

# NOMINATION FORM

## PART A - ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

### Abstract

The book decoration of the monastery of Reichenau, situated on an island in the Lake Constance, epitomizes book illustration of the Ottonian period in Germany. Even though other important centres existed alongside the Reichenau, hardly any other works of art have formed the image of Ottonian art as much as the miniatures which originated there. After the decline of the Carolingian Empire, political consolidation, the renewal of the idea of the empire and the reform of the church all contributed to a period of cultural rise. During the Ottonian period, German book illustration achieved artistic pre-eminence in Europe for the first time. With sponsorship by the Emperor and influential imperial bishops, the great churches of the empire were provided with priceless equipment and choice manuscripts. The intense intellectual, cultural and religious climate inspired artistic masterpieces. Thanks to commissions from important bishops and the Emperor, the Reichenau had a substantial share in this. The book illustrations reflect the spirituality of the time, and their ambitions can be inferred from the models which the new art was based on: paintings from Late Antiquity, the Carolingian period and Byzantium. Yet their intention was not imitation, but creative new design.

As one of its outstanding achievements, the book illustration from the Reichenau developed expansive cycles of miniatures on the life of Christ, which were to influence the art of subsequent centuries. Furthermore, the portraits of emperors, which were integrated into the liturgical manuscripts, have received special recognition as works of art and historical sources of the first rank. They express the view of the ruler as protector of the church who was installed by God himself. By adding the ruler's portrait to the book, both his support of the church and his inclusion into prayer are captured visually.

### 1. Identity and Location

#### 1.1 Name of documentary heritage

Illuminated manuscripts from the Ottonian period produced in the monastery of Reichenau (Lake Constance)

#### 1.2 Country

Germany

#### 1.3 State, province or region

Euregio Lake Constance

#### 1.4 Address

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek  
Ludwigstraße 16  
80539 München  
Telefon: ++49 89 28638-2256  
Fax: ++49 89 28638-2266  
email: [direktion@bsb-muenchen.de](mailto:direktion@bsb-muenchen.de)  
URL: <http://www.bsb-muenchen.de/>

## **1.5 Name of organization or institution (if appropriate)**

Bavarian State Library, Munich

on behalf of the German institutions holding eight manuscripts (A, B, C, E, F, G, H, J). The consent of the German owners has been granted. The Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, and the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Cividale del Friuli holding the remaining two manuscripts (D, I) have been contacted for their consent.

## **2. Legal Information**

### **2.1 Owner (name and contact details)**

Bavarian State Library, Munich (as above 1.4)

### **2.2 Custodian (name and contact details)**

Dr. Hermann Leskien (contact details as above 1.4)

### **2.3 Legal status**

#### **(a) category of ownership**

public

#### **(b) details of legal and administrative provisions for the preservation of the documentary heritage**

The manuscripts are preserved as part of the holdings of public libraries in Munich, Bamberg, Darmstadt, Trier and Paris, as well as the cathedral treasury at Aachen and the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Cividale del Friuli. They are kept in an especially secure and controlled environment.

#### **(c) accessibility**

Public access to the manuscripts is restricted to scholars with a justified research interest (codicologists, art historians) and upon application to the holding institutions only. If access for research is granted, the manuscripts can only be consulted on the premises of the institution in question. On rare occasions, the manuscripts are displayed in exhibitions to the general public.

#### **(d) copyright status**

The copyright of the manuscripts is held by the custodial institution.

## **2.4 Responsible administration**

### **(a) details should be given of the mechanism or organization already established, or to be established, to ensure the proper management of the documentary heritage**

Safekeeping and handling of the manuscripts are the responsibility of trained staff of the custodial institutions, normally the department of manuscripts (with exception of A and D), where appropriate managerial procedures for the preservation of and the access to the heritage in custody have been established.

## **3. Identification**

### **3.1 Description and inventory**

A) Vellum manuscript of c. 996 A.D. 256 leaves measuring 298 × 215 mm.

Text: Latin Book of Gospels

Illumination: Canon tables and 31 full-page miniatures, depicting the dedicating monk Liuthar on the page facing the apotheosis of emperor Otto (III), the four

evangelists, four decorated initials and 21 illustrations of the gospels. Most miniatures are damaged and have been reworked in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Binding: Modern.

- B) Vellum manuscript of c. 1000 A.D. 88 leaves measuring 249 × 187 mm.  
Text: Commentaries on selected books from the Old Testament (Canticles, Proverbs, Daniel), with Old High German glosses and an Old English letter by Cuthbert.  
Illumination: 2 double-page miniatures, one each at the beginning of Canticles and Daniel, depicting on the verso the baptized and Ecclesia and the dream of Nebuchadnezzar respectively, on the recto a historical initial with Christ and Daniel. Headings and first and last letters of verses written in gold.  
Binding: Seventeenth-century pigskin with armorial stamps.
- C) Vellum manuscript of c. 1001-10 A.D. 106 leaves measuring 295 × 205 mm.  
Text: Apocalypse and gospel lectionary  
Illumination: 57 miniatures, of which 34 are full-page, including 50 illustrations to the Apocalypse, a portrait of an enthroned emperor faced by a page depicting the triumph of virtues over vices, and five christological images in the gospel lectionary.  
Binding: Modern; only a large-format agate stone from the original binding has been preserved, which is today kept in the Schatzkammer of the Munich Residence.
- D) Vellum manuscript of c. 980 A.D. 233 leaves measuring 238 × 188 mm.  
Text: Psalter  
Illumination: 19 full-page miniatures depicting the dedication of the book by monk Ruodprecht to archbishop Egbert of Trier and by the latter to saint Peter the Apostle. One miniature depicting David composing the psalms and 14 portraits of bishops and archbishops of Trier (predecessors of Egbert) faced by 15 pages with ornamented initials. 5 more miniatures were added in Kiev in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century.  
Binding: Modern.
- E) Vellum manuscript of c. 965-76 A.D. 176 leaves measuring 297 × 222 mm.  
Text: Gospel lectionary  
Illumination: 7 full-page miniatures depicting the evangelists, the maiestas Domini, the dedication of the book by the scribe Anno to Gero and by the latter to saint Peter the Apostle. Facing pages with verses within an ornamental frame.  
Binding: Early medieval leather binding, ivory plate removed; restored.
- F) Vellum manuscript of c. 1007-12 A.D. 206 leaves measuring 425 × 320 mm.  
Text: Gospel lectionary  
Illumination: 28 full-page miniatures, including a dedication scene depicting emperor Heinrich II and his wife Kunigunde being crowned by Christ, portraits of the evangelists and illustrations to the gospels as well as pages with decorated initials.  
Binding: Contemporary metal-covered binding. Upper cover decorated with gold-framed Carolingian ivory relief of the crucifixion; lower cover: silver, partly gilt.
- G) Vellum manuscript of c. 998-1001 A.D. 278 leaves measuring 334 × 242 mm.  
Text: Latin Book of Gospels

Illumination: Canon tables and 34 full-page miniatures, including the portrait of an enthroned emperor (Otto III) faced by a page depicting four provinces paying homage to him, four miniatures depicting the evangelists faced by pages with ornamented initials, and 29 scenes from the New Testament.

Binding: Contemporary gold binding Upper cover decorated with a Byzantine ivory panel depicting the death of Mary and with 188 jewels.

- H) Vellum manuscript of c. 1000-20 A.D. 266 leaves measuring 305 × 233 mm.  
Text: Latin Book of Gospels  
Illumination: Canon tables and five full-page miniatures depicting Christ and the evangelists faced by pages with ornamented initials.  
Binding: Contemporary gold binding with jewels.
- I) Vellum manuscript of c. 980 A.D. 133 leaves measuring 285 × 205 mm.  
Text: Gospel lectionary  
Illumination: 13 full-page miniatures including a double-page dedication scene depicting an unidentified cleric presenting the book to Christ. Four miniatures depicting the evangelists and 7 scenes from the New Testament. 16 pages with ornamented initials.  
Binding: Gold binding, second quarter of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, added in the abbey of Poussay. Upper cover decorated with a Byzantine ivory panel (ca. 1000 A.D.) surrounded by reliefs from gold. Lower cover: engraved silver.
- J) Vellum manuscript of c. 977-93 A.D. 165 leaves measuring 270 × 210 mm.  
Text: Gospel lectionary  
Illumination: 60 decorated pages, including 8 full-page miniatures depicting archbishop Egbert and the four evangelists, a page with a decorated initial, and 51 illustrations to the gospels, the earliest cycle of this kind.  
Binding: Modern.

### 3.2 Bibliographic/Registration details

- A) Aachen, Domschatz: Evangeliar Ottos III.
- B) Bamberg, SB, Msc. Bibl. 22
- C) Bamberg, SB, Msc. Bibl. 140: Bamberger Apokalypse (und Evangelistar)
- D) Cividale del Friuli, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Ms. 136: Psalterium Egberti
- E) Darmstadt, Hess. Landesbibliothek, Cod. 1948: Gero-Codex (Evangelistar)
- F) München, BSB, Clm 4452: Perikopenbuch Heinrichs II.
- G) München, BSB, Clm 4453: Evangeliar Ottos III.
- H) München, BSB, Clm 4454: Evangeliar aus dem Bamberger Dom
- I) Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. lat. 10514: Évangélaire de Poussay
- J) Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Cod. 24: Codex Egberti (Evangelistar)

### 3.3 Visual documentation, if appropriate (for example, photographs or a video of the documentary heritage)

Full colour facsimiles with commentary exist of manuscripts C, D, F, G and J. Of manuscripts A, B, E and H, only the illuminated pages have been reproduced in the publications listed. Of manuscript I, only reproductions of individual pages have been published. Three manuscripts are available in full electronic facsimile on CD-ROM (see enclosures).

- A) Ernst Günther Grimme, *Das Evangeliar Kaiser Ottos III. im Domschatz zu Aachen*. Freiburg / Basel / Wien: Herder, 1984. 36 colour plates.
- B) *Mittelalterliche Miniaturen aus der Staatlichen Bibliothek Bamberg*, hrsg. von der Bibliotheksverwaltung. Mit einer Einl. von Hans Fischer. Bd. 1. Bamberg : Buchner 1926, Taf. 3-7.
- C) *Die Bamberger Apokalypse*. Luzern : Faksimile-Verlag 2000. [full facsimile]  
*Die Bamberger Apokalypse: Staatsbibliothek Bamberg (Msc.Bibl.140)*. Berlin : Dt. Historisches Museum ; Bamberg : Staatsbibliothek Bamberg, 2002. [full electronic facsimile on CD-ROM]
- D) *Psalterium Egberti*. Facsimile del ms. CXXXVI del Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Cividale del Friuli, a cura di Claudio Barberi. [Roma] : Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, 2000. [full facsimile]
- E) *Die Miniaturen des Gerokodex : ein Reichenauer Evangelistar des 10. Jahrhunderts*. Handschrift 1948 der Landesbibliothek zu Darmstadt, mit Einleitung von Adolf Schmidt. Leipzig : Hiersemann, 1924 (Bilderhandschriften der Landesbibliothek zu Darmstadt 1). 10 colour and 28 black and white illustrations.
- F) *Das Perikopenbuch Heinrichs II. : Clm 4452 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*. Faksimile-Ausgabe. Frankfurt am Main : Fischer 1994. [full facsimile]  
*Das Perikopenbuch Kaiser Heinrichs II.: eine Handschrift zum Blättern; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, Clm 4452*. Augsburg : Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, 2002. [full electronic facsimile on CD-ROM]
- G) *Das Evangeliar Ottos III. Clm 4453 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*. Faksimile-Ausgabe. Begleitband mit Beiträgen von Fridolin Dreßler, Florentine Mütterich, Helmut Beumann. Transkription, Übersetzung der Evangelien. Frankfurt a.M. / München etc. : Fischer / Hirmer, 1977 and 1978. [full facsimile]  
*Das Evangeliar Kaiser Ottos III.: eine Handschrift zum Blättern; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, Clm 4453*. Augsburg : Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, 2002. [full electronic facsimile on CD-ROM]
- H) *Evangeliarium aus dem Domschatze zu Bamberg : (Cod. lat. 4454)*, hrsg. von Georg Leidinger. München : Riehn & Reusch, 1920 (Miniaturen aus Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München 6). 1 colour and 22 black and white illustrations.
- I) François Avril, *Claudia Rabel: Manuscrits enluminés d'origine germanique*. Vol. 1. X<sup>e</sup>-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Paris : Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1995, no. 82. 1 colour plate and 3 black-and-white illustrations.
- J) *Codex Egberti der Stadtbibliothek Trier*, hrsg. von Hubert Schiel. - Voll-Faksimile-Ausgabe Basel : Alkuin-Verlag 1960. [full facsimile]  
*Codex Egberti : Teilfaksimile-Ausgabe des Ms. 24 der Stadtbibliothek Trier*, hrsg. von Gunther Franz und Franz J. Ronig. Wiesbaden: Reichert 1983.

### 3.4 History

#### Origin:

The manuscripts were produced in the scriptorium of the Benedictine monastery of Reichenau (Lake Constance) between c. 965 and 1020. With the exception of manuscripts D, E and J, which represent the earlier period, the manuscripts selected were produced during the high period of the workshop and are the most outstanding examples of the Ottonian art of illumination.

Several manuscripts contain dedication scenes which document the close association of the workshop with the Ottonian emperors or members of their court. Even though the individual persons depicted cannot always be identified with certainty, it is clear that the gospel-books A and G were made for emperor Otto III (983-1002) and manuscript F for his successor Heinrich II (1002-1024), who donated F and G to the cathedral of Bamberg (Franconia) on the occasion of his founding of the bishopric in 1007. Manuscript C also shows a portrait of an emperor and was kept in Bamberg from a very early date, as was manuscript H.

In three further manuscripts, prominent clerics of the Ottonian period are shown as sponsors and recipients: in E, Gero, later archbishop of Cologne (969-976), is portrayed; D and J contain images of Egbert, archbishop of Trier (977-993). The evangels and the Psalter, which were intended for liturgical use in churches, thus show the close imperial associations of the high clergy, a characteristic feature of Ottonian reign.

#### Later history:

Over a period of 1000 years, the books remained in close proximity to the institutions they were designed for. Manuscripts B, C, F, G and H were preserved in the treasury of Bamberg cathedral until the secularization of 1803, when the Elector of Bavaria handed them over to the Court Library at Munich (now State Library of Bavaria); only manuscripts B and C stayed in Bamberg. Apart from a brief period of alienation, manuscript A remained in the cathedral treasury of Aachen. Manuscript E was originally intended for a church in Cologne, but probably came to Darmstadt from a Westphalian monastery. Manuscript D was originally intended for the cathedral church of Saint Peter in Trier, but soon came into possession of a member of the Saxon imperial family and later by way of inheritance to Kiev, from where it travelled via Poland to Zwiefalten and Andechs before it was given by Saint Elisabeth of Thuringia or by her uncle to the cathedral church of Cividale in 1229. After the secularization, the Codex Egberti (J) migrated from Trier cathedral via the monastery of St. Paulin to the city library in 1810. Manuscript I was preserved in Poussay already in the 11<sup>th</sup> century; after the French Revolution, it passed to the Bibliothèque Royale via the municipal library of Mirecourt.

### 3.5 Bibliography

Hartmut Hoffmann, *Buchkunst und Königtum im ottonischen und frühsalischen Reich*. Stuttgart : Hiersemann 1986. (Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica <München> 30).

Henry Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian book illumination : an historical study*. 2 vols. London : Harvey Miller, 1991.

### **3.6 Names, qualifications and contact details of independent people or organizations with expert knowledge about the values and provenance of the documentary heritage**

Dr. Christopher de Hamel, Fellow Librarian, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge CB2 1RH

(formerly Director of Department of Western Medieval and Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures, Sotheby's, London; specialist in medieval illuminated manuscripts)

Prof. Dr. Rainer Kahsnitz, Herzogstr. 58, 80803 München

(Hon. Prof. emeritus, University of Augsburg; formerly Chief Conservator of the Bavarian National Museum, Munich; specialist in the history of medieval art)

Prof. Dr. Florentine Mütterich, Bauerstr. 12, 80796 München

(Hon. Prof. emerita, University of Munich; specialist in art history and illuminated manuscripts of the earlier Middle Ages)

## **4. Assessment against the Selection Criteria**

### **4.1 Assessment of the documentary heritage against each criterion described in General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage, Chapter 4, Section 4.**

#### **Criterion 1-Influence:**

Manuscripts of unique historical and material value due to their outstanding quality and importance as works of art and their close association with two medieval German emperors.

#### **Criterion 2-Time:**

Written and illuminated around the year **1000**, the manuscripts combine traditions of liturgical books and their artistic decoration which developed during the Carolingian period with influences from Late Antiquity and Byzantium. The iconographic tradition developed here forms the basis of the medieval Romanesque manuscript illumination.

#### **Criterion 3-Place:**

The manuscripts represent a selection of the most important surviving examples from the school of manuscript illumination in the Benedictine monastery of **Reichenau** during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. Their history is closely connected with the coronation church at **Aachen** and the bishoprics of **Bamberg**, **Cologne** and **Trier** to which the books were given for liturgical use.

#### **Criterion 4-People:**

The manuscripts were produced for the Ottonian emperors and members of their court. The full-page portrait of **Emperor Otto III** is the artistic highlight of manuscript G; the miniature has been interpreted as a representation of Otto's political agenda, which was based on the revival of the idea of Rome as the centre of the Roman Empire. As son of the German Emperor Otto II and the Greek princess Theophanu, Otto III embodied the merging of Western and Eastern traditions which are reflected in the manuscript's treatment of classical and Byzantine Art.

**Emperor Heinrich II**, who is shown together with his wife in a coronation scene in manuscript F, endowed his newly founded bishopric at Bamberg with several

manuscripts (including F, G, H), the books thus symbolize the religious foundations of medieval rule and the strong ties between the emperor and the church.

**Criterion 5-Subject/Theme:**

The manuscripts contain different versions of Jerome's Latin translation of the **gospels**, a text at the very centre of medieval Western culture. From the time of its standardization under Charlemagne until the Second Vatican Council, the Latin Book of Gospels formed an integral part of the Roman Catholic mass.

The full text of the four gospels is transmitted in manuscripts A, G and H, whereas manuscripts C, E, F, I and J present only those passages from the gospels which are read during mass (pericopes) following the order of the church year, a book type which came into existence in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Individual biblical books are transmitted in B and C: manuscript B contains three books from the Old Testament with glosses and manuscript D the Psalter, while C contains the full text of the Revelation of St. John (Apocalypse) in addition to the pericopes.

**Criterion 6-Form and Style:**

The manuscripts are magnificent examples of **Ottonian art** and represent the climax of medieval German manuscript illumination. In addition to portraits of the Emperors, clerical sponsors and the four evangelists, they contain the earliest examples of a narrative pictorial cycle based on the four gospels and the most splendid rendering of the apocalypse in Western medieval art.

**Criterion 7-Social Value:**

The manuscripts represent the very **highest social rank** of medieval book production and ownership. Written for emperors and prominent clerics, the books were not only intended for persons at the centre of medieval political history, but also epitomize the high symbolic value attached to the culture of the book in medieval Christian society.

**Secondary Criterion 1-Integrity:**

Over a period of an entire millennium, the manuscripts have survived numerous political upheavals (ranging from the Peasant's War over the Thirty Years' War to the secularization of monastic houses in Germany and the World Wars of the twentieth century) **complete and without damage** to their historical substance.

**Secondary Criterion 2-Rarity:**

The manuscripts are **unique**.

**4.2 Contextual assessment including an assessment of the importance of a series of documents, the importance of a series of documents in a particular setting, and the assessment against other documentary heritage.**

The manuscripts take pride of place among the books written and illuminated in the monastery of Reichenau during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, 22 of which are today kept in German institutions. Several of the books formed part of the imperial library before they were donated by Emperor Heinrich II to the cathedral of Bamberg together with c. 130 other manuscripts; others were intended for Episcopal libraries from the outset.

Within the context of the modern collections they are kept in today, the manuscripts stand out due to their artistic value and importance for German history.

#### **4.3 an evaluation of the authenticity**

Undisrupted history of ownership.

#### **4.4 an assessment of rarity (if appropriate)**

Unique. The material value of manuscript G has been highlighted by Christopher de Hamel: "In modern monetary term this must be a candidate for the most valuable book in the world" (Christopher de Hamel, A history of illuminated manuscripts. 2. ed., rev., enl. and with new ill. London : Phaidon Press, 1994, p. 60).

#### **5. Management plan - see below Annex 1.**

All manuscripts are in a good state of preservation and in secure condition. In recent years, printed and electronic facsimiles were produced of a number of the manuscripts (see above 3.3). Plans for the digitization of the manuscripts will be developed in the future (management plan to follow).

#### **6. Consultation**

##### **6.1 Details of consultation about the nomination with the**

###### **(a) Owner**

Bavarian State Library (for the Free State of Bavaria)

###### **(b) Custodian**

Dr. Hermann Leskien

###### **(c) relevant Regional or National Memory of the World Committee (if appropriate)**

German

#### **7. Nominator**

##### **7.1 Name**

Dr. Hermann Leskien

##### **7.2 Relationship to documentary heritage**

Custodian

##### **7.3 Contact person (if appropriate)**

##### **7.4 Contact details**

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek  
Ludwigstraße 16  
80539 München  
Telefon: ++49 89 28638-2256  
Fax: ++49 89 28638-2266  
email: [direktion@bsb-muenchen.de](mailto:direktion@bsb-muenchen.de)  
URL: <http://www.bsb-muenchen.de/>