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978-0-521-09051-3 - Cultural Interplay in the Eighth Century: The Trier Gospels and the Making of a Scriptorium at Echternach

Nancy Netzer

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This is the first detailed study of the Trier Gospels, an important early medieval manuscript. Through an investigation of its production, Professor Netzer reveals the cross-cultural influences among the Insular, Continental, and Mediterranean worlds in the eighth century, demonstrating in particular the complicated process of cultural interplay that took place in the scriptorium at Echternach. She traces the history of the production of the manuscript through a detailed analysis of its components: the individual texts, construction and arrangement of gatherings, scripts, ornamental initials, canon tables, and illustrations. She sheds light on the manuscript's sources, on the different backgrounds of the two scribe-artists involved in its production, on the influences which determined the size and layout of the codex, the role of the pictures within the book, and the place of the manuscript in the development of Insular and Continental book production. This study makes a significant contribution to the understanding of early medieval book production and of the influence of missionaries from the British Isles on early Continental culture.

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*The Trier Gospels and the making of a
scriptorium at Echternach*

NANCY NETZER

*Associate Professor of Fine Arts,
Boston College*



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*To Bob
and
to Edith and Lee*

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Born from a desire to probe the process of artistic cross-fertilization among various early medieval cultures ranging from the Mediterranean to Ireland, the present study focuses on a single manuscript, the Trier Gospels, that uniquely epitomizes the problem of cultural interplay in the eighth century. For the opportunity to work on this most precious manuscript belonging to the cathedral at Trier, I extend special thanks to Franz Ronig, who encouraged me to undertake the study, made the book available to me for extended periods, and allowed me to photograph it, and to Martin Persch and Alois Thomas who permitted me to use the Bistums Archiv in Trier as a study.

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