



# Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity

*By Rosamond McKitterick*

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Charlemagne is often claimed as the greatest ruler in Europe before Napoleon. This magisterial study re-examines Charlemagne the ruler and his reputation. It analyses the narrative representations of Charlemagne produced after his death, and thereafter focuses on the evidence from Charlemagne's lifetime concerning the creation of the Carolingian dynasty and the growth of the kingdom, the court and the royal household, communications and identities in the Frankish realm in the context of government, and Charlemagne's religious and cultural strategies. The book offers a critical examination of the contemporary sources and in so doing transforms our understanding of the development of the Carolingian empire, the formation of Carolingian political identity, and the astonishing changes effected throughout Charlemagne's forty-six year period of rule. This is a major contribution to Carolingian history which will be essential reading for anyone interested in the medieval past. Rosamond McKitterick has also received the 2010 Dr A. H. Heineken Prize for History for her research into the Carolingians.

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Review

"Recommended." -Choice

"...magisterial study of this historical figure..." -H-German, Kevin Teo Kia-Choong

"...an important addition to our understanding of the diplomatic and non-diplomatic (linguistic-cultural, religious, social-ethnic) contributions Charlemagne made to medieval European society." -Kevin Teo Kia-Choong, H-German

"this book is a mile-stone in Carolingian scholarship, a critically significant reappraisal of the celebrated emperor and of the impact of his rule, and an achievement which cannot fail to stimulate further work on a number of fronts." -English Historical Review

"In this important book, Rosamond McKitterick undertakes both a historiographical synthesis and, in part, a major reassessment of the era 768-814, the period during which Charlemagne was king of the Franks and emperor of the West." -David S. Bachrach, The International History Review

"This is a laudable book by a leading and prolific scholar of Carolingian Europe." -Timothy P. Newfield, Canadian Journal of History

About the Author

Rosamond McKitterick is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Sidney Sussex College. Her previous publications include *Atlas of the Medieval World* (2003), *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (2004), and *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (2006).

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