



**BYZANTINE INFLUENCES ON WESTERN
ARISTOCRATIC ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS:
THE FÉCAMP PSALTER (MS. THE HAGUE,
KONINKLIJKE BIBLIOTHEEK, 76 F 13)
AND OTHER RELATED WORKS**

JESÚS RODRÍGUEZ VIEJO

PhD Student

Université Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV)

1, rue Victor Cousin, F-75005 Paris

jesus.rodriguez@paris-sorbonne.fr

ABSTRACT

The main subject of this study is an outstanding twelfth-century psalter produced in Normandy which has clear Eastern influences, both in terms of technical conception and iconography. This manuscript, kept in the Royal Library in the Hague with the signature 76 F 13, is certainly related to other preserved examples, produced at the same time in Norman England, such as the Gough Psalter from the Bodleian Library in Oxford. The historical records of these artworks will permit us to shed light on the arrival of these iconographies and techniques of Byzantine origin in the medieval West, where the Abbey of Cluny played a major role, after which they spread throughout the Norman kingdom. Finally, we will devote a part of the research to how these sacred images with Byzantine influences have been appreciated by contemporary Western viewers.

Metadata: Medieval art, Byzantine art, Manuscript illumination, Christian Iconography, Byzantium, Cluny, Ducal Normandy, Norman England

RESUMEN

La principal obra analizada en esta investigación es un salterio del siglo XII de muy alta calidad, producido en Normandía, con claras influencias bizantinas tanto en la iconografía de las escenas como en la concepción técnica de la figuración. Este manuscrito, conservado en la Biblioteca Real de la Haya con la signatura 76 F 13, está relacionado con otros ejemplos de salterios iluminados producidos contemporáneamente en la Inglaterra normanda, como el Salterio Gough de la Biblioteca Bodleiana de Oxford. La documentación histórica sobre estas obras nos permitirá conocer mejor la llegada de iconografías y técnicas de origen bizantino al Occidente medieval, donde la abadía de Cluny desempeñó un papel fundamental, para después ser transmitidas, en nuestro caso, a través del Reino normando. Finalmente, ofreceremos una idea sobre la consideración de esas iconografías de origen bizantino en la mente del espectador medieval contemporáneo.

Metadata: Arte medieval, Arte bizantino, Iluminación, Iconografía cristiana, Cluny, Normandía ducal, Inglaterra normanda

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The main subject of my research is an illuminated manuscript preserved at the Royal Library of The Hague with the signature 76 F 23, produced in the Abbey of Fécamp in Normandy at the end of the twelfth century. The artistic period which we will deal with is roughly that of the Romanesque, and the geographic context is that of the Norman Kingdom in the territories of present-day France and England. This study is intended to shed light on the phenomena of transmission of iconographies and art appreciation. In this way, this analysis will permit us to better understand the way that Byzantine art followed to influence the contemporary medieval Western production, and eventually, the effect that this output, modified in some degree by Byzantium, could have had on the minds of contemporary Latin viewers. Naturally, the main aim of analyzing the state of the art of one topic will require a brief introduction to what has been done in this area, in order to consider our case study and our approach as truly innovative¹. For the art historian devoted

¹ Some of the earliest introductory studies to the subject are: W. Koehler, "Byzantine Art in the West", *DOP* 1 (1941) 61-67; K. Weitzmann, "Various aspects of Byzantine influence on the Latin countries from the Sixth to the Twelfth Century", *DOP* 20 (1966) 1-24; E. Kitzinger, "The Byzantine contribution to Western Art of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries", *ibidem*, 27-47.

to the study of the relationship between the Byzantine East and the artistic production of the medieval West, the duality of research fields has been the main problem to face².

In this double field of study, two authors have made considerable inroads into the relationship between Western medieval art and the Byzantine East. The first scholar to study separately the Byzantine influence outside the borders of the Empire was the British art historian David Talbot Rice (1903-1972). In his work published in 1935, *Byzantine art*, the author devoted a final chapter to the influence of Byzantium in the contemporary West, among the early and medieval Slavonic states, and the Islamic dynasties of the Eastern Mediterranean³. The whole of his analysis then, deals with the shining mosaics of Venice and Norman Sicily, and the wall paintings of Santa Maria Foris Portas near Milan and Sant'Angelo in Formis in Southern Lazio⁴. In this way, the official commissions given to Greek artists on Western European soil, whose records are relatively easy to trace back, are the strong point of Rice's study. His essay's merit is its character of being the very first analysis of the influence of Byzantium over the Latin West, in a very early period of the whole discipline.

The book *Byzantine Art and the West*, published in 1970 by the Austrian art historian Otto Demus (1902-1990) is the most celebrated publication for art

² C. R. Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800-1200*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992; is the most paradigmatic example. The reference to an "Eastern influence" is consistently mentioned, specifying neither artistic periods nor geographic areas.

³ See the reviews by L. H. Dudley Buxton, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 68.2 (1936) 351-352 and by R. W. Thomson, *Speculum* 45.1 (1970) 162-164.

⁴ G. P. Bognetti – G. Cherici – A. Capitani d'Arzago, *Santa Maria di Castelseprio, Milan, Fondazione Treccani*, 1948; K. Weitzmann, *The Fresco Cycle of S. Maria di Castelseprio*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1951.

historians dealing with this comparative approach⁵. The work of the Austrian author is the only monograph that has been published on the topic until this day. It expertly analyzes the Byzantine influence on the West since the end of Late Antiquity up to the spread of Gothic schools of painting throughout Europe. In most cases, when a clear Eastern iconography appears in Western Europe, there is little room to know how that influence arrived there. The analysis of the ties between monastic entities and political powers is the key to understanding this process.

BYZANTINE INFLUENCES ON CLUNY'S MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION

In cultural terms, Western Europe at that time was a land of courts and monasteries. The cultural life was basically a solely religious manifestation and was particularly concentrated in monasteries, spots of religious and political power alike⁶. By the year 1000, there were several royal courts that had replaced the collapsed Carolingian power, but this royal artistic output was a more defined production and cannot be compared to the more widespread activities of hundreds of monastic communities throughout Europe. This Europe of monasteries has been revealed to be the main agent for artistic exchanges between very distant areas. As both Rice and Demus have remarked, the Italian Peninsula played a major historical role as mediator between East and West. Here, Monte Cassino emerged as the dominant

⁵ See the review by Ch. Walter, *REB* 30 (1972) 366-368, and the bibliography collected in "Otto Demus, 1902-1990", *DOP* 45 (1991) 7-11. Other works that he published are *Die Mosaiken von San Marco in Venedig*, Baden bei Wien, R. M. Rohrer, 1939; *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, London, Routledge, 1949; *Die romanische Wandmalerei*, Munich, Hirmer Verlag, 1968.

⁶ For a general overview about the role of monastic institutions in the Middle Ages: J. Paul, *L'Église et la culture en Occident*, vol. 1, Paris, *Presses Universitaires de France*, 1986, 122-155, 256-292. For the Benedictines and the St. Benedict's rule applied to cultural activities: J. G. Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages*, Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2011, 22-26, 191-195; B. Schütz, *Abbayes et monastères d'Europe: histoire, art et architecture*, Paris, Citadelle et Mazenod, 2005.

center of cultural life and was a major point of reception of Byzantine influences from the second half of the ninth century onwards⁷. The cultural excellence of the eleventh-century Abbey of Desiderius represented the peak of the Eastern influence in the area⁸. In the East, the so-called Macedonian Renaissance spread the cultural and artistic influence of Byzantine art beyond the borders of the Empire, and as we have seen before, sometimes in the territory of enemy powers, such as the Normans in Sicily⁹. Demus explained the degree of spread of Byzantine works in the West as recognition of the cultural and artistic importance of Constantinople as a Christian inheritor of the former Roman Empire¹⁰. Even if the scholar added remarkable points of research, such as the relevance of textiles and the works of goldsmiths as vehicles of East-West artistic exchange, he particularly underlined the role of illuminated manuscripts in this cultural interaction¹¹.

These manuscripts were a common product of monastic workshops, but also a versatile vehicle of knowledge and communication between distant groups. In this way, the pictorial character of these books provided

⁷ H. Bloch, "Monte Cassino, Byzantium and the West in the Earlier Middle Ages", *DOP* 3 (1946) 163-224; H. Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1986.

⁸ See n. 31. The original source about his period is provided by the official account of the Abbey, the *Chronicon Cassinense in quatuor libros divisum* (1603), written by the cardinal Leo of Ostia. A contemporary medieval source is to be found in *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis* (1138) by Leone de Marsico and Pierre Diacre.

⁹ J. Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine art*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1993, 240-282; E. Kitzinger, *I mosaici normanni in Sicilia*, Palermo, Accademia Nazionale di Scienze, Lettere e Arti, 1992; E. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic: The Royal Programs in Norman Sicily, 1130-1187*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990.

¹⁰ O. Demus, *Byzantine art* (cit. n. 5), 185-187.

¹¹ For a general introduction to the role played by the manuscript in the Middle Ages: J. Glénisson, *Le Livre au Moyen Âge*, Paris, Éditions du CNRS, 1988, 40-55, 82-108, for monastic production workshops and different manuscript purposes. For the importance of manuscript illumination as transmission of ideas: R. Recht, *Le livre enluminé: l'image médiévale*, Paris, Éditions du CNRS, 2010, 32-45.

an excellent method of artistic exchange. Moreover, religious images were easily interpreted, and were often modified to create different iconographic conceptions. In this way, the artistic output of the Byzantine East could have been appreciated in the West, where it modifies in some way or other its traditional production. If Monte Cassino's scriptorium played a major role in the direct reception of iconographies and Byzantine artistic influences in general, the Abbey of Cluny in Burgundy is believed to have been a major hub for the reception and modeling of these Eastern influences in Western Europe by the year 1000. Subsequently, these influences were transmitted to other minor areas in the monastic geography of Europe. Charles Dodwell stated that Byzantine influences were very relevant at Cluny, which he considered one of the most important centers of Western Christendom¹². Unfortunately, few examples escaped the fires of the French Revolution, and nowadays the knowledge of the Clunian scriptorium is based only on the study of these few illuminated manuscripts that have come down to us¹³. Due to the *damnatio memoriae*, similar to that of Monte Cassino, the research has been mostly confined to historical studies of the scriptorium and the library, and few illuminated manuscripts have been identified as truly Clunian, and thus completely studied.

Nonetheless, two major examples of Clunian manuscripts with clear Byzantine influences have attracted the attention of scholars. Dated around 1100, the lectionary hosted at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris, BnF, Nouv. acq. lat. 2246) is certainly believed to come from the Burgundian abbey and displays some illuminated scenes of very high quality¹⁴. The episode of the "Annunciation" [fig. 1] is one of its most interesting depictions. The

¹² C. R. Dodwell, *The pictorial arts* (cit. n. 2), 216.

¹³ A monographic study has been recently published in the journal *L'art de l'Enluminure* 33 (2010).

¹⁴ G. Cames, "Recherches sur l'enluminure romane de Cluny: Le Lectionnaire Paris, B.N., Nouv. acq. lat. 2246", *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 2 (1964) 145-159.

rich purple garments of the Archangel, featuring goldsmith's work, are clearly influenced by Eastern iconography of imperial portraits. The depiction of these rich surfaces in oriental-like garments is proof that Byzantine iconographic models were used at that time in the Clunian scriptorium¹⁵. However, the figurative character of the depiction is naturalistic, and does not display the hieratism traditionally associated with Byzantine images. On the other hand, the gold leaf is still abundant and is used over a purpled background, a technique dear to Mediterranean aesthetics since ancient times¹⁶.

Instead, other remarkable scenes in the lectionary, such as that of the "Pentecost" [fig. 2], are characterized by the hieratic display of the Apostles situated beneath the half-length figure of the blessing Christ in the air¹⁷. Both the group and the figure of Christ are Eastern products in conception, and in general terms, the divine half-length figure can be considered a Western model of Pantocrator¹⁸. Moreover, the treatment of the draperies in the whole illuminated manuscript is far more elaborate and can be connected with the traditional "wet draperies" technique for depicting fabric surfaces, associated with the so-called Komnenian style, present in mosaics and wall paintings of the Middle Byzantine Empire¹⁹.

Another fascinating example of this Byzantine influence in Cluny is that of the Bible of Souvigny (Moulins, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 1);

¹⁵ For the case of the Virgin Mary and the relationship with the *Basilissa's portrait*: J. Ball, *A Byzantine Dress*, Ph. D. Thesis, New York University, 2001, 19-23.

¹⁶ G. Matthew, *Byzantine aesthetics*, London 1963, 142-161.

¹⁷ K. Künstle, *Ikönographie der Christlichen Kunst*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1928, 517-521.

¹⁸ M. Copsidas, *Le Christ Pantocrator, présence et rencontre*, Paris, Éditions du CERF, 2009, 86-95. The use of the half-figure Christ-God is mainly used in our examples for the scenes of the Seven Days of Creation to represent God in the heaven, and, on the other hand, as a resurrected Messiah in the "Pentecost" scene.

¹⁹ J. Beckwith, *Early Christian* (cit. n. 9), 245-247.

Souvigny being a town in the central landlocked region of Auvergne²⁰. This place was the last haven of St. Maieul (d. 994), a sanctified abbot of Cluny. He apparently brought a precious bible with him. It had been made at his former see and was strongly inspired by a purely Byzantine conception²¹. One of the most interesting scenes is that of the “Creation” [fig. 3]. The half-length figure of God-Christ is displayed in the upper level of this multi-scene, in a similar way to that of the “Pentecost” in the Paris Lectionary seen before. However, the dark brown and blue tones of the depiction, together with its severe appearance and hieratism, show a conception even closer to that of the Eastern Pantocrator when compared to the Paris example. Once again, the gold leaf inundates the background where the figures are depicted. In both cases, Cluny’s illuminators used a Byzantine model to create an outstanding artwork, both in terms of iconography and pictorial style. The importance of the Burgundian abbey’s manuscript illumination spread throughout the different duchies of *Francia* from the eleventh century onwards. This irradiation from the main monastic reference of Western Europe can be looked on as a trend, and it continued to minor ecclesiastical entities by way of traditional interactions between sees (economic and diplomatic exchanges, brand-new appointed abbots) and also due to the massive flock of Clunian monks to old communities in order to start the Reform²².

It is possible to believe that those monks and high ecclesiastical figures carried with them illuminated manuscripts produced in Cluny, which could

²⁰ W. Cahn, *The Souvigny Bible. A study in Romanesque Manuscript Illumination*, Ph.D. Thesis, New York University, 1967.

²¹ J.- H. Pignot, *Histoire de l’Ordre de Cluny depuis la fondation de l’abbaye jusqu’à la mort de Pierre le Vénérable*, Paris 1868, 258.

²² The expansion of the Clunian Reform reached most of post-Viking Benedictine monasteries throughout the Late Carolingian Empire. In our case, a documented case is that of Fécamp, where a wave of Clunian monks arrived in the second half of the tenth century following an official request of the ducal authorities. Cf. F. L. Fallue, *Histoire de la ville et de l’abbaye de Fécamp*, Rouen 1841, 111.

have inspired local productions afterwards. In this process of exchange, fluvial communications through the rivers of Eastern and Northern France proved to be an important way of cultural exchange, where clergymen and material culture flocked from one see to another²³. But what were the reasons for this widespread Byzantine influence on high-quality artworks across the medieval West? The use of Eastern pictorial conventions in the cases analyzed before, namely the clear iconographic background of some scenes and the hieratism of the characters displayed over a gold leaf background, are typical characteristics of Western manuscript illumination which are linked to the idea of Byzantine art as prestigious reference in the Latin West²⁴. These conceptions are indeed non-traditional according to the Western traditions based on the ancient Roman naturalism that the Carolingian schools of illumination expertly reflected in the Early Middle Ages.

Few authors have dealt with the direct reception of Byzantine products by way of diplomatic exchanges and the Crusades, since there is very little contemporary documentation about it. Moreover, when a Western scribe mentioned some kind of material exchange or purchase from Constantinople, the emphasis was not placed on the material itself but on the provenance of the items²⁵. The Byzantine artistic centers of production in the East, and

²³ The irradiation of Cluny's influence throughout the Meuse valley has been relatively well studied, see: M. Smeyers, *Vlaamse miniaturen van de 8ste tot het midden van de 16de eeuw, De Middeleeuwse wereld op Perkament*, Leuven 1998, 58-84. For medieval waterways: V. Serna, "Au milieu du gué. Où en sommes-nous de l'archéologie des rivières pour les périodes médiévale et moderne", *Rives et riverains. Dossier de la Revue Archéopages* 23 (2008) 52-56. In a more general way: V. Serna – É. Rieth – I. Catteddu, "Circulation et communication", in I. Catteddu (ed.), *Archéologie médiévale en France. Le premier Moyen Âge (Ve-Xe siècle)*, Paris 2009, 102-119.

²⁴ For the prestige of Byzantine art in the Carolingian period, see: O. Demus, *Byzantine art* (cit. n. 5), 77-78. Demus proposed a self-aware willing of the Carolingian dynasty to restore the ancient Roman past, which then had become totally Christian, as the main reason to explain the use of Byzantine influences in the period.

²⁵ C. R. Dodwell, *The pictorial arts* (cit. n. 2), 3. The author mentioned the statement of the eleventh-century Norman ecclesiastic author William of Poitiers, who affirmed that

Constantinople's workshops in particular, have always enjoyed a special connotation of prestige in the West, where the city of the Bosphorus was looked on as a legendary see. Thus, the presence of exotic Eastern iconographies and the connotation of prestige of their origin, were the main axes of the research on this comparative approach. There was little room then for more specific studies concerning the iconographic transmission itself or the perception of this remarkable influence in the West.

This idea of prestige is attached intrinsically to the aesthetic value of the image. The peculiar iconographies and techniques used in those works expressed the same theological meaning but in different terms and with an exotic connotation. Hans Belting opted for a strict perception of the icon as a cult object in Byzantium, something that Charles Barber assumed as well, to be exported then to the West²⁶. But other scholars such as Robin Cormack opted for a more sociological approach to the topic, based on the aesthetic and social values attached to the images in high-rank commissions²⁷. However, Anne Derbes, talking on Tuscan Duecento painting, summed up that Byzantine images may have been highly appreciated for their theological authority, but Western artists modified those iconographies, which they also considered exotic²⁸. We will study a particular manuscript with clear Byzantine influences in both iconographic and technical senses, and we will

«the treasures looted during the Conquest of England, would draw admiration even from those who had visited Byzantium».

²⁶ H. Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter. Form und Funktion führender Bildtafeln der Passion*, Berlin, Mann, 1981, 22-23; C. Barber, *Figure and Likeness: On the limits of representation in Byzantine iconoclasm*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2002, 7.

²⁷ R. Cormack, *Painting the Soul Icons, Death Masks and Shrouds*, London, Reaktion Books, 1997, 23.

²⁸ A. Derbes, "Images East and West: The Ascent of the Cross", in L. Brubaker – R. Ousterhout (eds.), *The Sacred Image, East and West*, Urbana – Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1995, 110-111.

try to go beyond the traditional approach to the subject. Thus, we will study not only the iconographies themselves, but also the ways of artistic transmission, and we will also offer a more symbolic approach to the figuration contained in our manuscript in order to ascertain more about how this production was regarded by contemporary Western viewers.

THE FÉCAMP PSALTER

The so-called Fécamp Psalter is a manuscript kept at the Dutch Royal Library in The Hague, with the signature 76 F 13. Dated around 1180, it was produced in the monastery of the Holy Trinity of Fécamp, a town on the northern Norman coastline²⁹. This community was a legendary foundation dating from Merovingian times. Sacked and destroyed by the Vikings, the abbey was re-founded under Norman rule, in order to create a monastic reference in the northern part of the ducal territory. Fécamp was reformed by a group of Clunian monks in the tenth century³⁰. The monastery was reputed to host a relic of the Holy Blood and became one of the major centers for manuscript illumination of the Norman duchy from the eleventh century onwards.

According to Dodwell, Fécamp's illuminated manuscript production reached its peak of quality by the first half of the twelfth century, and was

²⁹ W. Cahn, *Romanesque manuscripts. The Twelfth Century*, vol. 1, London, Harvey Miller, 1992, 160-161, and cf. J. Rodríguez Viejo, *The Hague, K. B., 76 F 13. An Aristocratic Psalter in late Ducal Normandy*, M.A. Thesis, Leiden University, 2013. Surprisingly enough, Cahn does not make any single reference to the peculiar iconography of the Psalter in his two-page analysis and rather focuses on its origin in Normandy.

³⁰ For the importance of monastic re-foundations in early Ducal Normandy, implementing then the Clunian Reform, C. Potts, *Monastic Revival and Regional Identity in Early Normandy*, Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 1997. About Fécamp's *scriptorium*, studies have been historically delayed due to the partial destruction and dispersion of the library during the French Revolution. Currently, a Ph.D. candidate is writing on the subject: S. Lecouteux, *La bibliothèque médiévale de l'abbaye bénédictine de la Trinité de Fécamp*, sous la direction de C. Jacquemard et A.-M. Turcan-Verkerk, Department of History, University of Caen (academic year 2011-2012).

considered the second most important place in the region after the well-established community of Mont Saint-Michel³¹. The documented contacts with Cluny in the tenth century provide us with plausible indications concerning the arrival of ecclesiastic material brought by the Clunian monks from the Burgundian abbey to Normandy at this early stage. Thus it is possible that Clunian monks brought with them new manuscripts from the Burgundian scriptorium, in order to facilitate the first activities of the brand-new community in Fécamp, whose library and precious manuscripts had been previously destroyed or despoiled by the Vikings decades before. The most interesting question to be posed here is to imagine the sort of manuscripts that arrived in those communities, since Cluny's own scriptorium was heavily influenced by Byzantine pictorial conventions.

As we know, the Clunian Reform considered the manual work of copying and illumination to be an important part of the monks' daily work³², so that Fécamp's scriptorium experienced a remarkable boost after the Clunian reform³³. Theoretically conceived in a slump period in the monastery's production according to Dodwell, the Fécamp Psalter is without any doubt a product of extraordinary quality, and can be considered an "aristocratic" work, since its use was reserved for a nobleman. However, this label of "aristocratic" is drawn from studies on Byzantine manuscript illumination. In this field, the denomination is applied to some of the most outstanding illuminated artworks of the Middle and Late Byzantine Empire, such as the well-known Macedonian Paris Psalter (Ms. Paris, BnF, gr. 139)³⁴.

³¹ C. R. Dodwell, *The pictorial arts* (cit. n. 2), 198-199. J. Le Maho, "La dispersion des bibliothèques du diocèse de Rouen au temps des invasions normandes: autour d'un manuscrit carolingien anciennement conservé à la Sainte-Trinité de Fécamp", *Tabularia. Sources écrites de la Normandie médiévale* 4 (2004) 61-78.

³² A. Chagny, *Cluny et son Empire*, Lyon – Paris 1938, 125-167.

³³ See n. 30 and 31.

³⁴ A. Cutler, *The Aristocratic Psalters in Byzantium*, Paris, Picard, 1984, 7-9, 63-71; K.

These manuscripts were created either for liturgical or private use, but they are always characterized by full-page illuminated scenes. Our manuscript is then doubly “aristocratic”, since it contains the depiction of a nobleman (the commissioner, indicating then a private use for the book), and also fits the denomination applied to its Byzantine counterparts, namely, the presence of full-page illuminated scenes. We need to remind the reader that full-page compositions in Northern Europe were rather uncommon at that time, and the visual purpose of the pictorial program clearly lies behind this conception.

The Psalter displays a very rich pictorial program, both in terms of technique and materials, but particularly in the character of the iconography. Byzantine influences in the figuration are clearly strong. The so-called Christological cycle displays the most important moments of the life of Christ according to the Gospels in full-page scenes. Some folios are believed to be missing. The most striking common characteristic of the scenes is the all-pervasive presence of a gold leaf background of very high quality. Sometimes, the figuration is completely surrounded by the gold surface, which gives a more symbolic approach to the image when the book is fully open³⁵.

This is the case for the most interesting scene, that of the enthroned “Mother of God” (fol. 18r) [fig. 4]. The Virgin Mary wears rich garments made of embroidery with shining bejeweled surfaces, which has a visual rhythm with the bejeweled parts of the throne. In the text of the Psalms there is an explicit reference to a “queen” in golden garments, which runs: «*adstetit regina a dextris tuis in vestitu deaurato*» (Ps 45:10), although its further identification

Weitzmann, “Der Pariser Psalter Ms. Grec 139 und die mittelbyzantinische Renaissance”, *Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 6 (1929) 178-194. The denomination is indeed an old borrowing from J. J. Tikkanen, *Die Psalterillustration in Mittelalter*, Helsinki 1895, 112-147. Other scholars have retaken it afterwards, such as D. T. Rice, *The Art of Byzantium*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1959, 310. A review of Cutler’s work by J. Lowden, “Observations on Illustrated Byzantine Psalters”, *Art Bulletin* 70 (1988) 242-260.

³⁵ E. Sandler, *L’icône, image de l’invisible. Éléments de théologie, esthétique et technique*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1981, 56-63.

with the Virgin is rather controversial³⁶. However, the presence of bejeweled surfaces is confined to the edges of the garments, and the typical richness of Byzantine imperial portraiture is now more contained. It is clear that Eastern artists looked at the shining representations of the Basilissa in order to conceive the most proper sacred concept of the “Queen of Heavens”³⁷. Did the Eastern iconography suffer from a progressive simplification? The Italian examples in mosaics, wall paintings and illuminated manuscripts enjoyed the relative physical and chronological nearness of these Eastern models, in such a way that in late twelfth-century Normandy, the particular details of Byzantine iconographies were basically unknown to the illuminator’s mind. Possibly, Norman artists turned to familiar aesthetic models of local high-rank portraiture, which modified in some degree of other the aspect of the Virgin.

Other scenes from the Christological Cycle are also interesting in terms of the iconographic influence from the East. The over-dimensioned figure of Christ from the “Harrowing of Hell” [fig. 5] has little to do with the traditional representations of Anglo-Saxon origin, and is clearly influenced by the severe monumentality of Mediterranean models, to be found for instance in Saint Mark of Venice³⁸. Moreover, as for the iconography, the garments that Christ wears can be related to those of the “Mother of God”, and bejeweled surfaces are once again the proof of an oriental origin of the iconography. Indeed, this sort

³⁶ M.-M. Davy, *Introduction à la symbolique romane*, Paris, Flammarion, 2002, 181.

³⁷ M. Delivorria, *Recherches sur l’iconographie de l’impératrice byzantine*, Thèse d’État, Université de Paris, 1966; A. Grabar, *L’Empereur dans l’Art Byzantin*, Paris, *Les Belles Lettres*, 1936, 8-10. For manuscript illumination: I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts*, Leiden, Brill, 1976, 254-255. For the political connotations of the portraiture: C. Jolivet-Levy, “L’image du pouvoir dans l’art byzantin à l’époque de la dynastie macédonienne (867-1056)”, *Byzantion* 57 (1987) 441-470, and H. Maguire, “Style and Ideology in Byzantine Imperial Art”, *Gesta* 28.2 (1989) 217-231.

³⁸ K. Künstle, *Ikönographie* (cit. n. 17), 500-504. An historical perspective of its development and its Byzantine and Anglo-Saxon variants in A. D. Kartsonis, *Anastasis. The making of an image*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986, 35-39, 186-203.

of bejeweled halo can be consistently found in the Mediterranean depictions of Christ, heavily drawing on Byzantine sources. Some remarkable examples are located in the Italian Peninsula, such as the case of the Final Judgment apse painting of Torcello near Venice, and the tenth-century Christological scenes from the basilica of San Felice in Nola, near Naples. Another interesting composition is that of the “Pentecost” [fig. 6]. The Fécamp scene can be clearly related to the example analyzed before, the lectionary from the Bibliothèque nationale de France. In the lower level, the Apostles are displayed frontally and their heads show a remarkable gigantism. In this scene, Christ is absent from the upper level but is replaced by the representation of the Holy Ghost. However, the gold background is again used to surround the figuration in the folio. We have seen that a frontal display with a clear visual intention, gold leaf background, unnatural gigantism and monumentality of the figuration in a full-page illumination and rich bejeweled garments and jewelry, are the main characteristics of the Byzantine artistic influence on our Psalter, a truly Western “aristocratic” artwork. However, we will try to go beyond the traditional approach, combining social history and art appreciation.

The case of the Fécamp manuscript is also relevant due to its importance for the social history of the period, since a psalter was often used in private contexts³⁹. Traditionally, the illumination of this kind of text put a particular emphasis on the illumination of the initial of the first round of psalms, the *B* from the *Beatus vir*, which marks the beginning of the book⁴⁰. This detail is apparently irrelevant to our research, but on the front page, the verso of the

³⁹ R. G. Calkins, *Illuminated books of the Middle Ages*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1982, 207-209. For technical vocabulary: M. P. Brown, *Understanding Illuminated manuscripts, a guide to technical terms*, London, J. Paul Getty Museum, 1994.

⁴⁰ R. Kashnitz, “Frühe Initialpsalter”, in F. O. Büttner (ed.), *The Illuminated Psalters. Studies in the Content, Purpose and Placement of its Images*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2004, 137-155.

precedent folio, there is a portrait of the donor who commissioned the psalter [fig. 7].

Depicted in a praying pose, the commissioner is probably a Norman nobleman⁴¹, who shows an immense and unheard-of self-awareness, due to the fact that he has been represented in his own book⁴². This situation will not be usual in the West until the earlier developments of the Gothic illumination in the second half of the thirteenth century⁴³. Then, the portraits of patrons will be mostly confined to small figures on the lateral parts of the illuminated scenes, reflecting a clear symbolic suppeditation towards the sacred image with which the donor is represented. Instead, the Fécamp Psalter shows in my view a high degree of interaction of the commissioner with the scriptorium. This can be considered a reflection of the immense power of the nobility in twelfth-century Normandy, and for that reason, a cultural manifestation of a paramount social process, namely feudalism⁴⁴. The emerging economic power of the Norman nobility is therefore reflected in their own artistic commissions by way of the social self-awareness that the process implies.

⁴¹ J. Rodríguez Viejo, *The Hague* (cit. n. 30), 45-48. Noblemen were traditionally the top commissioners of psalters, and in this case, the iconography of the character depicted points towards this direction. However, I underlined another possibility of high-rank commission to be found in the Norman twelfth-century House of Flanders, and which could explain the presence of the “Fécamp Psalter” in the Low Countries in the late Middle Ages.

⁴² One of the richest fields of study has been that of Irish manuscript illumination (ninth-tenth centuries). Concerning the representation of the Apostles in those ninth-century Gospels, some authors have claimed a divine nature of the depicted character, thus, conceiving the representation of a human being as a sacred image. See J. Hubert – J. Porcher – W. F. Volbach, *Europe of the Invasions*, New York, G. Braziller, 1969, 160.

⁴³ N. Morgan, “Patrons and their Devotions in the Historiated Initials and full-page miniatures of a 13th-Century English Psalter”, in F. O. Büttner (ed.), *The Illuminated Psalters* (cit. n. 40), 309-322.

⁴⁴ D. Barthélemy, *L'ordre seigneurial, XIe-XIIe siècles (Nouvelle Histoire de la France Médiévale 3)*, Paris, Seuil, 1990, 128-157.

However, if we consider that a Byzantine influence came to Fécamp from either a Clunian complete manuscript or a book of models, another question can be asked concerning the roles of both the commissioner and the artist regarding the choice of this peculiar iconography⁴⁵. Was the exotic Eastern-based iconography of the Psalter a determined choice on the part of the self-aware nobleman or did the illuminator or the scriptorium offer it? This is difficult to establish, since so far we do not have any written document about the perception of this kind of Eastern iconography in the Latin West. However, the presence of the donor's portrait expresses without any doubt the paramount importance of this commission for him. The reason for the decision clearly lies in the purpose of the artwork: the reading of the Psalms and private prayer.

On the other hand, and as Cutler's catalogue has shown, the psalters produced during the Middle Byzantine Empire very often included the commissioner's portrait, usually with a sacred figure attached to the representation⁴⁶. Among some examples he studied, he included an image from the Psalter Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, Ms. gr. 61, fol. 256v, where the nun responsible for the commission is prostrated (proskynesis) before the Theotokos enthroned. Another illuminated scene is to be found in the Oxford, Christ Church College, Ms. Wake 61, fol. 102v, where the Virgin stands up and holds the hand of the monk responsible for the commission. Is this presence of the patron's portrait another Byzantine influence on the conception of the Fécamp manuscript? It would be risky to state that, but it is interesting to see that the most direct counterpart for the patron's portrait in our manuscript is to be found in contemporary Eastern psalters. Moreover, in the Byzantine psalters seen above, the representation of the Virgin Mary

⁴⁵ L. Brubaker, "Image, Audience, and Place: Interaction and Reproduction", in R. Ousterhout – L. Brubaker (eds.), *The Sacred Image* (cit. n. 28), 204-220.

⁴⁶ A. Cutler, *The Aristocratic* (cit. n. 34); for the Sinai Psalter, 112-115; for the Oxford Psalter, 55; and for the Palermo Psalter, 61-63.

seems to play a major symbolic role in the depiction of the commissioner. Another example analyzed by Cutler is the Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale, Ms. dep. Museo 4, whose fol. 293v, shows a half-length image of the Virgin Mary, occupying half of the folio, displayed frontally, in the gesture of *orans*, addressing herself straight away to the viewer. It is worthwhile to mention here that, again according to Cutler, the commissioner of the Palermo Psalter was Constance de Hauteville (d. 1198), mother of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, who had become a nun in the Sicilian capital by the end of her life. Even if the iconographies are radically different, the *orans* and the enthroned Theotokos, the visual intention is clear, to address itself to the viewer's gaze⁴⁷.

In the case of the Fécamp "Mother of God", the hieratism of the image, together with its central disposition and the gold background, indeed support a more theological consideration in its conception⁴⁸. The illuminator played not only with Byzantine iconographic conventions as we have seen before, but also with the theological meaning of the Eastern icon. Besides the illuminated manuscripts seen before, there are myriad examples of Greek and Russian icons that display the Virgin Mary, but few have a portrait of the Theotokos as a part of the scene of the "Adoration" as in our case [fig. 8]. Indeed, the Virgin in the throne (fol. 18r) is placed on the front page of the Three Magi, offering their gifts to Christ (fol. 17v). The choice of such a peculiar iconography of the Virgin for a Christological scene could shed light on its function within the whole manuscript.

As the composition shows, the image was intentionally conceived to be seen by a viewer standing in front of it⁴⁹. The Theotokos displays a full-page

⁴⁷ R. Cormack, "The eyes of the Mother of God", in M. Vassilaki (ed.), *Images of the Mother of God. Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing, 2005, 167-174.

⁴⁸ H. Belting, *Das Bild* (cit. n. 26), 252-254.

⁴⁹ M. H. Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the third mode of seeing", *Gesta* 22.2 (1991) 48-64. For Byzantine art: G. Matthew, *Byzantine* (cit. n. 16), 23-37. For per-

image, hieratic and surrounded by gold background. The nobleman observed the image during his prayer, and in this way the image of the Virgin was possibly conceived as a way of spiritual intercession between the faithful viewer and God/Christ⁵⁰. The Eastern representational conventions acted, in this way, as a tool that offered the artist the chance to display frontally an image in a full-page folio, where the gold background stands out from the figuration. However, the peculiar iconography, the presence of the Theotokos concept, and these technical considerations, are proof of the Eastern conception on the whole work⁵¹.

But in what way was this Eastern theological meaning possible in the West? A literary basis for this Eastern approach to the sacred image as an icon is provided by the diffusion of the treatises by Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite in medieval Western Europe⁵². In his works, the fifth-century author stated that God's divinity can be considered a light, *phos*, received either by way of the vision (*theoria*) or interior knowledge (*episteme*). Thus, the light plays a major role as an earthy reflection of the spiritual world. This is the basis for the icon theory; the reflection applied to the light reflected on the gold background, and this can indeed be used in our case⁵³. From the ninth century onwards, the diffusion of Pseudo Dionysius' works took place in the West. In 827, the Carolingian king Louis the Pious received a copy as a gift from the Emperor Michael II, to be deposited in the Parisian

spective applied to icons, see E. Sendler, *L'icône* (cit. n. 35), 114-120. For symmetry and perception in Western medieval Art: H. Weyl, *Symmetry*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1952.

⁵⁰ E. Sendler, *L'icône* (cit. n. 35), 122-125.

⁵¹ For the gold background in Western manuscripts, O. Demus, *Byzantine art* (cit. n. 5), 104.

⁵² A. Grabar, "La représentation de l'intelligible dans l'art byzantin du Moyen Âge", in *Actes du VIe Congrès International d'Études Byzantines*, Paris 1951, 127-143; cf. E. Sendler, *L'icône* (cit. 35), 157-168.

⁵³ J. Wirth, *L'image médiévale*, Paris, Méridiens Klincksieck, 1989, 325.

Abbey of Saint Denis. In the twelfth century, Pseudo-Dionysian tradition was revived by eminent scholars of the Benedictine order of the Parisian region such as John Sarrazin, who wrote a commentary and a further translation (c. 1150). Also, in the first half of the twelfth century, Abbot Suger of Saint Denis explained the light that poured through the stained glass of his new Parisian abbey using the Pseudo Dionysian ideas mentioned above⁵⁴.

On the other hand, we cannot deny the direct presence of Eastern icons and other ecclesiastic material from the East in Normandy at that time. Intense diplomatic interactions between the new Norman ducal authorities and Constantinople took place during the eleventh century, the epoch that witnessed the peak of power of the Duchy and the Conquest of England. The grandfather of William the Conqueror, Duke Richard II, had organized a pilgrimage to the Holy Land for several ecclesiastic authorities of the Duchy in the 1020s, which included Constantinople as a prestigious stopover. Later, in the 1030s, William's father, Duke Robert, had traveled to the East, staying for some time at the city on the Bosphorus⁵⁵. Despite the lack of specific documentation, it is possible to believe that these visits to the Byzantine Emperor's court included the exchange of gifts or direct purchases from Constantinople's workshops. These political interactions indeed reflected the prestige of the Byzantine Empire in the West, which we have analyzed already in terms of material culture.

⁵⁴ A. Louth, *Denys the Areopagite*, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1989, 122-125. For the reception of his works in the West: Ph. Faure, "Denys le Pseudo-Aréopagite et le Moyen Âge occidental: réception et influence de la *Hiérarchie céleste*", *Cahiers de Saint Michel de Cuxa* 28 (1997) 213-216.

⁵⁵ W. M. Aird, *Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy: 1050-1134*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2008, 51-52. Other examples of high ecclesiastic authorities in E. Cuozzo, "Les évêques d'origine normande en Italie et en Sicile", in P. Bouet – F. Neveux (eds.), *Les évêques normands du XIe siècle*, Caen, Presses Universitaires de Caen, 1995, 68-78. E. M. C. van Houts, "Normandy and Byzantium in the eleventh century", *Byzantion* 55 (1985) 544-559, at 549-551.

However, the reception of this Byzantine-made production in the West is rather unclear, and traditionally scholars such as Demus or Dodwell have put the emphasis on the identification of iconographies of clear Eastern style in Western artworks. The iconographies displayed in our manuscript are clearly exotic Eastern-like products, but with the same aesthetic value of a contemporary Western version. We can suppose then a fashionable trend in the production of high-quality Byzantine-influenced artworks in specific monasteries. It seems to have originated in Cluny as soon as the second half of the tenth century, with the Bible of Souvigny being one of the earliest documented examples. The Fécamp Psalter proves to be indeed a later proof of this connection with Cluny⁵⁶. With the consolidation of the Clunian order and its reform, its influence began to extend across medieval France. The arrival of Clunian monks in Fécamp is proof of this phenomenon in Ducal Normandy. The reform carried out by Clunian monks in the tenth century was the beginning of a fruitful relationship between the Norman abbey and the see of Cluny.

One of the post-Reform figures of Fécamp was the Italian-born William of Volpiano⁵⁷, who was appointed new abbot in 1021 by the sanctified Clunian authority, Maieul. He went to the Norman abbey to develop the community that other Clunian monks had reformed before, and his leadership led to the

⁵⁶ The architectural background that frames all the scenes is to be certainly related to that of the Cluny-made Parma's Idelfonsus (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Ms. 1650). Cf. M. Schapiro, *The Parma Idelfonsus. A Romanesque illuminated manuscript from Cluny and related works*, New York, College Art Association of America, 1964, 11-13.

⁵⁷ This connection establishes a solid basis to affirm that Cluny held strong relationships with other sees, without considering a strict link of monastic dependency, since Fécamp was not politically dependent on the Burgundian abbey. C. Lougnot, *Saint-Bénigne de Dijon et Guillaume de Volpiano*, Dijon 1988, 11-20. A more in-depth study with further bibliography: C. Marino Malone, *Saint-Bénigne de Dijon dans l'An Mil, Totius Galliae Basilicis Mirabilior. Interprétation politique, liturgique et théologique*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2009. For William's role in Normandy: V. Gazeau – M. Boulet, "Guillaume de Volpiano, un réformateur en son temps (962-1031)", *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest* 116.3 (2009) 222-224.

final transformation of the abbey into the second monastic spot of the Norman Duchy. The importance of William is paramount if we take into account that he was previously charged with the role of abbot at the community in Dijon, appointed directly from Cluny, where he had arrived from Northern Italy before the year 1000. The presence of William of Volpiano in Fécamp, after his training in Cluny and his early career in Dijon, establishes a clear link with Cluny's scriptorium by the beginning of the eleventh century; another sign of the presence of Byzantine influences on Fécamp's illuminated manuscript production. However, whether we deal with complete illuminated manuscripts or rather books of models is something we cannot know with certainty⁵⁸. Nevertheless, it is sure that the Burgundian abbey's production played a major role in the brand-new ducal scriptoria.

The traditional games of political influences and ecclesiastic appointments are the key to understanding the artistic transmission in more specific terms. The role of recently appointed abbots and bishops was already remarkable in the early eleventh century, since William was initially trained at Dijon's Cathedral, St. Benignus⁵⁹, before moving to Fécamp. Naturally, the link between the Cathedral of the Burgundian capital and nearby Cluny was strong by way of the Cathedral's abbey, and Cluny-made manuscripts poured into the library of the bishopric's abbey⁶⁰. In my view, the few presumed Clunian manuscripts, which have come down to us and which fortunately are conserved at the Municipal Library of Dijon, were used and kept originally in the Cathedral, and in this way, escaped the massive destruction caused by the French Revolution. The political importance of Cluny as the motherhouse is

⁵⁸ An introduction in V. Sekules, *Medieval art*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, 54-56; R. W. Scheller, *A Survey of Medieval Model Books*, Haarlem, De Erven F. Bohn, 1963, 384-406.

⁵⁹ L. Chomton, *Histoire de l'Église de Saint-Bénigne de Dijon*, Dijon 1900.

⁶⁰ Y. Zaluska, *Manuscrits enluminés de Dijon*, Paris, Éditions du CNRS, 1991, 1-11. C. Marino Malone, *Saint-Bénigne* (cit. n. 57), 115-145.

reflected in the appointment of new abbots for other minor abbeys, as seen in the case of William of Volpiano. In our case, the artistic influence of Cluny analyzed in the Fécamp Psalter will be found again in a farther area of the same Norman kingdom, northern England.

BYZANTINE INFLUENCES ON ANGLO-NORMAN PSALTERS

In the twelfth century, the Duchy of Normandy represented the oldest part of an emerging state. The importance of the territories conquered in England had grown considerably since the previous century, and a progressive implantation of the Norman social structures had taken place in the island. The close relationship that in most cases tied Norman monastic entities between them proved to be the case of interesting iconographic transmissions between distant areas, such as the mainland and England. In the case of Fécamp's Byzantine-like model, the taste of a high-rank commissioner appears at the same date in the northern part of the Norman state.

Dated around 1175-1180, the Gough Psalter is preserved at the Bodleian Library of Oxford, and has the signature Liturg. 2⁶¹. It is believed to come from York, the most important see of the northern Norman English Church. As Walter Cahn has already noted, the Christological cycle that precedes the text of the Psalms displays basically the same iconographies and they seem to have a very close connection with those of the Fécamp Psalter⁶². Some scenes are missing from the Fécamp manuscript, such as those of the "Presentation at the Temple" and the "Last Supper". These are probably the folios missing in The Hague. On the other hand, an important figuration such as that of the "Mother of God" is this time melted with the "Three Magi" in order to form a one-page full scene of the "Adoration", but still keeping the allure of

⁶¹ C. M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts, 1066-1190. A survey of manuscripts illuminated in the British Isles*, London, Harvey Miller Publishers, 1975, 120-121.

⁶² W. Cahn, *Romanesque* (cit. n. 29), 160-161; J. Rodriguez Viejo, *The Hague* (cit. n. 29), 49-52.

a queen enthroned. Despite the different pictorial style and a more restricted use of the palette, the Gough Psalter proves to have a narrow connection with its Fécamp contemporary. Scenes such as the “Baptism of Christ” or the “Visitation” are very similar to their mainland counterparts. The Gough Psalter is definitely a different production but strictly related to the Fécamp model. But how was this presence possible in these two distant areas of the Norman state? A certain Byzantine iconography appeared in Northern Europe’s manuscript production but nobody can truly explain how. The case of our two Norman Psalters is particularly interesting because we do have a connection, namely, a person who could have been the link between the two artworks. The presence of either a book of models or a complete manuscript in the area of York is plausible with the involvement of a Dijon-trained archbishop of the English city in the decade of the 1140s. Roger de Sully (d. 1189) was an ecclesiastic authority, the son of a Norman nobleman, who had been trained in Dijon before gaining the Abbey of the Holy Trinity of Fécamp in the late 1130s, directly appointed from Cluny⁶³.

Later, between 1141 and 1142, his relative Stephen, King of England, grandson of William the Conqueror, appointed Henry de Sully Archbishop of York. However he did not set himself up for a long time in the English city since the appointment made by the King was invalidated due to the civil war, which eventually led to Stephen’s expulsion in 1148⁶⁴. Then he returned to Fécamp, where he was again appointed abbot until his death. Roger de Sully was a witness of the political intrigues of the Norman kingdom. But his presence in York provides us with the key to understanding the presence of continental models in Northern England. As a newly elected archbishop,

⁶³ F. Barlow, *The English church, 1066-1154. A history of the Anglo Norman church*, London – New York, Longman, 1979, 96.

⁶⁴ P. Dalton – G. J. White (eds.), *King’s Stephen reign (1135-1154)*, Woodbridge, Boydell, 2008; D. Carpenter, *Struggling for mastery: The Penguin History of England, 1066-1284*, London 2004, 166.

he possibly traveled from Normandy to York with fellows from Fécamp. He or his assistants possibly brought with them either a book of models or a lost manuscript, with the same figuration observed in Fécamp and used for the conception of the psalter in The Hague. The identity of the commissioner of the Gough Psalter is unknown, but it is possible that he was related in some way to the Norman clergyman.

Another contemporary example in England related to our case study is that of an illuminated manuscript produced in an unspecified place in the northern part of the kingdom, the Thott Psalter (Ms. Copenhagen, Royal Library, 143, 2^o), another manuscript of very high quality with full-page illuminated scenes⁶⁵. The similarity with the Gough Psalter is extremely high, as already noted by Kauffman⁶⁶, although the use of vivid colors is this time the main characteristic of the pictorial program. At an iconographic level, the Copenhagen manuscript is basically related to the work of the Gough Psalter, and I would certainly propose York or a near-by place as the specific center of production. The scene of the “Mother of God” is melted with the “Three Magi” (fol. 11v) as seen in the Oxford manuscript, thus indicating an irrefutable link [fig. 9]. But the palette is far more colorful and some iconographic modifications, such as the absence of the crown on the Virgin’s head, underlines a chronological gap that could have permitted these new iconographic arrangements.

Another remarkable scene in this manuscript is that of the figure of Christ as judge, together with the Tetramorph, the last of the illuminated scenes before the text of the Psalms (fol. 15v) [fig. 10]. The hieratism of the figure of Christ is ideal for the severe representation of the Final Judgment,

⁶⁵ M. Mackeprang – V. Madsen – C. S. Petersen – A. A. Bjombo – E. Jorgensen, *Greek and Latin illuminated manuscripts, X-XIII centuries in Danish collections*, Copenhagen – London, A. Marcus – H. Milford, 1921, 32-42.

⁶⁶ C. M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque* (cit. n. 61), 120.

and it is something that the fine gold leaf background helps to underline in the viewer's mind. The scene is certainly absent from both the Fécamp and Gough Psalters, and the pictorial style is radically different. We can talk then about a progressive modification of the mainland model, which took place in England by the year 1200. The iconographic basis remains and the link with York is clear, but the Thott Psalter is indeed an original English creation, although Byzantine influences lie behind it.

The political and ecclesiastic link with Normandy as well as with other continental monastic sees, such as Cluny, is the only way to explain the presence of these peculiar iconographies in the island. In particular, the interaction with Cluny is sufficiently documented in the case of the Winchester Psalter (Ms. London, British Library, Cotton Nero c. iv)⁶⁷. The twelfth-century manuscript is believed to have been largely made in England, but it does have several ties with the Burgundian abbey. The liturgical calendar of this psalter displays two names and feasts of sanctified Clunian abbots, namely St. Maieul, the commissioner of the Souvigny Bible, and St. Odo (Eudes). Moreover, a former monk of the Burgundian abbey is believed to have been the commissioner of the manuscript, Henry de Blois (d. 1171), brother of King Stephen, who was appointed archbishop of Winchester in 1129. This is a very similar story to that of the Gough Psalter and it is possible that there could have been a link with Henry de Sully while he was in York. But the most important aspect of the Winchester Psalter is the explicit Byzantine style of two scenes contained in its Christological cycle, which are totally different from the rest of the illuminated episodes. The well-known "Dormition" and the "Virgin in Throne" [fig. 11] are pure Byzantine iconographic interpretations, and their presence in England is rather a mystery if we take into account the style of the rest of the manuscript. They were possibly part of a Clunian manuscript, which was not finished then and was re-used in England afterwards, where Henry

⁶⁷ K. Haney, *The Winchester Psalter: An iconographic study*, Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1986, 36-46; C. M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque* (cit. n. 61), 105-106.

de Blois had brought it. The presence in Norman England of iconographies influenced by Byzantine pictorial conventions is a widespread phenomenon, but is not clearly perceived until the second half of the twelfth century, to give place to a more own insular conception by the year 1200, preceding the boost of the English manuscript illumination in the earliest stage of the international Gothic style.

THE PSALTER OF MARGUERITE OF BURGUNDY. A LATE EXAMPLE OF ICONOGRAPHIC TRANSMISSION?

The last work studied here is a fourteenth-century psalter, an early Gothic French masterpiece. It will permit us to explore the further iconographic transmission in late medieval France of models that we have already seen, the stylistic modifications that progressively occurred in the Gothic period, and the subsequent changes in the artistic perception of sacred images. Preserved at the Sainte-Geneviève Library in Paris with the signature Ms. 1273⁶⁸, the so-called Psalter of Marguerite of Burgundy is dated to the early years of the fourteenth century and is believed to have been produced in Paris. The Marguerite of Burgundy in question was the young consort Queen of France Marguerite (1290-1315), wife of Louis X and granddaughter of St. Louis⁶⁹. She was nominally in charge for less than one year, between 1314 and her death in 1315 (aged 25). The Psalter is related in terms of pictorial style to the masterwork Psalter of Blanche of Castile, mother of St. Louis, whose well-known psalter is dated around 1220 (Ms. Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, 1186)⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ R. Branner, *Manuscript Painting in Paris during the Reign of St. Louis. A Study of Styles*, Berkeley – Los Angeles – London, University of California Press, 1977, 30.

⁶⁹ C. Bouyer, *Dictionnaire des Reines de France*, Paris, Librairie Académique Perrin, 1992, 192.

⁷⁰ H. Martin, “Le Psautier de Saint Louis et de Blanche de Castille”, *Les Joyaux de l’Arsenal* 97 (1910) 19-28.

The Psalter of Marguerite of Burgundy is an artwork of very high quality and, according to Koehler, it was produced at the same Parisian workshop that carried out the commission for the former Queen Blanche⁷¹. However, he underlines the late date for the execution of the work compared to the Psalter of Blanche of Castile, dated roughly a century before. Moreover, he does not itemize other works conceived by the same workshop at such a late stage of the Parisian manuscript illumination post-St. Louis. The Psalter of Marguerite seems to be a “unicum”. However, the scenes of the Christological cycle are once again our focus of attention, since they display similar iconographies to those of Fécamp and particularly to those of the Gough Psalter. Some scenes, such as those of the “Pentecost” [fig. 12] or the “Adoration of the Three Magi” [fig. 13], are basically the same iconographies as in the Oxford manuscript and which have Fécamp’s model as their most archaic stylistic basis. The pictorial style is radically different, since we are dealing with a psalter produced in the first decades of the fourteenth century, more than a century after the Fécamp and York commissions⁷². Nonetheless, the relationship in iconographic terms is irrefutable, in particular the massive use of gold leaf for the background.

The origin of the short-term consort queen in Burgundy is the key point in an explanatory hypothesis. It is possible to think that Marguerite brought with her to Paris a copy of an illuminated manuscript either from Dijon or from Cluny, which had been reproduced more than a century before in the twelfth century (during the time of Henry de Sully, to be taken to Fécamp first and then to England). Due to the pictorial style, we assume that the Psalter of Marguerite is a Parisian creation, but the iconographic background of the work could suggest its production in a Burgundian atelier. Another

⁷¹ C. A. Kohler, *Catalogue des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève*, vol. 1, Paris, Éditions Librairie Plon, 1893, 389-391.

⁷² An introduction to the psalters’ production of the period to be found in A. Bennett, “The Transformation of the Gothic Psalter in Thirteenth-Century France”, in F. O. Büttner (ed.), *The Illuminated Psalters* (cit. n. 40), 211-221.

possibility is that the Psalter was conceived in Burgundy, during Marguerite's youth, taking into account that usually psalters were used by the children of the nobility to learn to read⁷³. A pictorial evolution should have taken place then in Cluny's scriptorium, moving towards a Gothic aesthetic, whereas the iconographic basis remained the same. However, the stylistic similarity with the Psalter of Blanche of Castile is very high, and the Parisian origin seems to me more plausible.

One of the most interesting single scenes in the Psalter of Marguerite is the "Final Judgment", being the last scene of the Christological Cycle [fig. 14]. This scene is absent in the Gough Psalter and in the Fécamp work, but can be related to the Christ in glory in the Tetramorph in the Thott Psalter. The sole presence of this dramatic scene in the Psalter of Marguerite is rather curious and implies, in my view, a tragic vision of the personal fate⁷⁴. Marguerite died when 25 years old. Is then her psalter to be dated to this final year of her life? Does the scene of the Final Judgment have a link with Marguerite's own fate? The appreciation of this early Gothic masterwork is thus open to more in-depth studies, but we are far from the icon theory introduced before in the case of the Fécamp Psalter. We have crossed the line between a Byzantine approach to the Western production and general appreciation studies on medieval art, since we abandoned the Eastern-like iconographies of Fécamp. The Psalter of Marguerite of Burgundy is without any doubt related to the Gough Psalter and Fécamp, despite the chronological gap. But the clear Gothic pictorial style of the Paris psalter hides the Byzantine origin of the whole model.

⁷³ U. Nilgen, "Psalter für Gelehrte und Ungelerhrte im hohen Mittelalter", in F. O. Büttner (ed.), *The illuminated Psalters* (cit. n. 40) 239-247.

⁷⁴ J. Bradley, "You shall surely not die." *The concepts of Sin and Death as Expressed in the Manuscript Art of Northwestern Europe, c. 800-1200*, Leiden – Boston, Brill, 2008, 374-384.

A Byzantine approach to Western art is possible when a degree of similarity with Eastern conventions is reached. Not only when there is a clear Byzantine iconography but also when there are technical features which can be related to Byzantine art, such as a gold leaf background or the hieratism in the figuration, always with a powerful visual intention. Leslie Brubaker, summing up other scholars' opinions, stated that pictorial arts progressively replaced sculpture as a focus for devotional cults. Latin societies indeed became increasingly familiar with Byzantine art by way of the Norman conquests in Southern Italy and through the Crusades, something that was, reporting Anne Derbes' own ideas, supplemented by the appeal of the new and exotic⁷⁵.

Iconographic studies by themselves have usually played a major role in the analysis of this artistic influence and little attention has been paid to the material transmission towards northern Europe, and even less to the appreciation of these Eastern iconographies and techniques far from the Mediterranean. Some inroads into this field have been made since the early years of the 1970s. Two years after the publication of Demus' work, David Talbot Rice published his last work, *The Appreciation of Byzantine Art*⁷⁶. As well as being the first handbook on Byzantine art where the relationship with the West is taken into account, it is also the forerunner of a prospective wider discipline. Analyzing a millennium-long production, the British scholar defined mosaics and icons in terms sometimes borrowed from Western theological thought, such as Bernard de Clairvaux's well-known *Deus lux est*, this time applied to the shining magnificence of gold-background mosaics in

⁷⁵ L. Brubaker, "Image, audience, and Place: Interaction and Reproduction", in R. Ousterhout – L. Brubaker (eds.), *The Sacred Image* (cit. n. 28), 205.

⁷⁶ Into this particular field, some scholarship has made inroads: R. S. Nelson, "The Italian Appreciation and Appropriation of Illuminated Byzantine Manuscripts, ca. 1200-1450", *DOP* 49 (1995) 209-235.

Constantinople⁷⁷. The different typologies of illuminated books offer a multi-sided perspective, which spanned both lay and clergy spheres. Is a Byzantine-influenced production the choice of expert illuminators who actually offered that, or can we ascertain the presence of a more social trend regarding the prestige of this production in the minds of the commissioners? In my view, both explanations are compatible, and possibly are the key to the final decision. For a special request, the scriptorium offered an outstanding solution. The consideration of Byzantine art as a prestigious and legendary Christian product lies behind, but the exotic iconographies that the manuscripts displayed were also pleasant to Western eyes. A stricter Eastern theological meaning arises in the case of Fécamp, where the hieratism and the use of gold leaf are extremely close in meaning to its counterpoints in the East, the icons.

Even if I preached a more social approach to the subject, based on social trends and prestige considerations, the icon theory is appealing in some cases. It has indeed been applied successfully to the world of Italian Trecento painting but nothing has been said about Romanesque “Aristocratic” manuscript illumination, which usually combined high-rank patronage with outstanding artworks. The use of psalters by the lay stratum in a private context can lead us to think of a more personal approach to the images contained in the manuscript. The Christological images were possibly used as a sort of complementary visual inspiration for praying or meditative moments before the recitation of the Psalms. Most of these Western images have far from a close visual relationship between object and viewer such as, for example, in the case of Greek and Russian icons of the “Mother of God”. But as we have seen, Byzantine iconographies and technical conceptions in Western artworks were often so close to their Eastern counterparts that it is possible to think of a similar religious use in the Latin West in private contexts. Modifications were the logical product of different chronological

⁷⁷ D. Talbot Rice, *The appreciation of Byzantine Art*, London, Oxford University Press, 1972, 8.

periods, distance, and separated theological approaches to the Christian faith. But we do know that this influence is to be continued in the following century, in the mystic Eastern hieratism of the Sienese School, among many other extraordinary Western works, which have Byzantine art as a primordial origin.



Fig. 1. *Annunciation*, from the Paris Clunian Lectionary, Paris, BnF, Nouv. acq. lat. 2246, fol. 6r (photo: Courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



Fig. 2. *Pentecost*, from the Paris Clunian Lectionary, Paris, BnF, Nouv. acq. Lat. 2246, fol. 79v (photo: Courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



Fig. 3. *The Creation*, from the Souvigny Bible, Ms. Moulins, M. M. C., 1, fol. 4v (photo: Courtesy of the Médiathèque Moulins Communauté)



Fig. 4. *Mother of God*, from the Fécamp Psalter, Ms. The Hague, K. B., 76 F 13, fol. 18r (photo: Courtesy of the Dutch Royal Library)



Fig. 5. *Harrowing of the Hell*, from the Fécamp Psalter, Ms. The Hague, K. B., 76 F 13, fol. 24v (photo: Courtesy of the Dutch Royal Library)



Fig. 7. Commissioner's portrait and *Beatus vir* page, from the Fécamp Psalter, Ms. The Hague, K. B., 76 F 13, fols. 28v-29r (photo: Courtesy of the Dutch Royal Library)



Fig. 8. *Three Magi and Mother of God (Adoration)*, from the Fécamp Psalter, Ms. The Hague, K. B., 76 F 13, fols. 17v-18r (photo: Courtesy of the Dutch Royal Library)

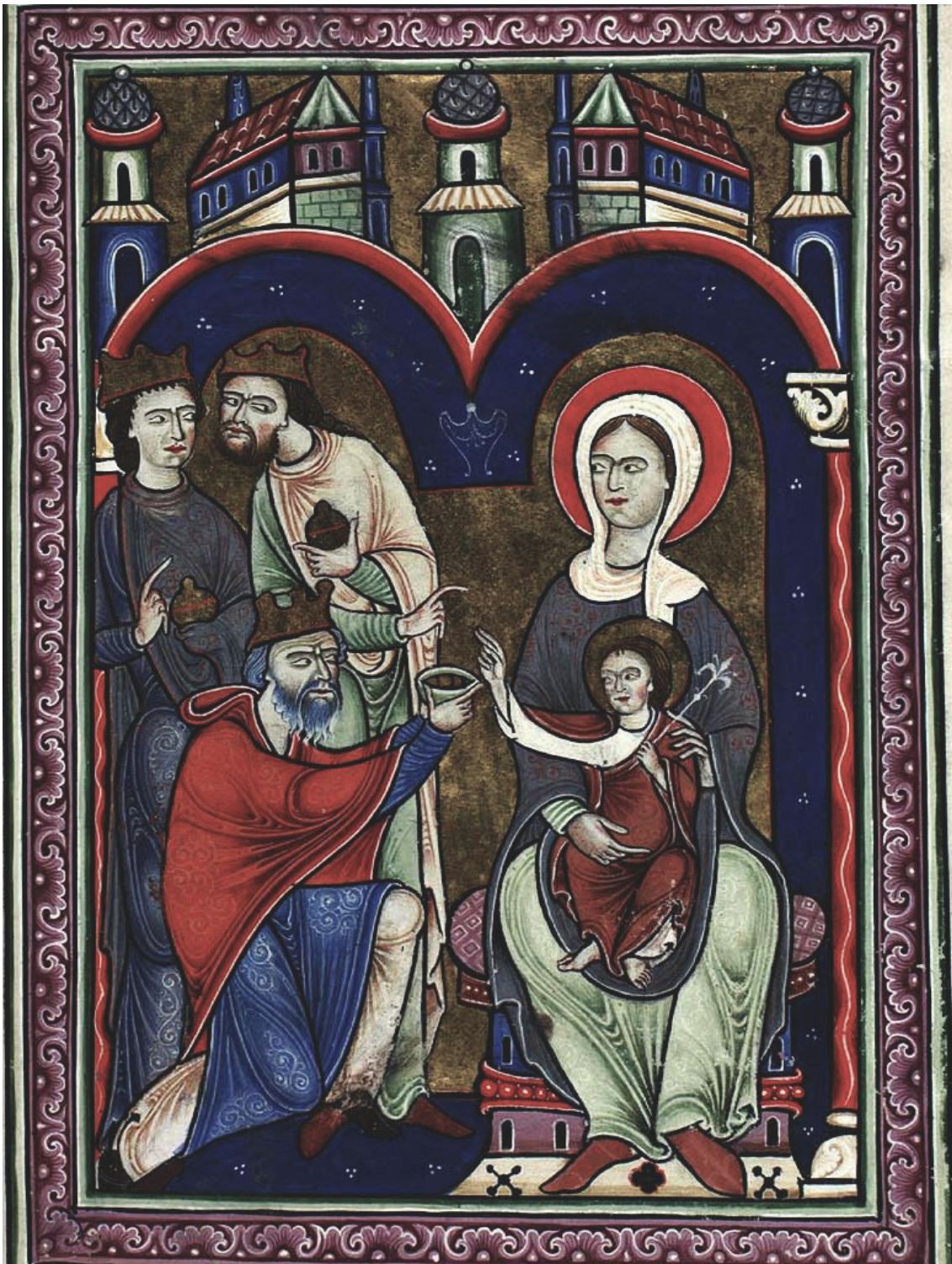


Fig. 9. *Adoration*, from the Thott Psalter, Ms. Copenhagen, Royal Library, 143, 2^o, fol. 11r (photo: Courtesy of the Danish Royal Library)



Fig. 10. *Christ in Glory and Tetramorph*, from the Thott Psalter, Ms. Copenhagen, Royal Library, 143, 2°, fol. 15v (photo: Courtesy of the Danish Royal Library)



Fig. 11. *Madonna in throne*, from the Winchester Psalter, Ms. London, British Library, Cotton, Nero C. IV, fol. 30v (photo: © British Library Board, ms. Cotton, Nero C. IV)



Fig. 12. *Pentecost*, from the Psalter of Marguerite of Burgundy, Ms. Paris, Bibliothèque de Sainte-Geneviève, 1273, fol. 18v (photo: Courtesy of the Bibliothèque de Sainte-Geneviève)



Fig. 13. *Adoration*, from the Psalter of Marguerite of Burgundy, Ms. Paris, Bibliothèque de Sainte-Geneviève, 1273, fol. 8v (photo: Courtesy of the Bibliothèque de Sainte-Geneviève)

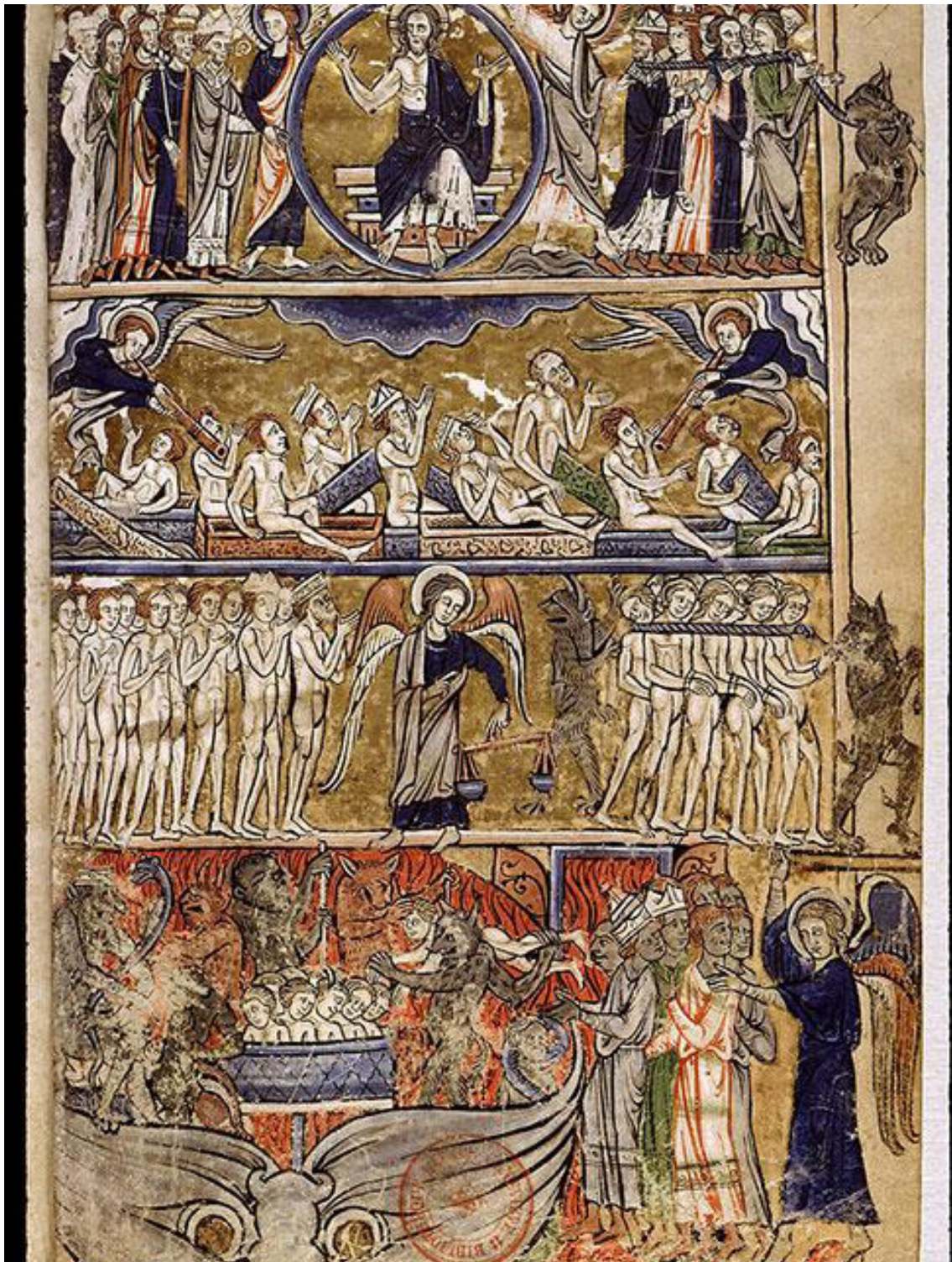


Fig. 14. *Last Judgment*, from the Psalter of Marguerite of Burgundy, Paris, Bibliothèque de Sainte-Geneviève, ms. 1273, fol. 19r (photo: Courtesy of the Bibliothèque de Sainte-Geneviève)