon*,⁵²⁸ recalling the events of the year 1000, Thietmar writes:

As he had doubts regarding the location of the bones of Emperor Charles, he secretly had the pavement over their supposed resting place ripped up and excavations carried out until they were discovered, on the royal throne. After taking a gold cross which hung around the emperor's neck and part of his clothing, which remained uncorrupted, he replaced everything with great veneration.⁵²⁹

⁵²⁵ This connection is confirmed in Otto III's elevation of his tutor and friend, Gerbert of Aurillac (also known as Gerbert of Reims) to the papacy in 1000, and the latter's taking on the name of Sylvester I. The Ottonian rulers' favored depiction, as stoic, beardless, enthroned rulers, recalls depictions of Constantine and earlier Roman emperors. See Garrison, *Imperial Art*, especially p. 62ff.

⁵²⁶ Matthew Gabriele as determined that for a brief window of time leading to this event, mention of Charlemagne in the Ottonian diploma greatly increased, which he interprets as part of the larger context of staging this 'momentous' event, which likely intended to set in motion the canonization of the late Frankish ruler. "Otto III, Charlemagne, and Pentecost 1000: A Reconsideration Using Diplomatic Evidence," in *The Year 1000: Religious and Social Response to the Turning of the First Millennium*, edited by Michael Frassetto, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 111-132. See also Garrison, *Imperial Art*, Chapter 3, "Otto III at Aachen: The encounter with the divine", pp.39-86.

⁵²⁷ Garrison, *Imperial Art*, p. 63.

⁵²⁸ Thietmar's version is the earliest of the three retellings of this story.

⁵²⁹ *Ottonian Germany*, p. 185.

Otto III's *inventio* of Charlemagne's tomb advertises the Frankish ruler's backing of the young man's right to rule in accordance with hagiographic tropes.⁵³⁰ The corpse's unusual positioning, seated, enthroned,⁵³¹ is a reminder of their shared duties as rulers, a passing of the torch of sorts, with God's blessing. Thietmar's mention of the cross, adorning the Frankish king's neck, underlines his status as most Christian king; his holiness further emphasized in the report of the unnatural preservation of his clothing.⁵³² Charles' appearance as a timeless, enthroned ruler, and his saintly, uncorrupted body reaffirms his sanctity and connection with the heavenly ruler.

Hagiographic tropes permeate various aspects of this story, beginning with the premise of a saint allowing only the worthy seeker to find what others were too undeserving to locate. It simultaneously presents Charlemagne, the object of the quest, as a holy person, and casts Otto as his rightful heir. This interpretation gains momentum in

⁵³⁰ Gabriele (2002) has argued that scholars have tended to fall into two broad categories in their interpretations of this event along either 'religious' or 'political' lines. He favors an eschatological reading, with the Ottonians anticipating the end of days at the arrival or the turn of the millennium fully expected to be the last emperors.

⁵³¹ For a discussion of the sources addressing the finding of Charlemagne's tomb and the corpse's unusual positioning, see John F. Moffit, The Enthroned Corpse of Charlemagne: The Lord-in-Majesty Theme in Early Medieval Art and Life. (Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland, 2007).

⁵³² Otto III's own actions and their retelling by Thietmar likely intended to set the stage for Charlemagne's canonization, pronounced by Pope Paschall III in the twelfth century, possibly in an attempt to secure Frederick Barbarossa's support. Garrison has emphasized the meaningful selection of Pentecost for this *inventio*, encouraging the reading of this event as a point of exchange with the divine, further supported by the historical records' mention of Otto taking Charles' cross but providing him with new white vestments. This reading as an encounter with the divine also transpires from the very premise of Adémar of Chabannes' introduction to his account. The latest of the three versions of this story, it prefaces the encounter with the mention that Otto was told in a dream to seek Charles' tomb, in a clear echo of Constantine's God-lead victory at the Milvian bridge. Gabriele, Pentecost, p.117, and Garrison, Imperial Art, especially pp. 64-65.

light of the details enhancing later versions. Charles' "uncorrupted clothing" is expanded to include his entire body, a reliable indicator of sainthood, as do the king's hair and nails' continuous growth, and the pleasant sweet smell emanating from his mostly intact corpse. Next to the actual body of Charlemagne, possession of objects that could be associated with his rule was the most desirable conveyor of his approval and visual expression of allegiance to the new regime.

Appropriation: Scope and Obstacles

Ottonian art occupies a transitional place within the larger narrative of stylistic evolution between the celebrated Carolingian and Romanesque periods, and shares characteristics with both. Sometimes amalgamated with other regional art forms under the pre-Romanesque label, particularly with regard to architecture, it is too often unfairly viewed as primarily concerned with propaganda and overly derivative from Carolingian but also Byzantine influences, owing to the presence of Theophanu at the Ottonian court from 972.⁵³³

The Ottonians' appropriation of Carolingian manuscripts manifested itself in diverse ways and comprised variously extensive modifications to the Carolingian cores of the works chosen. Maximum visual impact could be achieved with minimally intrusive

⁵³³ For a brief overview of the recent study of Ottonian Art, see Adam Cohen, "Vigintennial Views on Ottonian Art History", Special Issue of *Peregrinations*, International Society for the Study of Pilgrimage Art, 3 (2010). Joachim Gahede, "Pre-Romanesque Art" entry in the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (1989). With regard to the potential impact of Theophanu's presence, see Rosamond McKitterick, *Theophanu*, and *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, edited by Adelbert Davids, (Cambridge University Press, 2002). Henry Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian book illumination: an historical study*, (London: Harvey Miller, 1999) remains the most comprehensive study of this material.

disruption to the codicological integrity of the manuscripts, as is the case for Trier 23. As will be discussed below, some were more elaborate and comprised full-page illuminations on inserted leaves, or the over-painting of partial or entire folios with purple pigment, later supplemented by gold or silver ink, carefully traced over the now muted script. The scope of these transformations can be difficult to evaluate as the passage of time has eroded or in some cases even almost completely obliterated the evidence. This further complicates the identification of the patrons responsible for these alterations as well as their intentions and anticipated gains. These modifications, whether succinct or more extensive, certainly elevated the manuscripts' perceived status by outfitting them with the most explicit markers of luxury and elite patronage. These visual signs of prestige made manifest to their discerning viewers these codices' impressive pedigrees, be they original or constructed via manipulation. These luxurious objects imparted upon their original owners an implied elite status, and aura, which in turn extended to their current custodians.

The uncertain provenance of some of these manuscripts obscures the exact circumstances surrounding their acquisition and subsequent transformation. It is therefore difficult to determine how and when they came into the hands of their Ottonian patrons, and uncover whether these specific codices' appropriation resulted from convenience or careful selection. The discussion that follows does not resolve these complex issues, and the examples provided are not the sole testaments to this practice, but they create a backdrop against which the purpose and motives, which informed Trier 23's own transformation, can better be understood.

The occasional relocation of manuscripts is confirmed in the following anecdote: Abbot Ekkehard reminiscing about Otto II's visit to St. Gall, on August 14th 972, accompanied by his father and Theophanu, recalled the emperor's love of books and mentioned his taking some of the monastery's best manuscripts. The abbot reported that his brothers did not object to this theft, for fear of offending such a high-status robber. He mentioned later that, after insistent pleading, he ultimately secured the return of some of the abducted codices.⁵³⁴ While nobody likely dared rival the emperor's audacious appropriation, it is not inconceivable that an archbishop or his emissary could have his pick from his numerous dependencies' collections.

The remaining evidence indicates that these transformative endeavors necessitated not only access to expensive pigments and precious metals to create silver and gold ink, but in some cases involved not only the participation of skilled scribes, but the involvement of one of the most praised early medieval artist, the Gregory Master.⁵³⁵ When these parameters are taken into consideration, the field of potential sponsors is significantly narrowed, as only a small group of elite patrons with access to these codices, and with the resources necessary to carry out those alterations, could also reasonably anticipate to benefit from their publicized ownership of these transformed objects. It is also probable that select members of these reworked codices' potential audiences were

⁵³⁴ Beissel, *Geschichte*, p.210, didn't object openly, but still referred to the guilty party as "robbers" and "thieves".

⁵³⁵ With regard to the 'career' of the Gregory Master, see Carl Nordenfalk, "The Chronology of the Registrum Master," in *Kunsthistorische Forschungen: Otto Pächt zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*, edited by Carlo Bertelli, Artur Rosenauer and Gerold Weber, (Salzburg, 1972), pp. 62-76. Nordenfalk's assumption that the artist's style evolved toward ever increasing expressionism is problematic and seems to reflect twentieth century developments rather than established Ottonian evidence.

themselves actively engaged in this practice. The wealthy and resourceful men, and possibly women, behind these alterations probably commissioned new codices in accordance with their needs and exact specifications which reflected contemporary tastes and style. It is meaningful that they elected to also transform these older manuscripts.

These reworked codices' overall appearance was significantly enhanced as a result of these transformations, yet, their *raison d'être* went beyond showcasing the wealth of their respective patrons, or provide a luxurious upgrade to some random older manuscripts whose subdued or truncated original decoration no longer aligned with contemporary taste and expectations. It is compelling that none of those codices were outfitted with narrative scenes, a common feature of contemporary deluxe creations such as the Codex Egberti (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Ms. 24), with which the Gregory Master is closely linked.⁵³⁶ I believe that the primary concern was to ensure that these transformed codices remained identifiable as essentially Carolingian. Familiarity with Carolingian luxury manuscripts, which facilitated this recognition, is attested most notably, in the Gero Codex' (Darmstadt, Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Ms. 1948) established dependency on the Carolingian Lorsch Gospels (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. Lat. 50, and Alba Iulia, Biblioteca Documenta Batthyaneum, s.n.). Unfortunately, art historical scholarship has exploited this persuasive comparison as a *de facto* confirmation of Ottonian art's quintessentially derivative and therefore subordinate relationship to its

⁵³⁶ This extensive picture cycle and the manuscript's quality, luxury and association with Egbert and the Gregory Master have contributed to its popularity and its availability in facsimile form. *Der Egbert Codex [Codex Egberti]*, (Luzern: Faksimile-Verlag, 2005). On the Gregory Master, see Carl Nordenfalk, "Der Meister des Registrum Gregory," reprinted in his *Studies in the History of Book Illumination*, (London: Pindar Press, 1992), pp. 133-148, and Brigitte Nietschke, *Die Handschriftengruppe um den Meister des Registrum Gregorii*, (Recklinghausen: Verlag Aurel Bongers, 1966).

prestigious Carolingian predecessor.⁵³⁷ The influence of Tours related manuscripts on Ottonian illumination in and around Trier has been established and provides a backdrop against which the observations made in this chapter must be understood.⁵³⁸

The appeal of the books discussed here derived from more than their materiality, appearance and contents. Their symbolic value was akin to various degrees to both *spolia*, as seen above, but also relics. Like relics, encased in lavish containers, which channeled through their external splendor the true otherworldly power of their contents, these codices' prestige was rooted in their recognition as Carolingian luxury goods. This artifice deliberately constructed for these select codices an even more prestigious Carolingian pedigree than they may have already possessed. We may ponder to what extent their viewers were genuinely fooled, or obligingly perpetuated this illusion, as some of them must have engaged in this practice as well, or actually owned the Carolingian luxury books whose appearance was emulated. But to what end? As will be suggested below, the motivation and the anticipated reward informing this practice, as well as its effectiveness are difficult to ascertain, but are best understood as one aspect of

⁵³⁷ C.R. Dodwell presents in a single opening the Lorsch Gospels Maiestas Domini and its Gero Codex counterpart, (pp.132-133, figures 118 and 119) as well as the portraits of St. John (p.135, figures 120 and 121) in order to convey explicitly this undeniable dependency. The Pictorial Arts of the West 800-1200, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

⁵³⁸ For a discussion of Tournonian illumination's impact with regard to style and iconography on Trier book production, and more specifically on the work of the Gregory Master see Carl Nordenfalk, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der tournonischen Buchmalerei," Acta Archeologica 7 (1936), pp. 281ff.; Hermann Schnitzler, "Südwestdeutsche Kuns um das Jahr 1000 und die Schule von Tours", Trierer Zeitschrift 14 (1939), pp.154-181; and more recently, Reiner Nolden, Die tournonische Bibel der Abtei St. Maximin vor Trier: Faksimile der erhaltenen Blätter: Farbtafeln mit den Initialen: Aufsätze/im Auftrag der Gesellschaft für Nützliche Forschungen zu Trier, (Trier: Gesellschaft für Nützliche Forschungen, 2002).

a larger campaign of self-promotion intended on gaining status, rank, and influence, or securing dispensations and financial gains. It replicates, on a smaller scale, the Ottonian rulers' own strategic reclaiming of the symbolic and tangible remains of the Carolingian past, including Charlemagne's body, as tools of self-aggrandizement and legitimacy.

Thomas Head's investigation of Archbishop Egbert's carefully constructed advocacy of his see of Trier's apostolic status and primacy among rival dioceses through a resourceful and manipulative program of visual propaganda provides a potential template.⁵³⁹ The carefully orchestrated drama that accompanied Egbert's *inventio* of the relics of Celsus, an early Christian saint, necessitated the audience's complicity to reach its full effect.⁵⁴⁰ A theatrical setting similarly magnified the visual impact of the reliquaries Egbert commissioned. A feeling of awe and reverence must have accompanied even the slightest glimpse at the portable altar containing a piece of Andrew's sandal or the lavish reliquary claiming to house a piece of Peter's staff.⁵⁴¹ These objects' splendor communicated the sanctity of their contents, and associatively bestowed prestige upon their owner. A mix of wonder, admiration, and envy must have

⁵³⁹ Thomas Head, "Art and Artifice in Ottonian Trier," *Gesta*, Vol. 26, No.1 (1997), pp. 65-82. Thomas Head's article is especially thought provoking with regard to his claim that the visual element of this carefully crafted program of propaganda preceded its textual manifestation. Egbert's patronage of the art and the culture surrounding him and Trier is explored in the two-volume exhibition catalogue, *Egbert Erzbischof von Trier 977-993: Gedenkschrift der Diözese Trier zum 1000 Todestag*, edited by Franz J. Ronig, with Andreas Weiner and Rita Heyen, (Trier: Rheinischen Landesmuseums, 1993).

⁵⁴⁰ Head, *Artifice*, p. 8. Egbert appears to have purposely maneuvered to delay the actual unearthing of the relics to maximize the number of people in attendance. To what degree this audience was actively and knowingly participating in Egbert's dramatic staging is less certain.

⁵⁴¹ For quality images, see Thomas Head, *Artifice*, and *Egbert*, Volume 1, Entry #41, pp.36-37, and Taffeln 146-159, pp. 195-209, for the portable altar, #43, pp.38-39 and Taffeln 160-164, pp.210-214 for the staff.

greeted the Archbishop as he walked down the nave on a feast day, or joined his fellow clergymen in some official assembly or celebration, garbed in his full regalia, holding his staff, effectively affirming his elevated status, as chosen by Peter.⁵⁴² This dynamic recalls the competitive relic collecting discussed in Chapter 2 and demonstrates that these objects' ownership, embellishment, and display became potent signifiers of status and legitimacy but also receptacles of future ambitions.

Whether Trier 23's Ottonian custodians knew the manuscript's origin, as reconstructed in this dissertation, cannot be confirmed, but we can infer that they were capable of interpreting the visual and textual clues that the manuscript still presents to its modern viewers. Its indisputably luxurious appearance, combined with the dedication poem's identification of the donor as Albinus, overruled any potential uncertainty about its origin. The connection with Alcuin, and by extension the shrine of St. Martin at Tours were sufficiently prestigious to warrant interest in the manuscript, but they were superseded by the poem's implication that the manuscript's intended recipient was a king, who could only be reasonably identified as Alcuin's friend and benefactor, Charlemagne. Such a prestigious connection would have appealed to a ruler, yet it is more likely that it served an ambitious cleric, eager to cast himself in the role of the contemporary embodiment of the emperor's faithful, trustworthy advisor. This strategy associatively elevated the current ruler, over whom he aspired to gain influence, to that of Charlemagne, thus actively and symbiotically participating in the Ottonian dynasty's

⁵⁴² Karl Leyser has written extensively about the importance of ritual and pageantry in the Ottonian period. See "Ritual, Ceremony and Gesture: Ottonian Germany" in Communications and Power in Medieval Europe 1: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries, edited by Timothy Reuter. (London and Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp.189ff.

rhetoric of power. In this context, the addition of an enthroned figure to Trier 23's already extensive decorative scheme may be revealing.⁵⁴³

Competition for royal favors and privileges unfolded against an ever-changing political landscape. Rivalries and shifting alliances necessitated vigilant monitoring and calculated maneuvering. A carefully crafted program of self-promotion could play a decisive role in establishing one's place in this precarious hierarchy. Long-term ambitions and their sometimes delayed but eventual fulfillment could be suddenly and unexpectedly thwarted. Egbert experienced such a disappointment after his momentary backing of Henry II's campaign to depose the young Otto III in 984.⁵⁴⁴ The Archbishop ultimately recovered, but he never secured the recognition of Trier's apostolic status and primacy, he so actively promoted. However, the ultimate failure of this enterprise primarily rests on his ill-advised allegiance, and does not invalidate the sophistication and quality of his carefully crafted visual campaign of self-promotion.

⁵⁴³ As will be discussed below the addition of a *Maiestas Domini* may surprise in the context of Trier 23, on account of its gospel frontispiece design which already prominently features the core elements of this composition. However, the desire to feature an enthroned figure, which might be viewed as a declaration of allegiance to the current ruler's christomimetic identification, may have played a part. An additional motivation might be uncovered in the inclusion of an image-type so closely associated with the scriptorium of Tours, and therefore intended to strengthen the connection to Alcuin and by extension Charlemagne already appearing in the dedication poem. The desire for a depiction of an enthroned figure as a motivating factor behind the addition of a *Maiestas Domini* in the Trier codex was suggested to me by a member of the audience at the presentation of part of this material at the 42nd International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI (May 10th-May 13th, 2007). Otto I's seal changed over time to ultimately settle on the depiction of an enthroned ruler, a type favored by his two successors, Otto II and Otto III.

⁵⁴⁴ Timothy Reuter, Germany in the Early Middle Ages c.800-1056, (Harlow, Essex & New York, 1991), pp.184-6.

The Manuscripts

A few related manuscripts will be examined to better understand Trier 23's own transformation. They are the Augsburg Gospels (Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. I.2.4°.2,) an early eighth century book from Echternach –albeit of pre-Carolingian origin, but connected to a monastic foundation with which the Carolingian dynasty had long nurtured strong ties as seen throughout this dissertation; an early ninth century gospel book from Tours, known as the Gospels of St. Martin, (Prague, Kloster Strahov, Ms. DF III 3) now in Prague; and the Gospels from St. Maximin, now Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. theol. Lat. 283. Their relatively subdued original decorative schemes were enhanced in the Ottonian period through a series of alterations. These codices' hybridity challenges traditional interpretative modes privileging period styles, and they have therefore not received the scholarly attention they deserve. This situation is rendered even more perplexing upon closer inspection, for, as will be shown below, these transformations are persuasively linked on stylistic, iconographic and technical grounds with the work of the Gregory Master and his circle.⁵⁴⁵

The Augsburg Gospels' original ornamental scheme consisted of initials in shades of yellow, red and black, marking the openings of each gospel and prefatory texts, and twelve pages of canon tables.⁵⁴⁶ A cross ornamental page (126v) directly preceding the

⁵⁴⁵ Nordenfalk remarks that "Im Registrum Gregorii finden wir also den Meister als Restaurator einer älteren Handschrift tätig. Das war allem Anschein nach eine seiner Spezialitäten," *Meister des Registrum Gregorii*, p.133.

⁵⁴⁶ The manuscript was the object of a color microfiche edition. *Evangelium Epternacense* (Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. I.2.4°.2) *Evangelistarium* (Ezbischöfliches Priesterseminar St. Peter, Cod. Ms 25), with an introduction and codicological description by Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Codex illuminati medii aevi* 9, (Munich:

opening of John's gospel conveys insular influence, a common feature of manuscripts associated with the scriptorium of Echternach, while a pair of exotic birds frames an acrostic poem on folio 2r.⁵⁴⁷

Much of the evidence of the scope of the manuscript's transformation c.985 has been lost, but the codex was probably equipped with evangelist portraits, of which only Mark has survived. [Figure 51] First bound to Ms. 25 in the Archiepiscopal Seminary of St. Peter in Schwarzwald, it now exists as a single leaf sine numero.⁵⁴⁸ The recognizable offset on Mark's portrait (fol. 55r) of the facing initial still in the original manuscript facilitated this identification. Nancy Netzer persuasively demonstrated that this miniature was added on a previously blank folio, thus contrasting E.A. Lowe's claim that the four portraits were painted on inserted leaves.⁵⁴⁹ Further codicological evidence led Dáibhí Ó Cróinín to ponder whether the addition of the other three portraits should even be assumed, regardless of the inherent idiosyncrasy of such a proposition.⁵⁵⁰ Whether these evangelist portraits were novelties in a manuscript that never contained them, but were expected by its Ottonian owners, or were replacements for damaged or missing

Helga Lengenfelder, 1988). While not the primary focus of her study, Netzer's Interplay, addresses the Augsburg Gospels at length.

⁵⁴⁷ Ó Cróinín provides an overview of the manuscript's decoration, Evangeliarum, pp. 27-30.

⁵⁴⁸ For an overview of the fate of this single leaf, see Anton von Euw in Vor dem Jahr 1000: Abendländische Buchkunst zur Zeit der Kaiserin Theophanu, Eine Ausstellung des Schnütgen-Museums zum Gedenken an den 1000. Todestag der Kaiserin Theophanu am 15. Juni 1991 und ihr Begräbnis in St. Pantaleon zu Köln, (Köln, 1991), Cat. Nr.41, Abb.116, pp.148-149.

⁵⁴⁹ Ó Cróinín, Evangeliarum, p.15, and pp. 36-37.

⁵⁵⁰ Ó Cróinín, Evangeliarum, p. 37.

frontispieces is unclear. As this example demonstrates, the absence of scholarly consensus hampers the formulation of any conclusive assessment of this material, and the determination of patterns of transformation.

Alterations to the Augsburg manuscript further comprised the addition of gold and silver headings in (rustic) capitals (fol. 83 and 123v respectively) and the gilding of various initials (16v, 47r, 55r, 83r). Ó'Cróinín references some “secondary elements” added to the modest canon tables.⁵⁵¹ This extensive tenth century remodeling greatly enhanced the manuscript's appearance, effectively elevating its status to that of uncontested luxury book, with plausible court ties. Its impact on potential viewers was by extension greatly heightened, as was by association the status of its current owner.⁵⁵²

The Gospels of St. Martin, now in Prague originated in Tours in the early ninth century and underwent a radical overhaul around 980.⁵⁵³ The manuscript, written in uncial and originally featuring only Explicit and Incipit markers, was supplemented with evangelist portraits, attributed to the Gregory Master (folios 8v, 69v, 107v, 176v).⁵⁵⁴

[Figure 52] The subtle tonal shading and modeling articulating facial features, particularly prominent in John's portrait, [Figure 53] closely recall Pope Gregory's in the famous Trier illumination of the *Registrum Gregorii* (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Hs 171 a)

⁵⁵¹ Ó Cróinín, *Evangeliarum*, p. 27.

⁵⁵² Ó Cróinín notes that, “What [E.A.] Lowe termed the “dignified simplicity” of its decoration has, however, been mistaken for primitiveness by Rupert Bruce-Mitford: “At Echternach, even in the Maihingen [=Augsburg] Gospels, the atmosphere is one of primitive and provincial simplicity, almost wholly Insular and largely dependant (sic) for what elegance it could muster on models from the Northumbrian homeland”,” *Evangeliarum*, p.27.

⁵⁵³ *Egbert*, Cat.5, p. 21, and Taf. 22-28.

⁵⁵⁴ Nordenfalk, *Meister des Registrum Gregorii*, p.134.

and echoes the contemporary St. Chapelle Gospels (Paris, BnF, Ms. lat. 8851), both attributed to the Gregory Master, although the closest parallel remains the portrait of Mark in St Peter im Schwarzwald discussed earlier.⁵⁵⁵ These stylistic and iconographic similarities combine with the distinctive technique of gold leaf application, identified by Doris Oltrogge as the Master's trademark, to strengthen this attribution.⁵⁵⁶ The presence on Mark's scroll and John's codex (Luke's is worn) of the shorthand script Nordenfalk connected to the Gregory Master, on account of its appearance on the tablet held by Pope Gregory's secretary in the *Registrum* miniature, confirms this association.⁵⁵⁷

Other modifications include a purple title page in gold capitals and the retracing of the Nomina sacra in the text with gold ink.⁵⁵⁸ This design is consciously reminiscent of the most precious Carolingian courtly productions, with which many high-ranking Ottonians were demonstratively familiar. An inventory listing of the twelfth century indicates that the manuscript was in the possession of the monastery of St. Martin in Trier at this early date.⁵⁵⁹ One may ponder whether the manuscript had long resided there, perhaps arriving as early as the Carolingian period as a gift bestowed by its Tournian counterpart. Alternatively, it may have been purposely acquired in the Ottonian era, in

⁵⁵⁵ Nitschke, *Handschriftengruppe*, p. 75.

⁵⁵⁶ Doris Oltrogge, "Materia" und "Ingenium" Beobachtungen zu Herstellung des Egbertcodex in *Egbert*, Bd. 2-Aufsätze, pp. 123-152.

⁵⁵⁷ Nordenfalk, "An Early Medieval Shorthand Alphabet" reprinted in *Studies in the History of Book Illumination*, (London: Pindar Press, 1992), pp. 128-132.

⁵⁵⁸ Nordenfalk, "Der Meister des Registrum Gregorii", p. 134. For good quality color plates see *Egbert*, Cat. 5 Taf. 22-28.

⁵⁵⁹ *Egbert*, Cat. 5, p.21.

order to strategically participate in this campaign of self-promotion through the showcasing of Carolingian ties.

The Gospels of St. Maximin, originating in Mainz in the first half of the ninth century and now in Berlin, only contained a set of canon tables (11v-17v) prior to their transformation around the year 1000.⁵⁶⁰ Five lavish miniatures supplemented this modest decorative scheme. Evangelist portraits, two painted on previously blank folios (19v, 133v) and two incorporated on inserted leaves (59v, 88v) [Figure 54] accompany an unusual depiction of Christ in Majesty (fol. 11r).⁵⁶¹ [Figure 55] The author portraits' quality does not rival the excellence of the *Maiestas Domini*, and they have consequently been attributed to the Gregory Master's atelier, although they closely relate, both iconographically and stylistically, to the set he is credited with inserting in the Gospels of St. Martin, just discussed.

The unusual iconography of the Christ in Majesty miniature references Revelation 1:13, where the Son of Man appears enthroned surrounded by seven candlesticks. The crouching figure, possibly John, who witnessed and transmitted this powerful revelation, recalls personifications of Terra known in contemporary miniatures, such as the Majesty page in the Liuthard Gospels of Otto III.⁵⁶² This apocalyptic tone similarly underlies the portrait of Mark added to the Augsburg Gospels discussed above, while the band separating Mark from the lion displays, in capitals "FORMAM TERRIBILIS MARCUS TENET ECCE LEONIS," a much smaller inscription in gold ink on the top left hand

⁵⁶⁰ Egbert, Cat. 24, p.31, and Taf. 115-119.

⁵⁶¹ Egbert, Cat. 24, p.31.

⁵⁶² *Vor dem Jahr 1000*, Nr. 39, p. 144, Van Eeuw mentions the close connection with Trier 23's *Maiestas Domini*.

corner of the frame reads, “Ecce vicit leo de tribu Iuda radiz David” (Behold the lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David) from Rev. 5:5.⁵⁶³ The approaching millennium witnessed the intensification of eschatological thoughts and concerns. In this context, the Ottonian ruler’s task, as Christ’s earthly representative, charged with assembling the faithful in anticipation of the impending Judgment, could not be overstated. For others, claiming a place alongside God’s trusted earthly agent took on additional urgency.

Finally, the canon tables were also transformed via the painting of elaborate foliated capitals and bases over the original plain or stepped designs. The column shafts were filled with alternating colors and patterns animating the page in dramatic fashion. Trier 23’s transformation is comparatively minimal, as it is confined to the addition of a *Maiestas Domini* on a previously blank folio (fol. 22v). [Figure 5] This relative restraint owed much to the manuscript’s already luxurious appearance. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the repetitive decorative sequences opening each gospel outfitted the manuscript with extensive, full-page brightly colored pages, which when combined with the codex’ ample format, elegant script, and wide margins, already effectively communicated its donor’s status. The information contained in the dedication poem further secured its reputation as an important vestige of the glorious Carolingian past.

The decision to supplement Trier 23’s already extensive decorative program with a Christ in Majesty image may surprise at first, due to the recurring gospel frontispiece design, which already featured the key elements essential to this composition: Christ, albeit depicted as a bust-length figure, accompanied by the apocalyptic symbols. The multilayered *Maiestas Domini* design, which became somewhat of a Tournonian

⁵⁶³ Vor dem Jahr 1000, Nr. 41, p. 148.

trademark during the ninth century, operated as visual exegesis, expounding through its geometrical arrangement and complex layering the essential harmony of the Old and New Testament and Christ's role as fulfillment of God's promise.⁵⁶⁴ The most notable examples preface the New Testament sections of full bibles, such as the Vivian Bible (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat.1, fol. 329v) of c. 845. This manuscript possibly inspired the Gregory Master's own composition for the Ste. Chapelle Gospels (Paris, BnF, Ms. lat 8851, fol.1v). Touronian bible frontispieces also contributed, albeit not exclusively, to the formulation of the decorative program of the monumental bronze doors created in the early eleventh century for, and possibly by Bernward for his church of St. Michael at Hildesheim.⁵⁶⁵

The hypothesis that seated author portraits would have better suited the Trier codex primarily reflects modern constructs normalizing their presence rather than the actual evidence from the Carolingian period. Whether its Ottonian patrons ever contemplated such an extensive disruption to the manuscript, which would have necessitated the insertion of single leaves, is unknown. However, the example of the Gospels of St. Maximin demonstrates that when confronted with a relatively blank canvas, this codicological inconvenience was not a sufficient deterrent. This proposition ignores the evidence, discussed throughout this dissertation, that Trier 23's creators

⁵⁶⁴ See Kessler, Bibles from Tours, especially Chapter III, "The Gospel Frontispieces", pp. 36-57.

⁵⁶⁵ Adam S. Cohen and Anne Derbes' reassessment of the unusual iconography of the doors revealed new sources of inspiration while recognizing the design's dependency on Touronian biblical imagery, in "Bernward and Eve at Hildesheim", Gesta, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2001), pp. 19-38. For a broader perspective on Bernward's artistic patronage and production and its relationship to the past, see Nees, Antiquarianism.

designed a luxury book, which its later medieval patrons recognized and appreciated, but which has mostly alluded modern audiences.

The appeal of Trier 23's original decorative scheme can be inferred from its guiding the design of its Ottonian addition. As will be demonstrated, the Majesty page deliberately harmonizes with the frontispieces. This observation confirms the proposed interpretation that these appropriations aimed at enhancing these codices' profile as the ultimate Carolingian *de lux* productions. As such, it is not surprising that the eighth century Augsburg Gospels, which likely looked dated to its tenth century audience, and the Gospels of St. Martin and St. Maximin, which did not originally include any figurative imagery, underwent a more extensive transformation than the Trier codex.

The Maiestas Domini

Trier 23's *Maiestas Domini* addition occupies a previously blank folio (22v) and not, as sometimes reported, an inserted leaf, in the manuscript's first volume.⁵⁶⁶ Its recto bares the last few lines of Matthew's chapter lists, written in the same Caroline minuscule script and brown ink as the rest of the manuscript. [Figure 56] The selection of this particular location for this addition may result from convenience, for as noted in Chapter 4, this carefully planned codex did not leave many blank spaces, although it incidentally reflects the preferred layout of Tournonian bibles, where multilayered frontispieces

⁵⁶⁶ I have traced the first published occurrence of this erroneous claim to Werdendes Abendland an Rhein und Ruhr: Ausstellung in Villa Hügel. Essen, 18. Mai bis 15. Sept. 1956, Herausgegeben von Villa Hügel Verein. Mit einem Vorwort von Theodor Heuss und Joseph Cardinal Frings, (Essen: Tellus-Verlag, 1959), where entry number 288, on p.178 states that the folio bearing the Ottonian *Maiestas Domini* was "eingebunden" into the existing manuscript.

featuring Christ in Majesty, with evangelists and their symbols and sometimes even prophets, introduce the New Testament.

The beardless, youthful figure of Christ is enthroned at the center of the composition while each of the four evangelist symbols occupies a corner. Christ's oversized nimbus features a cross, articulated with gold leaf, overlapping three concentric circles in contrasting colors, possibly alluding to the Trinity. A large green orb serves as Christ's throne and reminds the viewer of his universal dominion, while a smaller beige colored disk, possibly earth, occupies the foreground and supports his bare feet. Washes of muted colors create contrasting horizontal bands behind the figures and distinguish the space inside the frame from the parchment left bare around it.⁵⁶⁷ This feature is also reminiscent of Tours designs, and emerges in the very articulation of some frontispieces as horizontal bands of colors, or sections of linear, visual narrative.⁵⁶⁸

Superposed red and green Corinthian capitals cap half columns containing irregular undulating lines, imitating the veining found in marble. They in turn support green acanthus leaves, arranged horizontally and encased within a thick red border. A wide brownish horizontal section featuring ochre waves anchors the composition and provides support to the lion's paw and the ox's hoof. The bottom of Christ's circular footstool overlaps the lower edge of the frame. This elaborate frame's combination of acanthus leaves and undulating lines enclosed in vertical shafts recalls the abundant

⁵⁶⁷ The bands of bright colors or clouds appearing behind Christ enthroned is a motif already known from late Antiquity as in the apse mosaic of Santa Pudenziana in Rome from c. 400.

⁵⁶⁸ This layering of bands of colors appears in frontispieces of the Apocalypse, as in the Moutier-Grandval Bible (London, BL, Cod. Add 10546, fol. 449r, or in the Jerome frontispiece in the Vivian Bible (Paris, BnF, Ms. Lat. 1, fol. 3v).

vegetation and decorative patterns enlivening the frames in Trier 23's gospel frontispieces.

Christ's elongated face appears aloof, bisected by a strong, long nose, over a clearly delineated Cupid's bow, stern lips and chin. [Figure 57] Various shades of muted, golden tan bring volume to the face, and contrast with the strong highlights over the bridge of the nose, and articulating the eye sockets, brow and chin. Flattened ears flank the oblong face in a manner reminiscent of ancient funerary masks. Long light brown locks frame Christ's face and cascade evenly down his shoulders. The conspicuous absence of a part atop Christ's head is an unusual feature also present in Matthew's symbol. This strange motif recurs in the Berlin miniature discussed above, with which the Trier addition shares other similarities.

Christ's right hand is raised in blessing. His foreshortened forearm, garbed in red with a gold hem, protrudes vertically from the lozenge-shaped opening of his tunic. Christ's left hand grasps the edge of an open book, propped atop his left knee, over a heavy double fold of fabric. Although the *Liber Vitae* appears open, no text can be seen. Gold leaf is selectively, but effectively applied to accentuate the edges of Christ's faded blue garment, his cross nimbus and the borders of his and the evangelists' books.

Bust-length evangelist symbols bearing large ringed haloes with contrasting rim occupy the four corners of the image, and repeat the arrangement of the frontispiece of Matthew's gospel (fol. 23v) in the next opening. [Figure 1] Matthew and John's symbols are given prominence in accordance with the two men's elevated status as witnesses to Christ's earthly life, and their respective account's proclamation of Christ's dual human and divine nature. They are located in the top register of the composition, aligned with

Christ's halo and are winged. Mark's Lion, at the bottom left and Luke's ox, at the right, contort their bodies to look toward Christ. Matthew's symbol is a miniature rendition of Christ, sharing his distinctive facial features and his unusual hairstyle, with no part. The eagle and the lion are shown in full profile, as they consistently appear in Trier 23's Carolingian frontispieces, while the man and the ox are in $\frac{3}{4}$ frontal views; all adore the cosmic ruler. The direction of their collective gazes invites the viewer to partake in this privileged anticipatory vision of the eternal Judge.

The symbols harmonize with their counterparts in the Carolingian frontispieces through their arrangement, as just noted, as well as their iconography. All four symbols wear large haloes with contrasting rims, and their books are flat rectangular planes with different colored edges. Smaller details also coincide, such as the lions' coats, similarly articulated in distinctive tufts of fur, while both oxen have large swollen nostrils, and mirroring inward facing half-moon-shaped horns separating distinctively textured hair, which contrasts from the rest of the body. Christ's youthful appearance, his long flowing hair, surrounding an elongated, aloof face, framed by an oversized halo, equally matches the frontispieces. These compelling parallels support the proposed interpretation that this modification primarily aimed at enhancing the manuscript's appearance without disrupting its essential Carolingian identity, and status as relic of a glorious past.

John's symbol holds an outstretched scroll in the Ottonian addition, while his counterparts, as well as all four beasts in the Carolingian frontispieces, consistently present codices. This iconographic singularity may reference John's gospel opening, echoing the book of Genesis, "In the beginning", thus emphasizing the completed cycle from Creation to Judgment. Scrolls are common attributes of Old Testament prophets,

and visual referents to the Old Law. This motif's presence potentially alludes to Christ's role as the fulfillment of God's promise, and aligns with the suggested Old Testament allusion formulated via the breastplate in the Matthew frontispiece in the next opening.

The most compelling iconographic and stylistic parallels to Trier 23's Ottonian addition come to light in the works of the Gregory Master or his atelier. Among those, the Gospels of St. Maximin in Berlin discussed earlier, offer the most intriguing parallel. The figures of Christ mirror each other in their poses, including the distinctive way they hold their books, treated as flat planks resembling tablets, with large borders, resting on their left knees over heavy folds of drapery. Although the Berlin Christ is bearded and his right arm's foreshortening is less convincing, their visages bear the same austere aloofness and their features are modeled, highlighted and articulated similarly. Both faces are elongated, with strong, yet elegant features, and sharply contrasting planes of light and dark shadows. Raised eyebrows dominate dark, almond-shaped eyes. Their respective Cupid's bows are articulated through a dark vertical stroke connecting the long noses and pinched, small downturn mouths. The lower lips cast dark shadows, which contrast the lighter chins.

The peculiar absence of a part in the hairlines of both Christ and Matthew's symbol in the Trier miniature is an unusual characteristic shared by the crouching figure, identified as John in the Berlin image. Additional Morellian details confirm these miniatures' close relationship and likely common origin, as seen in the articulation of the hands. A sharp brown line extends from the fleshy part of the thumb, extending down to the wrist in the small Berlin figure, while it reaches into the hem of Christ's sleeve in the

Trier miniature. About two thirds of the way down, it is joined by a second line, seemingly emerging from the area between the ring and little fingers.

The author portraits supplementing the Gospels of St. Maximin's decorative scheme provide strong parallels for the evangelist symbols in the Trier Majesty. This is particularly evident with regard to Luke's symbol. Both oxen's faces display prominently flared nostrils, and almost joining crescent shaped horns over oddly textured tufts of hair. Dark lines delineate deep heavy folds around their respective necks. The lions' oddly open faces, coloring, and fur treatments are similar, and both symbolic depictions of Matthew sport the unusual hairstyle with no part. The mixture of codices and scrolls is also present in the Berlin portraits.

It is remarkable that none of these additions, as they survive today, include a single narrative scene from the extensive repertoire of New Testament imagery developed and diffused in the Ottonian period, as exemplified in the Codex Egberti, (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, cod. 24) to which the Gregory Master contributed a number of illuminations.⁵⁶⁹ This further confirms the proposed hypothesis that these manuscripts' decorative schemes were adjusted to coincide with constructed expectations of Carolingian luxury and decoration and not contemporary ones. The patrons' intentions clearly required that these books' s Carolingian origin be recognized, as this identity was the root of their power and the associated prestige they bestowed on their current owners.

A preliminary conclusion can be drawn from the few examples considered above. The agency of the Gregory Master and his students or atelier has generally been

⁵⁶⁹ Egbert, Cat.10, pp. 23-24 and Taf. 34-54, and Der Egbert-Codex.

understood as a reliable indicator of a Trier origin.⁵⁷⁰ The extensive evidence linking him to Egbert's commissions attests to their relationship and his availability. Whether he resided in Trier, or in another monastic dependency nearby is unclear, especially considering that his identity as monk, deacon, or layman has not been securely established, and would have impacted his ability to travel. In addition, while demonstrably at the service of Egbert, although possibly only temporarily, the Master could have relocated following the Archbishop's ill-advised backing of Henry II in 984. While inserted miniatures could still have been produced in absentia, it is unlikely that a manuscript would have been unbound for the purpose of decorating a single folio, although it could have been sent to the artist.

While Egbert's misguided, albeit brief allegiance likely doomed his ambitions for the see of Trier, we should not assume that it automatically marked the end of his career as patron of the arts. Following that unfortunate episode, the Archbishop may have endeavored to regain the favors of the Ottonian ruling line and sought to showcase his allegiance to the dynasty, by actively embracing and participating in their propagandistic discourse until his death in 993.

The presence of one or a handful of miniatures associated with the Gregory Master in a variety of manuscripts appears to support Nordenfalk's hypothesized career for the artist be it in one or various locations. The isolated contributions discussed here supplement the larger body of entirely Ottonian works that scholars have linked to the Master. It is worth noting however, that this pattern of contributing only one or a handful

⁵⁷⁰ Nordenfalk, *Meister des Registrum Gregorii*, p.133, and Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian*, especially Part I, pp. 39-42, and Part II, "The Manuscripts of Archbishop Egbert of Trier," pp. 57-83.

of miniatures to lavish manuscripts, at play here, extended to the Master's contributions to numerous contemporary creations. The Codex Egberti, for example, with which the Gregory Master has been closely connected as both painter and designer, only features seven miniatures reliably assigned to his pen.⁵⁷¹ Nordenfalk's reconstructed career for the Gregory Mastery, while problematic with regard to the later attributions, on account of his assumption that the artist's style would have moved toward greater expressionism, which I believe cannot be assumed, remains a productive interpretation of this sporadic evidence.⁵⁷² Nees suggested that a similar approach might be effectively applied to other early medieval artists, such as Godescalc, proposing that they received commissions, from one or more patrons, to contribute a single or a handful of folios to be featured or inserted in manuscripts that they may not have otherwise created, or indeed even seen.⁵⁷³

Context and Expectations

As mentioned, Thomas Head's investigation of Archbishop Egbert of Trier's elaborate program of visual propaganda demonstrated that 'secular' rulers did not have a monopoly over the careful appropriation of the past for personal gains.⁵⁷⁴ Head contextualized his observations against a backdrop of careful maneuvering from rival bishops. The competition to establish primacy had practical implications and incentives

⁵⁷¹ Nordenfalk, *Meister der Registrum Gregorii*, p.134.

⁵⁷² Nordenfalk's views may have been influenced by contemporary artistic developments. I find problematic the assumption that one can anticipate the direction in which a given artist's style will evolved, now or then. Picasso provides a compelling example.

⁵⁷³ Nees, Godescalc, and "On Carolingian Book Painters: the Ottoboni Gospels and its Transfiguration Master," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 83, (2001), pp. 209-239.

⁵⁷⁴ Head, *Artifice*.

for both the diocese and its Archbishop. Privileges, endowments and exemptions from oversight or taxes enhanced a diocese's profile and coffers, while potentially promoting its Archbishop to the role of advisor to the ruler. This position could lead to the honored task of crowning or anointing the future heir. Bruno of Cologne, William of Mainz and Henry of Trier shared duties during the coronation and anointing of Otto II at Aachen.⁵⁷⁵ Ambitious clerics aspired to position themselves as the 'makers' of kings, in a competitive environment recalling the rivalry between St. Denis, Tours and Rheims, and in a manner reminiscent of Pope Leo III's positioning himself as effectively superior to Charlemagne by placing the imperial crown on the king's head.

Cologne's Archbishop, Gero (r.969-976) had travelled to Constantinople as part of the diplomatic delegation negotiating Theophanu's marriage to Otto II.⁵⁷⁶ At home, his careful sponsorship of the arts transpired in the magnificent life-size crucifix, still known today as the Gero Crucifix, from c.975, and through the patronage of manuscripts, of which the Gero Codex has long received the most attention on account of its undeniable connection to the Carolingian Lorsch Gospels noted at the beginning of the chapter. Bernward, tutor to Otto III and bishop of Hildesheim since 993, actively participated in this visual campaign of active self-promotion and pageantry. The famous opening in his Golden Gospels (Hildesheim, Cathedral Treasury, MS 18, fol. 16v-17r) of c.1015, captured the dazzling effect generated by the cumulative visual experience of elaborate liturgical vestments, luxurious manuscripts and church fittings on full display during the celebration of mass in the lavish setting of St. Michael's. The monumental bronze doors

⁵⁷⁵ Head, Artifice, p. 76.

⁵⁷⁶ Vor dem Jahr 1000, p. 118.

and spiraled column were technological feasts, which referenced Aachen and quoted Touronian bible frontispieces while emulating Trajan's column and Santa Sabina's intricately carved wooden doors. Bernward's patronage reflected his love of Rome's ancient monuments, and echoed Otto III's own fascination with the eternal city.⁵⁷⁷

Egbert's familiarity with the history of his diocese and its connections with the Carolingian royal house can be presumed on account of his demonstrated ability to mine every available resources to serve his aggrandizing venture.⁵⁷⁸ This knowledge undoubtedly included Charlemagne's appointment of Alcuin's friend Ricbod to the role of first Archbishop of Trier in 791. Egbert, or his successors, would have encouraged the current ruler, eager to emulate Charlemagne, to nurture a similarly harmonious and beneficial association with Trier. Egbert's ambitions for his diocese possibly involved claiming for himself a revered role as advisor to the ruler. Did Egbert anticipate Henry's successful deposition of the child king in the mid 980's, or was he eagerly attempting to minimize the damage of his ill-advised support of the Bavarian Duke's campaign, and desperate to proclaim his allegiance to the young Otto III?

The ruling family's successful exploitation of the Carolingian past trickled down to an ambitious elite, who witnessed first hand the effectiveness of this strategy. Those fortunate enough to be in charge of the oldest monastic foundations, and dioceses, had ready access to the local repositories where some of these Carolingian objects were

⁵⁷⁷ This allegiance to the ruler does not seem to have extended to Otto III's sister, Sophia, the abbess of Gandersheim with whom he had an ongoing rivalry which according to Cohen and Derbes (Hildesheim) played a pivotal role in the iconography and design of the bronze doors, and the vilification of Eve. We may ponder whether Bernward would have triumphed over Sophia and claimed Gandersheim had Otto III lived longer.

⁵⁷⁸ Head, Artifice.

housed. Egbert belonged to this privileged few, as did the powerful church leaders in Cologne, Mainz, Hildesheim, etc. and could hardly claim a monopoly on this practice of appropriation, although he was most advantageously positioned in a location that undeniably boasted strong and lasting ties with the Carolingian dynasty.

Chapter 2 traced the development of christomimetic kingship in the last decade of the eighth century and its indebtedness to Alcuin's rhetoric of power as it applied specifically to Charlemagne, cast as the divinely chosen leader of the Christian peoples, providentially assembled under his rule. This formulation owed much to the need to respond to unexpected political circumstances, opportunistically harnessed by the Frankish elite under Alcuin's guidance, or at least so Alcuin hoped. This Christ-centered conception of earthly power, cast in the anxious belief in the impending Day of Judgment, resonated in the Ottonian era, at the dawn of a new millennium. The addition of an enthroned figure to the Trier codex resonates in light of its simultaneous demonstration of allegiance to the current regime and loyalty to the Ottonian leader of the people of God, while evincing one's devotion to the King of Kings and future Judge of humanity.

The manuscript's Ottonian patron, here hypothesized to be a high ranking cleric, possibly even Egbert, enhanced this already luxurious Carolingian relic through the addition of a beautiful miniature by one of the great artists of the time, or at least someone closely linked with that artist and his work. The manuscript's connection to Alcuin, and by association Tours, but also Charlemagne, as suggested by its dedication offered rare confirmation of this prestigious pedigree. The addition of the enthroned figure of Christ, with whom Ottonian rulers so closely identified, as attested in the

Liuthard Gospels, inscribed the Trier codex further into the contemporary discourse on power and legitimacy. Trier 23's Ottonian patron emerges as more than a witness to this construct. He is a supporter, an aspiring participant, seeking to cast himself in the role of the new Alcuin, the trusted friend, advisor but also beneficiary of Charlemagne's support and generosity. Alcuin's appointment as abbot of St. Martin demonstrated Charles' trust and confidence that his friend would care for the precious relics of one of the greatest Frankish saints. As seen in Chapter 2, if performed poorly, this task could have catastrophic repercussions, including the withdrawal of divine support and the potential downfall of the Carolingian dynasty.

Trier 23, thus enhanced, could be displayed on the occasion of a royal or imperial visit not only as a prestigious relic of the Carolingian past, but as an active participatory tool of imperial aggrandizement, effectively demonstrating its current owner's allegiance to the Ottonian dynasty. The codex could uniquely operate as mediator between its ambitious custodian and its imperial viewer, casting them as the modern embodiments of Alcuin and Charlemagne.

CONCLUSION

TRIER 23: A GIFT FIT FOR A KING

The identification of the Trier manuscript as the gift referenced in the dedication poem has here been attempted. The objections to this identification presented in Chapter 1 have been if not dispelled, at least undermined by this dissertation's systematic investigation of the manuscript's various textual and ornamental components as well as its most plausible political and ideological context of creation in the closing years of the eighth century. Alcuin's projected ambitions for the Frankish ruler at a time of political turmoil and shifts in world order allowed for his formulation of *Imperium Christianum* to evolve, and drove his resolve to help fashion a king wholly engaged in *imitatio Christi*. This concept greatly aggrandized the Frankish ruler and his people by inscribing them in the biblical narrative of universal history while simultaneously demanding of Charlemagne that he uphold good judgment, wisdom and mercy and hear the advice and admonitions of his closest advisors. These circumstances, concerns and aspirations are reflected in the design and contents of the Trier codex.

Reductive and anachronistic assumptions pertaining to Charlemagne's exclusive enjoyment of classicizing styles and predilection for the most ostentatious displays of luxury have been problematized. Trier 23's unusual features responsible for much of the

scholarly oversight have provided the very clues necessary to decipher its purpose and likely place of origin, in Echternach or nearby Trier, an area long connected to the Carolingian dynasty and also dear to Alcuin. As such it is likely that the manuscript travelled very little in its 1200-year existence. The sophisticated layers of meaning generated by the interplay of intentionally redundant texts and “curious” repetitive frontispiece design proclaim the gospels’ harmony and by extension celebrate the Franks as champions of orthodoxy and their king as the leader of the people of God.

As the potential connection between Trier 23’s dedicatory poem and surviving epistolary evidence between Alcuin and Charles and between Alcuin and his pupils remain unresolved, we should learn to accept that beyond the official, documented exchanges sanctioned by the Carolingian elite and commissioned to record and improve laws, liturgy and Scriptures, and within the networks of exchanges among courtiers and scholars, there circulated a fair number of works intended as gifts of friendship or as tokens of that most elusive of historical commodity, affection. Trier 23 is by no means a ‘modest’ or ‘humble’ or even ‘inferior’ book, in its size, the quality of its parchment, and in the skills of its execution, and as has been proposed, we should read the formulaic and ultimately self-aggrandizing reliance on the humility and unworthiness tropes with caution. They are veiled admonitions rooted in biblical and classical references and anticipate specific responses, which resonate in contemporary political discourse.

The manuscript’s later medieval reception confirmed that in the eyes of the Ottonian elite, Trier 23 was not just an acceptable, but also a desirable embodiment of Carolingian achievement. This dissertation has endeavored to demonstrate that the Gospels of Sta. Maria ad Martyres deserve to be celebrated as a distinct creation, attesting

to its patron's concerns and demonstrating the scribe's careful planning and execution. Its design and contents evince an intricate engagement with political and ideological concerns of the time and reveal Alcuin's complex relationship with Charlemagne.

FIGURES

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ABBREVIATIONS:

CCSL = Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina

CCCM = Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis

PL = Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Latina. Paris: J.P. Migne, 1878-1890.

MGH = Monumenta Germaniae Historica

- Epp. = Epistolae
- EKA = Epistolae Karolini aevi
- Antiq. = Antiquitates
- PLAC = Poetae Latini aevi Carolini
- SS Rer. Germ. = Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum
separatim editi
- Conc. = Concilia
- Suppl. = Supplementum

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- , *De Fide Sanctae Et Individuae Trinitatis Libri Tres*. PL 101: 0009-0064A.
- , *De Vita Sancti Willibrordi Trajectensis Episcopi Libri Duo*. PL 101: 0693-0724C.

- , *De Incarnatione Christi Et De Duabus In Eo Naturis Libelli Duo*. PL 101: 0271-0300A.
- , *De Virtutibus Et Vitiis Liber Ad Widonem Comitem*. PL 101: 0631-0638D.
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APPENDIX

MANUSCRIPT DESCRIPTION

Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Cod. 23 (122a/b)
[Gospels of S. Maria ad Martyres]

Binding: Oak covers, dendochronologically dated to 1177, one tree was used for both front covers and another for both back covers. Both front covers feature a central rectangular recessed area measuring 17.5 x 11.0 cm for Volume I and 17.2 x 11.0 cm for Volume II indicating the likely presence of an elaborate cover featuring ivory plaques. Regular gathering of eight folios, marked with a large capital letter on the back of the last leaf, starting with "C" on fol. 24v., switching to Roman numerals at the end of the second volume. First two gatherings not marked, but 1-8 and 9-16 are also regular quaternions.

Volume I: 112 pages [30.5cm x 21.5cm]

Opens with one sheet of paper.

- 0r: fly leaf with 15th century script
1r: in 15th century script note from priest from St. Peter in Bitburg, 1471
1v-4v: *Interpretatio* with plain initial "H", indented left
"Habraham pater multar gentium..."
line 18: "Spiritualiter In abraham....." beginning of part 2 of the commentary, slightly enlarged initial "S"
3r: bottom: "Moraliter haequaue In cepretationes nominu..." beginning of part 3 of the commentary with plain, enlarged initial "M" in the margin, occupying three lines of text.
4v: End of hebrew names, ten-line dedication poem "Suscipe rex" 10 lines, with initials in margin
5r: *Epistola beatissimo papae Damaso*, with decorated uncial "B" initial (12.0 x 7.5 cm) featuring bands of simplified ribbon interlace and topped by a simplified knot capital. Bowl of the letter occupied by intersecting overlapping circles clearly constructed with a compass. INCIPIT EPISTOLA BEATISSIMO PAPAE DA appear next to the initial to complete the text block. Reddish capitals highlighted with darker red, purplish shading, and a spot of blue in the first P of PAPAE.
6v: line2 INCIPIT PROLOGUS with decorated initial "P" (5.0 cm), *Plures fuisse*. The vertical stem of the initial, contains a simple undulating design, ending in a bird head with clear round eye, holding a stylized vegetal sprig in its beak. Additional vegetation emerges on the far right edge of the bow protruding slightly outward, LV initials, slightly enlarges located in top part of the bow.
7v: bottom: EXPLICIT PROLOGUS
8r: Initial "M" (4.5 x 2.5 cm) Matheus exuiudea. Triads of round protrusions

(buds?) on either side of vertical stem, delicate pairs of vegetal volutes mirror each other at the foot of the letter and sprouting from the middle of the diagonal sections, green and yellow.

- 8v: EXPLICIT PROLOGUS EUSEBBIUS CARPIANO, plain initial A, (3.0 x 3.2 cm) Ammonius quidem
- 9r: line14: HIERONIMUS DAMASO PAPAE, initial S, (4.c x 2.0 cm)
Sciendum etiam, use of compass, addition of vegetation volutes almost forming a figure 8.
- 9v: EXPLICIT PROLOGUS, Matheus e sacro poem each opening letter filled with alternating highlight in red, green or yellow.
- 10r: end of poem (with Luke and John), rest of page left blank.
- 10v-18r: Canon Tables, m-type, with elaborate collection of decorative motifs, alternating with each opening, featuring bird heads, foliage, ribbons, simple interlace and knots in bases, capitals and intermediary decorative section in the middle of the column shafts.
- 10v-11r: Canon I
- 11v: Canon I
- 12r: Canon II
- 12v-13v: Canon II
- 14r: Canon III
- 14v: Canon IIII
- 15r: Canon V
- 15v: Canon VI
- 16r: Canon VI & Canon VII
- 16v: Canon VIII & Canon VIII
- 17r: Canon X Mt
- 17V: Canon X Mk, Lk
- 18r: Canon X Jn
- 18v: Blank
- 19r: Blank with two holes
- 19v: *Incipiunt capitulae* [evangelium secundum Matthaum], large initial, intertwined IN with smaller ci on blank background, dog head capital for I, and snake headed terminal, central disk with cross pattern, combination of complementarily colored bands of stylized vegetation, loose ribbon and simplified knots, red, green, yellow, blue.
- 22r: end of chapter lists
- 22v: Maiestas Domini, Ottonian addition, Christ enthroned with circular footstool, four evangelist symbols in corners.
- 23r: Blank
- 23v: Matthew frontispiece with Christ under and arch over a central frame with text: "Incipit Evangelii secundum Mathevm", at each corner medallions with haloed evangelists symbols holding books, frame combines vegetation and simplified interlace motifs. Large vegetal volutes protrude from side of frame, red, green, blue, yellow. Christ in red tunic with large rectangular jeweled brooch.

- 24r: L initial, Liber Generationis. Combination of interlace, lose knots, tiles in similar color scheme.
- 24v: Quire mark “c”
- 32v: Quire mark “d”
- 40v: Quire mark “e”
- 48v: Quire mark “F”
- 56v: Quire mark “G”
- 64v: Quire mark “H”
- 72v: Quire mark “I”
- 75 r: *Explicit evangelium secundum Matthaem*
- 75v: INCIPIT PROLOGUS SECUN DUM MARCU, in large capital letters over five lines, red, green, yellow, on blank background, covering the entire page
- 76r: Initial M with large A and R under the two diagonal strokes of the initial, facing beast head spitting foliated vegetation as capitals, interlace and vegetal motifs in contrasting and complementary bands, Marcus evangelis..., first line in captals with letters colored in, then regular script size.
- 77r: *Explicit prologus secundum Marcum*
- 79v: Mark frontispiece, text: “*Incipit evangelium secundum Marcum*”
- 80r: Initial I, interlace, tile capital, foliated terminal, capital letter of alternating colors over eight lines, the first three larger, red, green, yellow, blue.
- 80v: Quire mark “K”
- 88v: Quire mark “L”
- 96v: Quire mark “M”
- 104v: Quire mark “N”
- 112r: Explicit evangelium secundum Marcum
- 112v: document script of the early 13th century, treasury inventory of a church. Tax and tithe list of Church of St. Peter in Bitburg, and other places nearby. On the back guard page two pen trials from the 11th century. Quire mark “O”

Volume II: 121 pages [30.5cm x 22.5cm]

- 1r: blank
- 1v: Initial L, Incipit argumentum Lucas, enlarged top section encased in figure eights, vertical stem combines various types of rosettes, simple horizontal bar, lose ribbon knot, red, yellow, green, blue.
- 2v: *Incipiunt capitulae secundum Lucam*
- 5r: INCIPIT EVANGLIUM SECUNDU LUCAM with foliated border at the bottom, in capital letters some partially filled with color.
- 5v: Luke frontispiece with text: “*secundum Luca*”
- 6r: Initial Q, *Quoniam quidem multi*, in capital letters of alternating color,

- Initial combines zigzag patterns, stylized vegetal, knotwork, interlace and bird head motifs. Bow occupied by a pinwheel formation with four groups of three inward facing birds holding twigs, lose knots.
- 10v: Quire mark "P"
- 18v: Quire mark "q"
- 33v: Quire mark "S"
- 41v: Quire mark "T"
- 49v: Quire mark "V"
- 57v: Quire mark "X"
- 59v: EXPLICIT EVVAGELU SECUNDU Lucam in capital letters of alternating colors
- 60r: IH ligature, INCIPIT PROLOGUS SECUND IOHANN, snake terminal, arrangement of various interlace, knots and geometric patters with large capitals
- 61r: *Incipit capitula eiusdem*
- 62v: John frontispiece, text; "*initium sci Evvangelii secvndv Iohanne*"
- 63r: Ligature IN, PRINCIPIO ERAT VERBU in alternating colors, oversized capitals, with tile or cloisonné type design, varied zigzag, interlace and cross motifs, snake head terminal.
- 83v: Quire mark "I"
- 91v: Quire mark "II"
- 99v: Quire mark "III"
- 103v: end of John's gospel
- 104r: *Incipit capitulare evangleiorum de anni circuli*
- 106v: Quire mark "III"
- 114v: Quire mark "V"
- 119r: end of the capitulare
- 119v-120v: Brief statements regarding the dedication of 12 altars, inauguration of the high altar in 1017 by Archbishop Poppo, with a garment of Mary (de veste s. Maria virginis) and other relics as well as new dedication of the St. Stephen altar (1438), St. Benedict Altar (1209), Holy Cross altar (1209), Holy Trinity altar (1258), St. Michael altar (1209), All saints altar "in infirmaria" (1458), of St. Barbara altar "in ista capella" (1468), oratorium s. Clementis (1251), oratorium beatae Mariae Magdalenae (1209). Written after 1468.