

Essay

Theophanu Evangelium: Greco-Egyptian treasure of the North

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In the Frankish period of the 7th and 8th centuries, settlements along the Düssel (thusila or Döson) included farming and fishing outposts where the tributary flowed into the Rhine. The women's community in Gerresheim, Düsseldorf was a foundation of the Frankish nobleman Gericus, established towards the end of the 9th century. The Magyar invasion of Gerresheim in 919 led to a transition of leadership of the female monastic community there to the supervision of the Archbishop of Cologne, Hermann I in 922.

After a consolidation and reconstruction, the consecration of a new church took place in 970 and confirmation of the Gerresheimer duty took place in 977. Emperor Otto II (973--983) preserved its foundational benefices in official documents. Abbess Theophanu 1039--1058 was appointed as head to supervise feeding many dependants of the abbey. It was under the reign of Teophanu that Essen, which had been called a city since 1003, received the right to hold markets in 1041. Ten years later, Teophanu had the eastern part of Essen Abbey constructed. Its crypt contains the tombs of St. Alfrid, Mathilde II, and Teophanu herself.

The *Theophanu- Evangelium* at the foot of Mary is a famous gift to the Essen Cathedral Treasury. Often referred to as Alfrid Gospels *MS Hs1*, the parchment manuscript is most likely from the Werden scriptorium. It originated around the year 800 and was transferred to the Essen foundation ca. 850. The Gospel Book contains over a thousand glosses in Latin, Old Saxon and Old

High German.

The manuscript contains a pericope, in Latin, the letter *Novum Opus* of Jerome to Pope Damasus I (b. Portugal, 305-384) who followed Pope Liberius; the preface *Plures Fuisse* of Jerome to the Gospels, the four prefaces to the Gospels and the text of the Gospels, also 14 canon tables, as well as the same hand that scripted most of the glosses, an incomplete *Ordo Lectorum*. The added bound Homiliar contains excerpts from various texts of the Venerable Bede. The text of the Gospels was created by three different writers with brown ink, writing is an early version of the Carolingian minuscule. Various sections were emphasized by the *Capitalis Quadrata*.

The uncial was used only in the Gospel of Matthew chapter for the beginnings, the genealogy of Christ and the Lord's Prayer. The headings are painted in yellow, red and green. The book is decorated in polychrome and includes both decorative sides, the canon tables, and incipit- initial pages and initials of different design and size. The colors used are Mennigerot and copper green; the yellow color has not yet been studied.

The book decoration of the manuscript is exceptionally diverse and penetrated by influences of several cultures. Note the decorative letters, in which parts were replaced with canine and bird-like figures. This ornamental letters can be traced back to fish bird letters of Merovingian book art of the 7th and 8th century. The initials on the other hand often have braided ribbon ornaments derived from motives of Irish-Anglo-Saxon period. In these

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ornaments, the Essene manuscript is identical to the Psalter of Charlemagne (*Bibliothèque Nationale ms. Lat. 13159*), which can be dated 795-800 and is suggestive of its production in the same scriptorium (Gerd, 1999, 28).

The use of different decorative shapes in a manuscript was not uncommon in the Carolingian illumination. The ornamental character of the representation is unaffected by the Carolingian Renaissance, which included a reliance on classical models and the representation of the people gave more space (Pothmann, 1987). The canon tables' script was designed by the illuminator differently. Arcades with arches and gable strips and various braids are decorated with leaf patterns trimmings. One of the canon tables has an identical ornament as column packing on how the Gundohinus Gospels (*Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale. Ms 3*) which bear similarities to the shapes of the arches (Gerds, 1999, 28).

Among the decorative sides, the cross-plot with the head of Christ in the intersection of the cross arms and symbols of the Evangelists between the cross arms is particularly striking. This miniature has in the faces on particularly clear Irish influences. Depictions of faces with low foreheads, in a line drawn with the nose eyebrows, eyes wide open, as well as their mouths are similar to the resulting band in the 8th century crucifix on p. 266 of the *Code Cal. sang. 51* of the Abbey Library of St. Gallen (Küppers and Mikat, 1966).

The design of the Cross in ms. 1 by colored rectangles indicates gemstones and its representation is an example of "*Crux Gemmata*." Therefore, the representation does not mean the crucifixion as an event, but Christ who "entered into his glory" through the cross. The presentation with the head of Christ at the intersection of the crossbar is rarely seen in western manuscripts; the Essene representation is one of the latest representations of this type, more typical of Eastern or Coptic Rite. Throughout this manuscript Christ is characterized as a teacher of truth. Folio v 68v. is the decorated side of the preface to the Gospel of Mark. The initial I is composed of two symmetrical intertwined patterns, generated by worm-like mythical creatures that are woven into a braid. The word "incipit" is scripted using zoomorphic motifs in Coptic *Majuskel*.

Furnished at Gerresheim, the treasure was translated to a sister community of St. Ursula near Cologne and its treasury, managed by Bishop Hermann (889--924), was recorded in the *Gerresheimer Testimony* as a result of the Hungarian invasion. Abbess *Heizzecha* was head of St. Hippolytus and St. Ursula at Cologne while fielding complaints from the the Archbishop of Cologne about the abuses of Gerresheimer Reeves in 1107.

'Dusseldorf ' is first recorded as a town in 1135. Gerresheimer abbess Hadwig von Wied (ca. 1150) was also the leader of the Essene community of women (1150 -before 1176?) founded on the privileges of her brother, the Archbishop of Cologne, Arnold II von Wied (1151--1156); the chapel was donated by wealthy

Schwarzrheindorf nuns to the woman's community there. St. Lambertus Basilika is a landmark in the historic core of Dusseldorf. The history of a previous building - under the patronage of Kanonissenstifts Gerresheim and the Foundation of St. Ursula in Cologne was through Pope Adrian IV's behest (1154--59); a certificate from May 23, 1159 notes that the origins of the building on site had been established much earlier.

Under Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa the little town of Kaiserswerth, lying at the northern edge of Dusseldorf, became a well-fortified outpost of the Empire. From the Palace of Barbarossa, a heavily fortified castle was built between 1174 and 1184 to guard against incursions from surrounding warlords. Under the capable leadership of Abbess Guda (1212--1232) Gerresheim achieved economic stability, recorded in the land register dating from the 2nd half of the 14th century Liturgical Ordo.

In 1236 the collegiate church, a Romanesque Basilika of St. Margaret, was completed and dedicated. Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach (1180-1240) von Gerresheim's famous miracles are attributed to this privilege. On August 14th, 1288 the sovereign, Count Adolf V von Berg, granted the village on the banks of the Dussel the right to call itself a city. Prior to that a bloody power struggle between the powerful Archbishop of Cologne and the Berg nobility had taken place, culminating in the battle of Worringen. Enemy forces wiped out the army of Cologne on 5 June 1288.

The Stadterhebungs monument celebrating Dusseldorf's elevation to city status on the Burgplatz serves as a reminder of Duke William I of Berg, Gelder and Jülich's patronage. On March 1, 1392 William I and Anna donated benefices for a treasurer, cantor and ten clerks at St. Lambertus, Dusseldorf. The church treasury had been increased by significant relics, including the bones of St. Apollinaris, as they were translated from Remagen whose veneration was spread by Benedictine monks. St. Apollinaris' feast is also noted in the Coptic Synaxarium in *Paremhat* (March 16).

In 1394, the three -nave church was completed in the Lower Rhine brick Gothic style; the construction of the choir was carried out on the foundations of the Romanesque building.

In use in the St. Lambertus Basilika was the *Missal with Sequences, MS 10075*, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, incomplete, containing 252 fols, written in the late 12th or early 13th century from the vicinity of Duesseldorf. The missal contains Beneventan chants written in staff notation. Beneventan chant and liturgy flourished from the middle of the 7th century, when the Arian Lombards became Catholic.

The history of Arian Lombards was recorded by Paul the Deacon who is also credited with the a Latin translation of the Greek *Life of Saint Mary the Egyptian*. Beneventan chant is distinguished by frequent and repeated use of various short melodic motifs. Unlike the Ambrosian rite, there is no special service for nightfall,

but there are about fifty extant antiphons and five responsories. The chants end on one of two pitches, a G or an A, and thus do not fit into the Gregorian system of eight modes.

With rare exceptions, only Proper chants which are dependent on the feast for the Mass survive. As in the Ambrosian rite, a threefold Kyrie was sung to a simple melody following the Gloria, but this was not analogous to the more complex Kyrie of the Gregorian repertory. In the Beneventan rite, the Proper of the Mass included an *Ingressa*, *Alleluia*, *Offertory*, *Communion*, *Exsultet* and in six extant Masses, a *Gradual*. The *Biblioteca Capitalore's* holdings include five graduals; of these texts, numbered 34, 35, 38, 39, and 40, numbers 38 and 40 contain main sources of all Beneventan chant.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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