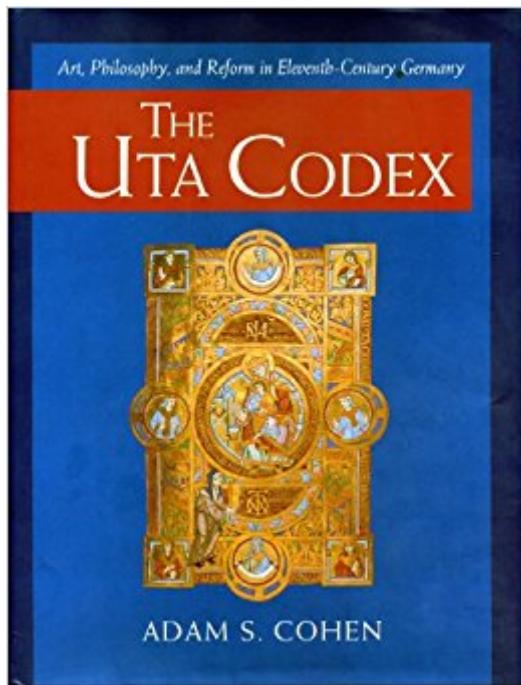


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The Uta Codex: Art, Philosophy, And Reform In Eleventh-Century Germany



Synopsis

Created at the behest of the abbess Uta, it is not only one of the most beautiful of Ottonian manuscripts but also one of the most complex. The collection of liturgical readings is preceded by four full-page frontispieces illustrating the Hand of God, Uta dedicating the codex to the Virgin and Child, a Crucifixion, and Saint Erhard (the convent's patron saint) celebrating Mass. Four evangelist portraits accompany the readings from each Gospel. In this groundbreaking study, Adam Cohen provides comprehensive explications of the codex's renowned illuminations as well as the first thorough investigation of its historical context. Cohen shows that the lavish miniatures, among the most elaborate pictures of the Middle Ages, use figures, ornaments, Latin tituli, and geometric schemata to fashion visual exegeses of great range and complexity. Through consideration of questions of function, patronage, and program, Cohen also demonstrates that the codex commemorates the abbess Uta's efforts to reform conventual life and education. The Uta Codex will be of interest to scholars of medieval art as well as those exploring questions of women, monastic culture, and intellectual life in the Middle Ages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This elegantly written and beautiful-produced book examines one of the most astonishing of medieval illuminated manuscripts, the Utta Codex. This Codex is one of the boldest and most intricate of early medieval manuscripts--a sumptuous volume that fully deserves the numerous illustrations and the learned commentary provided by Prof. Cohen. Prof. Cohen's account of the

Codex explores its role in a monastic world undergoing reform. For example, he reveals the ways in which the Codex's illuminations were understood to suggest the place of monasteries and monastic reform in the harmonies of the larger world and universe. Drawing upon medieval images, texts and music theory, Prof. Cohen shows the Utta Codex to have been ambitious not only its illustrations but also in its vision of monasteries and monastic life. In the course of making this point, Prof. Cohen's book touches upon a host of other important and interesting issues, including the construction of memory and female patronage. Particularly intriguing are his suggestions about what may be the earliest known illustration of the "horned Moses." In short, Prof. Cohen provides a very rich account of a very rich work of art.

This just the study everyone should read and delve into who wants to come to an understanding of medieval religious manuscripts. The quality of the argument as well as the quality of the book are just superb.

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