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## **ABSTRACT**

This study contemplates the part played by style in the creation of Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian works of art produced in the seventh and eighth century. Considering style as a *locus* of meaning, it investigates how Anglo-Saxon art makers may have responded to the emergence of Continental styles brought to the region with the spread of Christianity. By looking at some of the ways style has been treated within the scholarship of Anglo-Saxon art objects, and by thinking about some of the effects stylistic analysis has had on current understandings of style, an alternative view of style is proposed. Working from the standpoint that Anglo-Saxon creators of artistic products were fully aware of the ramifications their stylistic choices had in conferring meaning, this investigation seeks to reveal some of the potential signs and symbols embedded in Anglo-Saxon designs. Taking various analytical and theoretical approaches to the material, it aims to offer some new interpretations of some of Northumbria's most canonical artworks and suggests new insights in to the mindset of Anglo-Saxon artists and viewers. Its overriding objective is try to understand more about style's role in the creation processes involved in formulating these works of art.

Dedicated to  
W.R. Green 1941-2012

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**INTRODUCTION:**  
**WORKS OF INFINITE VARIETY**

In the opening chapter of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, written by the Anglo-Saxon monk and scholar from his monastic foundation at Jarrow, Northumbria, in 731, Bede details the various peoples and their languages making up the population of the British Isles at his time of writing.<sup>1</sup> He says,

At this present time, there are five languages in Britain, just as the divine law is written in five books, all devoted to seeking out and setting forth one and the same kind of wisdom, namely the knowledge of sublime truth and of true sublimity. These are the English, British, Irish, Pictish, as well as the Latin languages; through the study of the scriptures, Latin is in general use among them all.<sup>2</sup>

This account presents a vivid description of the diverse communities inhabiting the country at his time of writing. Along with their different languages, cultural values and traditions, these ethnic groups were also fashioners of a wide range of works of art, and these exhibited artistic styles that were born out of their respective art-making cultures, traditions and practices. Existing examples of luxury metalwork, manuscript texts and illustrations, and once poly-chromed stone-carved monuments bear testimony to the artistic activities of these societies. Many of these works, and those they went on to influence, have been the focus of academic scrutiny and have been studied through understandings of the artistic styles they display. Amongst those looking at extant Anglo-Saxon artworks, some have sought to identify specific visual characteristics of these particular styles in order to ascertain patterns of transmission, artistic influence and contacts of those responsible for

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of some of Bede's motivations for writing his *History*, see Wallace-Hadrill, 1988. For a critical evaluation of Bede's description of the English peoples, see e.g. Stenton, 1971: 9-11

<sup>2</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 1:1 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969:16-17): Haec in praesenti iuxta numerum librorum quibus lex diuina scripta est, quinque gentium linguis unam eandemque summae ueritatis et uerae sublimates scientiam scrutatur et confitetur, Anglorum uidelicet Brettonum Scottorum Pictorum et Latinorum quae meditatione scripturarum ceteris omnibus est facta communis.

their production and have employed stylistic analysis to determine dates and places of origin for the art items under inspection.

However, the disconnected and often fragmentary nature of surviving materials from the Anglo-Saxon period, both in terms of the artworks themselves and the written accounts recording them has rendered this a thorny process. Thus, many studies of these art objects have relied upon stylistic analysis to bring a voice to these otherwise historically silent artefacts. Such style studies have done much to advance understandings of these objects and have shed useful light on this commonly, and unhelpfully dubbed, ‘dark’ age of British art history.<sup>3</sup> Yet, more recently, such stylistic approaches to Anglo-Saxon works have been called into question, with scholars beginning to reconsider these artworks, and have suggested the need for alternative visual methodological approaches. Prominent in this regard is the work of Nancy Netzer, whose considerations of the uses and abuses of style in such studies has highlighted particularly the way that style was conscripted and exploited in some earlier studies as a means of bolstering nationalistic identity, her work demonstrating the seriously xenophobic consequences resulting from such usages.<sup>4</sup> Netzer’s work in this area formed one of the contributions to the international conference held in 1996 that accompanied an exhibition of Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian works held at the Laing Gallery in Newcastle. The exhibition and conference centred on Northumbria’s ‘Golden Age’. The 1999 publication of this conference’s proceedings presents a collection of papers featuring Anglo-Saxon Northumbria and its material culture.<sup>5</sup> Presenting a fully interdisciplinary account of the major new developments in Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian research, this work was unprecedented in its scope and offered an unequalled perspective on the acme of Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian political, cultural and artistic achievement.

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<sup>3</sup> The term ‘dark age’ was seemingly first applied to the early medieval period by Petrarch in the fourteenth century. Thankfully, modern scholarship has done much to reverse the negative associations this term has cast on the period.

<sup>4</sup> Netzer, 1999: 315-26; 2001: 167-77

<sup>5</sup> Hawkes & Mills, 1999



Issues concerning style and its usage in visual analysis raised under this project have gone on to form a significant cornerstone for subsequent works in this area.

Although taking a slightly different methodological tack, this study seeks to contribute to the issues of style raised in 1999 and to recent debates about style and its usefulness in the contemplation of Anglo-Saxon works of art. However, rather than detracting from older scholastic edifices that have evolved in this area, it seeks to present an alternative view of style and its analysis that may provide a useful complementary counter-point to pre-existing ideas about style and its analytical study, and augment scholarly perceptions of style and its efficacy in the study of Anglo-Saxon visual objects. Of course this in itself is not a new proposition; the critical study of Anglo-Saxon style edited by Catherine Karkov and George Hardin Brown in 2003 highlighted many of the problems that have arisen in Anglo-Saxon studies as a consequence of stylistic analysis, going so far as to propose some useful alternative approaches to artistic styles.<sup>6</sup> However, the articles contained in the book were written by a number of different authors from varying academic disciplines and backgrounds who each perceived style according to their own particular fields of interest and scholarly pursuits. While Northumbria and its styles featured within these discussions, it was neither the central nor sole focus of enquiry. To date, the most comprehensive effort to consider the styles of Northumbria in the period is Carol Neuman De Vegvar's 1981 work in which she discussed the transmission and development of Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian aesthetic styles.<sup>7</sup> Through a consideration of the cultural climate from which certain Northumbrian works derived, she looked at the various influences and artistic impetuses for the creation of art works. In the closing paragraphs of her introduction, she posed that hers was a work that required continuation: that subsequent scholars of Northumbrian material should continue to question style and its

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<sup>6</sup> Karkov & Hardin Brown, 2003

<sup>7</sup> Neuman De Vegvar, 1981

role in understanding these works. This study, although taking an alternative view of style in Northumbria, aims to contribute to the field so richly tilled by Neuman De Vegvar.

It therefore seeks to impart a unified and specifically focused art historical approach to Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian styles that takes an active view of style's role in the creation of artworks. Moving away from formal aesthetic approaches and comparative methodologies concerned with charting objects into chronological order to provide a date and provenance for artefacts in favour of more interpretive lines of enquiry, this work marks a new departure as it adopts established art historical methodologies to examine artworks traditionally interrogated by archaeological approaches and situated within archaeological and historical contexts. Rather than focusing on exclusively stylistic evidence as geo-temporal indices, this analysis opts instead for a more interdisciplinary mode of stylistic enquiry, which takes account of such issues as image content, function, context of production, reception and display, and considers the roles of the patron, maker and viewer in the creative process. As such, it sets out a hypothesis that suggests that the makers of these works of art were cognisant of style's facility to instil a work with meaning. That is to say, that the Anglo-Saxon makers of creative works were completely able to manipulate, modulate and manage style so that it could be used to advance and promote their particular artistic ideas, creative desires, and cultural agendas. By viewing style in this way, it is possible to reveal much about these works and come closer to understanding some of the more visually challenging aspects of Anglo-Saxon designs. The purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to offer some new interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian works formulated from observations gathered from the styles exhibited. Understanding style as a vector of meaning, it seeks to uncover some of the direct and indirect meanings behind images displayed in some of the area's most recognised artworks.

In order to demonstrate the validity of such an hypothesis, a limited, but specifically focused research landscape has been chosen: the artistic products originating from, associated with, and influenced by the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria in the seventh and eighth centuries. The reasons for this selection require some qualification.

Like many previous Anglo-Saxon art studies, this work is grounded in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria around the period of the seventh and eighth centuries, although in doing so, it soon becomes apparent that pinning-down the precise location of what exactly constitutes the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria itself presents problems. This is because the elastic borders and regions of the kingdom were constantly expanding and contracting with certain places falling in and out of Northumbrian jurisdiction at different times.<sup>8</sup> Another problem faced when discussing Northumbria at this time is the inevitable bias towards the east of the region that results from the higher volume of documentary and archaeological evidence present in the east of the region compared to the west. However, for current purposes, these issues of boundary control, and weighted historical and archaeological record are side-stepped by considering ‘Northumbria’ as a loose term describing those territories in the northern counties of England that made up the bulk of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria from the reign of Æthelfrith to the period immediately following the sacking of the monastery of Lindisfarne by Viking raiders in 793.

The chief rationale driving this choice is that this place and time underwent radical social, cultural and economic changes, and these stimulated vibrant outpourings of artistic works by cultivating a fertile cultural environment to propagate the production of creative works of art. The artistic items produced under these conditions form the key focus of this enquiry and are treated throughout as primary resource material for this project. While

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<sup>8</sup> For insight into the topography and changing boundaries of Northumbria, see e.g. Higham, 1993: 108-24

some studies have used styles exhibited in such works as indications of dating and locating objects into organised, related patterns, issues of chronology and topography are not the major concerns of this work. Although the specifics of time and place of production of Northumbrian art works are of paramount importance to archaeological and historical, and indeed to art historical studies, such issues are not the primary interest here. What is important is how artistic styles may have functioned in the processes of creation of these works of art produced under Northumbrian influence in the period. Hence, here, 'Northumbria' is used as a useful term defining an amorphous group of art makers, viewers, patrons and recipients as well as assigning a geographic locale. Likewise, in terms of chronology, here it suffices to highlight some of the major socio-political shifts affecting the production of works of art in order to provide a brief historical context for the current discussion, as issues of dating will be more fully addressed within the main body of this work. At this point, all that is required is a brief outline of some of the major social issues affecting the production of art within the region at this time.

A useful historical starting point for this is the accession of Æthelfrith of Bernicia (c.592-616) to the throne of Northumbria, for it was Æthelfrith who initiated the annexation of the two kingdoms of Bernicia (from the River Tees to the Firth of Forth) and Deira (south of the Tees to the River Humber) into one unified Northumbrian state (Fig.1).<sup>9</sup> The act of merging these two Northern provinces would form the central powerbase of Northumbrian dominance for the following two centuries. Æthelfrith's successor, Edwin of Deira, continued to expand Northumbria's territories through his conquest of the British Kingdom of Elmet, extending Northumbrian power for a time as far as the Isles of Anglesey and Man, and so making it the most significant Anglo-Saxon kingdom in the country. Although the area remained in a constant state of political flux,

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<sup>9</sup> For information on the people mentioned here, see individual entries in e.g. Lapidge, *et al*, 2001

with warring dynastic factions struggling for power and control in the area (the exile of Æthelfrith's son, Oswald, to Dal Riada is an example of the feudal rivalries still occurring during Edwin's reign), Edwin's supremacy brought about a relative peace, stability and, with it, economic constancy in which the creative arts could thrive.

Edwin's expansion of Northumbria's lands and borders and his solidification of the union of the sub-kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira widened social contacts and thus elevated Northumbria to a position of overall power within Anglo-Saxon England. With this came the need to express visually the status and authority of the area and its leader, and created the demand for the production of visual objects befitting the redoubtable Northumbrian social elite. Examples, such as Edwin's commission of posts to be erected with bronze drinking cups hanging from them, so that travelers could drink and refresh themselves,<sup>10</sup> and his standard, 'which the Romans call a Tufa and the English call a thuf',<sup>11</sup> which was always carried before him, illustrate how this Northumbrian king used visual products to demonstrate his royal status.

During this period of Northumbrian ascendancy and comparatively stable sovereignty, a parallel desire for spiritual transformation emerged. Again, Edwin was seemingly instrumental in this change in Northumbrian polity. His wife, Ethelberga (or Tata, as she was also known),<sup>12</sup> was the sister of King Eadbald of Kent, who was raised in the traditions of the Roman Christian faith, established in Kent by Augustine at Canterbury. When she travelled north to be Edwin's bride, she took her priest, Paulinus, with her as her minister.<sup>13</sup> After some reluctance and much cajoling from Paulinus, and Pope Boniface who sent precious gifts including 'a silver mirror and an ivory comb

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<sup>10</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 2:16 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 193): *ibi ob refrigerium uiantium erectis stipitibus aereos caucus suspendi iuberet.*

<sup>11</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 2:16 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 193): *quod Romani tufam, Angli appellant thuuf ante eum ferri solebat.*

<sup>12</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 2: 9 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 163)

<sup>13</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 2:9 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 163)

adorned with gold', as incentives,<sup>14</sup> Edwin finally consented to be baptized, along with his kinsmen and many others, in a wooden church dedicated to St Peter that he had hastily built in York, on April 12<sup>th</sup> (Easter Day) in 627.<sup>15</sup>

However, the region's eventual (re)conversion to Christianity in time took place on two-fronts: initially transmitted through envoys of the Roman mission based in Canterbury, and then soon after through the introduction of Irish Christianity brought to the area on the request of King Oswald (d. 642).<sup>16</sup> After the battle of Heavenfield in 634, where Oswald defeated Cadwallon of Gwynedd, he took over ruler-ship of the joint territories of Bernicia and Deira.<sup>17</sup> As Bede recounts, on becoming king, Oswald asked the monks of Iona to convert Northumbria. Responding to his request, the monk and eventual saint, Aidan was sent and, through Oswald's patronage, he established a monastery at Lindisfarne on Holy Island, just off the coast of Bamburgh, one of Oswald's seats of power (Fig.2).<sup>18</sup> This double wave of Christian 'invasion' into the hearts and minds of the Northumbrian kings and their peoples represents a rare confluence of cultural events: variant forms of Christianity, each with their respective customs, beliefs and visual languages co-existing in the same time and place. Such a complex climate, however, caused some religious disharmony, with the alternative Christian traditions vying for dominance in the region.<sup>19</sup> This raised the need for some clarification as to which religious practices were to be considered most authoritative.

Thus, in 664 a Synod was held at Whitby to determine which Christian practices and rites would have religious autonomy in the area. The synod council was composed of

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<sup>14</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 2:11 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 175): id est speculum argenteum et pectine eboeum inauratum.

<sup>15</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 2:14 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 187)

<sup>16</sup> Charles-Edwards, 2003: 103-139

<sup>17</sup> For Oswald, see Stancliffe & Cambridge, 1995

<sup>18</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 3:3 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 219-21)

<sup>19</sup> Bede provides a clear example of the kinds of difficulties brought about by the occurrence of two forms of Christianity in his account of Easter, in which king Oswiu and his wife Eanflæd celebrated the paschal feast at two different times. See Bede, *H.E.*, 3: 25 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 297)

delegates from both Churches whose *priori* agenda was to put an end to the controversies that had arisen surrounding the date for the celebration of Easter. According to Bede and Eddius Stephanus, Wilfrid of York championed the calculation for Easter reputedly laid down by St Peter, which was legitimised by Roman canonical law, while Colman, speaking on behalf of the Irish contingent based at Lindisfarne, argued in favour of the computation apparently practiced by St John the Evangelist. Acting as judge over the proceedings, King Oswiu asked which saint had the greater authority. It was determined that, as Christ had entrusted Peter with the keys to heaven, he had the greater authority. Thus, Colman had to concede that Peter had primacy over John – and Oswiu decided that the Roman method for calculating Easter should be the method practiced in Northumbria.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, the Synod also decreed that the form of the monastic tonsure should take the Roman form.<sup>21</sup> This type of monastic haircut, understood to replicate the crown of thorns worn by Christ at his Passion, displayed a monk's Roman sympathies on a profoundly personal level. The 'style' of tonsure, be it Roman or Irish, served as a personal mark of distinction, instantly identifying the wearer as a filial member of a particular religious group. In this quite patent example, style (in this case a monastic hairstyle) functioned as means of connecting an individual or group to a wider network of affiliated members of an extended community. However, it also serves as a powerful illustration of how style could function as an outward sign of spiritual meaning. Hence, style's capacity to function in this way invites the suggestion for an alternative approach to its analysis. However, before this is possible, some of the ways that this historical and social background shaped the production of artworks is necessary.

One of the major consequences of having different interpretations of Christianity practiced in the same area is that each tradition brought with it an influx of new visual

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<sup>20</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 3:25 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 295-309); Eddius Stephanus, *V.W.* 10 (Colgrave, 1927: 21)

<sup>21</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 3:25 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 297)

objects and liturgical materials requisite for the practice and performance of ecclesiastical rituals. These religious objects displayed an exotic range of cultural influences and diverse artistic styles. However, these new religious artworks with their respective stylistic characteristics did not simply replace the art of the pagans in Northumbria in an act of visual suppression. Rather, this infiltration of religious creative works inspired the production of new types of works of art that appropriated and re-used existing indigenous artistic traits and styles most apt and most fluent in articulating the new Christian message to its pagan or newly converted Anglo-Saxon audiences. Indeed, the introduction of Christian works to the area supplied the necessary cultural catalyst to spark the creation of a new breed of artworks that although drawing from the artistic canons of peoples and places far a field, also drew from the extensive armoury of indigenous artistic styles at their disposal to communicate their changing socio-religious ideas.

Such visual changes ushered in by Christianity included transformations to the built environment of Northumbria, with churches and monasteries being constructed in stone to accommodate the burgeoning Christian congregations.<sup>22</sup> Despite wood being the vernacular building material of the Anglo-Saxons and the material apparently favoured by Irish church builders,<sup>23</sup> with the onset of Roman Christianity, stone became the desired material to build places of worship. The aspiration to build churches in stone came from knowledge and experience garnered from contacts with the European Continent, and these interactions spurred the impetus to present visually the Northumbrian Christian built landscape in a manner akin to Christian foundations abroad.<sup>24</sup> Churches and monastic foundations surviving from the period, such as St Peter's at Wearmouth built in *c.*674 and its sister foundation, St Paul's, Jarrow built in *c.*685, St Andrew's Abbey church at Hexham (*c.*672-3) and St Peter's abbey church, Ripon (*c.*669-678), provide impressive

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<sup>22</sup> Taylor & Taylor, 1965: 1-15

<sup>23</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 3: 25 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 295)

<sup>24</sup> Hawkes, 2003: 69-100; see below p. 166



examples of the building accomplishments of the Anglo-Saxon Church (Figs 3-6).<sup>25</sup> These religious foundations, some preserving much of their original character, also give a clear indication of the extent to which the buildings and churches of Rome and Roman churches on the Continent visually influenced local architectural forms and designs.<sup>26</sup>

External influences affecting Northumbrian material culture also came about through personal interactions with the wider Christian world, through social exchanges with visiting Christians that came to Northumbria.<sup>27</sup> They brought with them knowledge and experience of the extended Christian community. Notable examples of foreign (ecclesiastical) visitors to the region include Archbishop Theodore of Tarsus, Hadrian the African scholar,<sup>28</sup> and John the Archcantor, the singing master from St Peter's in Rome, who came to Wearmouth/Jarrow to teach the community the correct way to sing antiphons.<sup>29</sup> Along with church officials and religious teachers, foreign artisans also came to the area. They were employed to help build stone churches and brought with them knowledge of new building forms and architectural technologies. For example, according to Bede, Frankish glaziers were employed to teach the Northumbrians their methods of glass making and stonemasons from Gaul introduced their techniques of building in stone.<sup>30</sup>

Social connections with the Christian world beyond Anglo-Saxon shores, moreover, occurred in both directions. Indeed, accounts of Northumbrian pilgrims who travelled to the Continent to commune with Christians abroad have survived and these records give an insight into the buildings and objects seen on these overseas pilgrimages and preserve descriptions of some of the artefacts they brought back. The styles and motifs

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<sup>25</sup> For individual descriptions, see Taylor & Taylor, 1965: 297-312; 338-49; 432-46; 516-18

<sup>26</sup> E.g. Cramp, 2005

<sup>27</sup> See below, Chapter III

<sup>28</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 4: 1 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 329-33)

<sup>29</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.* 1: 6 (Plummer, 1896: 369)

<sup>30</sup> For glass making, see Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, 1: 5 (Plummer, 1869: 368); see also Cramp, 1975: 88-96. For importation of Gaulish stonemasonry see Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, 1: 5 (Plummer, 1896: 368)

exhibited on these imports filtered into the artistic psyche of Northumbrian creators, sparking regional copies of foreign exemplars as well as novel artistic responses to continental models. In turn, some of the newly created Northumbrian Christian artworks, with their combination of regional and foreign artistic styles, were deemed sufficiently artistically worthy to be taken as gifts to Christianity's heartland in Rome.<sup>31</sup>

Of the many cultural shifts occurring as a result of the region's conversion to Christianity, probably the most significant is the fact that Christianity demanded a radical change in communication media to spread 'the word' of God. Whereas, pre-Christian Northumbrians had passed down the stories and histories of their ancestors through oral tradition, their poetic verses and songs passing from generation to generation: the *spoken* word being the vehicle of artistic, dramatic and religious transmission of their cultural values and ethics, Christianity was a religion of the book that needed manuscripts to transmit the *written* word of the Christian God. Thus, the spread of literacy in the area, brought about by Christianity resulted in the increased production of books.

It is perhaps because of Northumbria's literary landscape that the area at this time has always attracted great scholarly interest, primarily because of the writings of Bede. For his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* represents the earliest, comprehensive English historical work charting the period from Britain's Roman rule to the invasion of Anglo-Saxon tribes, their settlement, and eventual conversion to the Christian faith.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, Bede's surviving literary output, which includes historical, computational, grammatical, biblical and hagiographical works, supplies a vast range of insights into the Anglo-Saxon socio-political sphere and particularly, the spiritual climate of the day. Additionally they also give a rare glimpse of some of the art objects made, exchanged and

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<sup>31</sup> See below, pp. 55-57

<sup>32</sup> Plummer's commentary provides an excellent insight into some of Bede's objectives for writing the *History*, see Plummer, 1896. For a comprehensive overview of *H.E.*, see Wallace-Hadrill, 1988.

viewed by Northumbrians, and as such provide a useful cultural backdrop to the contemplation of objects created within Northumbria.

Luckily, Bede's works have not survived in isolation. Other writers working in the region in the period such as Eddius Stephanus, Wilfrid of York's biographer, and unnamed writers like the author from Whitby who wrote the *Life of Gregory the Great*, the anonymous writer who recorded the lives of the Abbots of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, to name but a few, provide further evidence of Christianity's literary impact in the region at the time of its conversion.<sup>33</sup> These rare survivals from the period provide a significant, albeit limited, corpus of primary literary sources.

However, over and above their use as vital source material, books made in Northumbria or under Northumbrian influence at this time, provide significant examples of Anglo-Saxon material culture. Indeed, surviving Gospel manuscripts, biblical codices and liturgical books represent one of the clearest manifestations of the flowering of Northumbrian artistic creativity occurring under the sway of Christianity, the images contained within these manuscripts preserving not only models of calligraphic arts, but also providing an extensive glossary of artistic styles. Indeed, Northumbria's distinction in manuscript production has resulted in its acknowledgement as one of the premier centres of the visual arts in the Christian West and marks it amongst the most important literary centres in Europe at this time.<sup>34</sup>

Books, however, were not the only innovative means of artistically articulating the Christian message. The emergence of elaborately carved stone crosses depicting complex Christian iconographic programmes provide further examples of artistic developments occurring in the region resulting from its Christian conversion. These carved stone monuments, represent a genuinely groundbreaking approach to image making; one that has

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<sup>33</sup> For surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, see Alexander, 1978; Gneuss, 2001

<sup>34</sup> Bailey, 1999: fly jacket

no direct regional parallel or securely identifiable artistic antecedent.<sup>35</sup> These monolithic sculpted forms, relief carved with Christian (and other) images provide a unique insight into how images were selected, the way they functioned and the types of audiences they attracted. What is more, they indicate, in a highly visible way, the impact Christianity had on the Northumbrian landscape in a manner akin to the church building activities simultaneously occurring in the area in the period.

Nevertheless, it was not only newly fashioned art objects that were harnessed to promote and advance Christianity and its beliefs. Continuation of local arts in which the Anglo-Saxons excelled continued to be produced, and these too came to be adapted and absorbed by Christianity. Native crafts such as metalwork, weaving and embroidery were reconfigured for Christian usage. Surviving examples of high quality, precious metalwork such as Cuthbert's pectoral cross, fashioned in gold and garnets, and portable altar, adorned with silver repoussé work, give an insight into how local skills, techniques and metalwork products were adapted and put to the service of Christianity (Figs 7 & 8).<sup>36</sup> Likewise, the records speak of beautiful embroidered fabrics stitched with real gold thread that were made to adorn church altars, like the purple silk and gold embroidered altar cloths commissioned by Wilfrid for the dedication of his church at Ripon, and the elaborately embroidered gowns worn by the nuns of Coldingham who were castigated by Adomnan for their sartorial excess.<sup>37</sup> The late eighth/early ninth-century Anglo-Saxon embroideries surviving at Aldeneik, originally at Maaseik in Limburg, perhaps exemplify such textiles (Fig. 9).<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Bailey, 1996a: 23-41; Hawkes, 2003: 76-87

<sup>36</sup> Cuthbert's pectoral cross and portable altar are currently displayed along with other objects associated with Cuthbert's reliquary shrine in Durham Cathedral's Treasury. See, Battiscombe, 1956; Bonner *et al*, 1989; Webster & Backhouse, 1991: 133-34

<sup>37</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* 17 (Colgrave, 1927: 36-37); Bede, *H.E.* 4:25 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 427); see also, Foot, 2006: 161-62.

<sup>38</sup> Budny & Tweddle, 1984; Webster & Backhouse, 1991: 184; Crocker Owen, 2010: 310-11

It is these visual objects and the *seen* world of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria that forms the nucleus of this enquiry. However, rather than viewing the artworks and their artistic styles as zeitgeistian symptoms of a topographical and temporal group, they are here regarded as a means of accessing the thought processes of their makers. In such an approach, the styles used in these artworks play an obvious, but notoriously difficult role in their analysis. For earlier art historians, the elusive question of style was less problematic than it is today: it was seen as a means to connect objects to peoples and places, to collate and group disparate objects into cohesive patterns and to establish chains of influence and transmission. However, with the emergence of ‘new art history’, such types of comparative analysis have been viewed sceptically. Primarily, this is because in concentrating on formal elements like style, it is these elements that dominate the discussion rather the work of art itself.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, in such formal analyses of styles, the role of the individual artist or creator is often marginalised, artists being bystanders in discussions about similarity of forms. In a similar way, subject matter and the function of works are sidelined in favour of stylistic comparisons. Although the study of the western canon of art in general has embraced alternative approaches to style and its analysis, the field of Anglo-Saxon studies has only comparatively recently begun to re-evaluate style analysis’ pervasive hold on the study of these objects and engage with some of the critical, theoretical issues thrown-up by the study of style.

For this reason, Chapter I begins with a deliberation of some of the definitions of style that have arisen in visual studies using stylistic analysis as research criteria. Taking definitions from disciplines most commonly attuned to handling Anglo-Saxon materials and products and the styles they exhibit (Archaeology, Art History and Palaeography), it highlights some of the conflicting theoretical views of style present in its analysis in

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<sup>39</sup> Arnold, 2004: 4

different fields. Through a consideration of ‘Corpus’ scholarship and the criticisms that have arisen in recent times,<sup>40</sup> it looks at some of the underlying historiographical views of style that form the nexus of such debates. Then, examining how style has been defined in the fields of Archaeology and Art History, it considers how divergent views of style have affected the way Anglo-Saxon art objects are discussed. Following this, and considering style’s role in the analysis of manuscripts, the second part of Chapter I sets out a case study that examines some of the stylistic labels that have evolved in the contemplation of Northumbrian styles. Taking images contained in two contemporary manuscripts, the Christ in Majesty from the Codex Amiatinus and the image of Christ in the Durham Cassiodorus as comparanda, its objective is to address some of the issues encountered when using traditional style analysis to discuss images contained in manuscripts. Through examination of the stylistic terms “classical” and “insular”, it is considered how such overriding stylistic labels may have obscured some of the more idiosyncratic uses of style evident in the images. Following this, some of the ways that styles may have been purposefully selected in these examples to maximise visual impact and to add meaning to the images are proposed, arguing ultimately that the makers of such works were aware of style’s capacity to shape and develop image content. The overall purpose of Chapter I is to set out a contextual background that permits the suggestion of a slightly different approach to the use of style in art historical discourses on Anglo-Saxon art works.

The Chapter II takes examples of manuscript images that have been broadly defined in scholarship as ‘insular’: namely, those contained in the Echternach Gospels. This manuscript’s four evangelist pages are re-examined from the perspective that style functions as a major constituent in the formulation of meaning in these images. Through close visual analysis of their various stylistic components: geometric borders, figures and

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<sup>40</sup> Orton, 1999; 2003; Orton *et al*, 2007; Bailey, 2003

texts, its objective is to demonstrate that style may have been used in the construction of these images as a dynamic contributor to their iconographic scheme, and functions as a visible demonstration of learnedness. Drawing from semiological and iconographic approaches, this chapter presents a new interpretation of the manuscript's images derived largely from their stylistic content.

Shifting its focus to consider the impact of Classical styles on the area's artworks, the Chapter III looks at the role of Rome in shaping Northumbrian ideas about art and identity. By probing some of the motivations for acquiring Roman forms, some of the visual strategies adopted by Northumbrian art makers are discussed. As part of this, the role of style and questions about its use in understanding Roman-inspired works are raised. Taking the Bewcastle Cross as an example, some of the stylistic issues arising in its study are examined. Then, a new interpretation of the monument's floral iconography follows derived, in the main, from evidence based on style. Following on from this, the second part of this chapter looks at the impact of classical styles and layouts deriving from Roman architectural contexts. Looking at the back panel of the Franks Casket, it questions how Northumbrian makers may have exploited and developed Roman styles in order to assert Northumbrian identity, and in particular considers how style may have been drafted in as a vehicle of self-promotion, used to endorse Northumbria's place within the orthodox Roman Church.

In conclusion, this study presents an evaluation of what can be achieved by considering style in this way, and presents its findings through comparison with other stylistic works. The over-riding purpose of this thesis is to offer new interpretations of some of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria's most renowned artworks: interpretations that have been rationalised through understandings of styles and style's place within iconographic programmes. In selecting a time and place recognised in much Anglo-Saxon scholarship as

having a 'regional and period style' and by choosing some of its most celebrated artworks as its focus of enquiry, it is hoped that this alternative view of the part played by style in the creative process may disclose significant information about the objects that has not previously been uncovered by traditional formal approaches. Indeed, by handling style in this reflective way, by going beyond its more common use as an analytical tool for grouping diverse works together, it is hoped that deeper understandings of these artworks may be achieved. With recent discoveries of new Anglo-Saxon objects, such as those forming part of the magnificent Staffordshire hoard, such a re-evaluation of style's place within Anglo-Saxon studies, provides a significant contribution to current thinking.



# **CHAPTER I**

## **PART 1**

### **SOME PROBLEMS OF DEFINING STYLE**

#### **Introduction**

The art and material culture of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria has been, for some time, a major focus of interest amongst antiquarians and archaeologists. Art historians have also engaged with this subject matter and have applied methodologies previously ignored or criticised in archaeological circles: the studies of iconography, iconology and semiotics being just a few examples. However, one common analytical ground shared by the disciplines of archaeology and art history in their respective historiographies is the approach of stylistic analysis, a methodology that has recently generated some criticism. It is castigated as ‘the banal identification of similarity and transmitted influence’, and as being ‘the instrument of the connoisseur ... an arcane pursuit practiced by an elite in the service of the art market’.<sup>41</sup> Yet, despite such censure, stylistic analysis remains one of the foundations of research into Anglo-Saxon art. This is because it is still significant as a methodological approach as it continues to reveal important information about visual objects. So, for example, it can be used to reveal group contacts and the transmission of patterns and skills, and to provide evidence of possible sources, and the identities of the ‘hand’ of artists. Moreover, stylistic analysis provides a convenient means of describing disparate objects and things that appear different to each other.

Yet despite its clear usefulness, style and its analysis remains problematic. Even pinpointing a precise definition of style has proved a difficult undertaking. Indeed, some of the major theoretical issues arising in dialogues on style derive, in part, from its lack of

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<sup>41</sup> Cassidy, 1990: 4

clear definition. Although this absence of a definitive explanation for what exactly constitutes style has had far-reaching consequences for theoretical art historians, it has been largely, and until relatively recently, ignored by archaeologists.<sup>42</sup> By considering how stylistic analysis has been applied to works of art deriving from the kingdom of Northumbria in the seventh and eighth centuries some of the analytical problems that have arisen from the various conceptions of style and its description become evident. Thus, this chapter looks at some of the ways that style and its analysis have been used in the consideration of Anglo-Saxon art, surveys some of the definitions of style that have been proffered in the fields of archaeology and art history, and points out some of the analytical consequences of such definitions.

In order to further demonstrate some of these issues, the second part of this chapter will set out a case study taking contemporaneous examples of artworks produced in the first quarter of the eighth century: the enthroned David image of the Durham Cassiodorus<sup>43</sup> and the Ezra portrait of the Codex Amiatinus.<sup>44</sup> Scrutiny of these images will reveal some of the problems of viewing early Anglo-Saxon art through the lens of stylistic analysis, and suggest a different strategy for understanding styles manifested in the artworks produced. Furthermore, it can be demonstrated that through the use of visual and literary primary source evidence, a working ‘theory of style’ existed in this period. This is in direct contrast to other discussions of early Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian art styles that have focused on comparisons of similarities existing between visual forms in order to situate individual items in larger groups, or have considered styles as creative displays of the artistic urges of a given society in a specified historical time. However, study of the Anglo-Saxon material reveals that some style selections made by artists, scribes, artisans and patrons may be

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<sup>42</sup> Trigger, 1990: 4-12

<sup>43</sup> Durham Cassiodorus, Durham: Durham Cathedral Library, Manuscript B ii 30, dated on palaeographic grounds to second quarter of the eighth century (Alexander, 1979: 46, cat. 16)

<sup>44</sup> Codex Amiatinus, Florence: Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, MS. Amiatinus 1, dated on palaeographic grounds to first quarter of the eighth century (Alexander, 1979: 32-35, cat. 7)

indicative of a number of social and cultural desires. Indeed, it will be shown that certain styles may have been chosen specifically for the messages and signs they transmitted to particular audiences, and that some styles were deliberately manipulated to convey the social, political, cultural and religious agendas of their creators.

However, it is important to note here that in such a comparative study, one of the problems of style analysis is immediately highlighted. That is, by placing two images side by side for comparison in this way as a means of demonstrating the flaws of style analysis, the study actually relies upon a stylistic approach. This in itself begs the question of whether it is possible to discuss works of art without reference to style. Is style analysis an inevitable consequence of talking about art? It is these questions that will be addressed here.

#### Question: What is style?

Any discussion of style is awkward as the word 'style' can simultaneously mean a number of things to various people in any given period. As a result, many and varied definitions exist.<sup>45</sup> The problem of defining style has been tackled by some of the most renowned philosophers and theoreticians, with a broad range of definitions and explanations of style being offered. Yet, there seems to be little agreement as to what precisely constitutes style. Although it is outside the remit of this study to outline the entire historiography of the concept of style and the issues that have arisen in such discourses, for present purposes, the field of discussion is limited to an overview of how style has been utilised in relation to the study of early Anglo-Saxon art. This includes consideration of the role of the archaeologist and the art historian in aiding (or obscuring) understanding of the concept of style.

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<sup>45</sup> See below p. 41

### Disciplinary Approaches: Archaeology & Stylistic Analysis

As many of the extant works of early Anglo-Saxon art have been excavated, the archaeologist has been the major contributor to current knowledge of Anglo-Saxon material culture. This in itself presents an important consideration that is often overlooked: namely that, it would be expected that the era in which archaeology emerges as a codified discipline (the nineteenth century), and the periods in which subsequent excavations take place are significant for understanding archaeological perceptions of style. What the 'current thinking' was by a nineteenth-century pioneer of archaeology, whose taxonomic ideas were perhaps shaped by Darwinian theories or Hegelian notions of an 'infinite spirit' prevalent at the time would perhaps be expected to be vastly different to the archaeologists of today familiar with modern technological and anthropological approaches. Yet, in the consideration of excavated objects, observations based upon stylistic analysis remain a common trend, seemingly despite periodic change. Therefore, to understand archaeology's longstanding use of stylistic approaches, it is worth thinking about how investigations based on style have been applied in archaeological circles and why stylistic analysis has dominated such discussions, particularly those relating to the material culture of the Anglo-Saxons.

Archaeology studies human history. It investigates human civilization through the retrieval and analysis of its material culture and the ecological information it has left behind in the ground. Through the processes of survey, excavation and analysis, it constructs a picture of the past constructed through the material objects recovered and the environmental evidence gathered, its purpose being to expand knowledge about past societies and reveal or date the progress of the human race. One of the primary tasks of the archaeologist is to chart finds into chronological order and map them into a timeline

through the recognition of style, type, function and geographical location in order to establish a date for items recovered. By comparing like-objects with like-objects, the regional and stylistic relationships of a given group taken from a datable stratified layer, the archaeologist is able to construct patterns of usage in given areas and demonstrate filial, social, political, and trade relationships occurring between distinct populations. Archaeology's application of stylistic analysis in this manner has led to some significant research projects relating to Anglo-Saxon art. Indeed, archaeology's hand in shaping understanding of the period of history that includes the Germanic migrations and the Anglo-Saxons' conversion to Christianity is immeasurable; consideration of one such archaeological use of style underlines these benefits while also highlighting some of the concerns about its usage that have arisen in recent scholarship.

Perhaps one of the most notable examples of an archaeological use of stylistic analysis is to be found in the publications of the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture project.<sup>46</sup> Dame Rosemary Cramp and a team of scholars from various research backgrounds instigated this vast national project in the 1980s, which is housed in the Archaeology Department of Durham University, received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, and continues to be supported by the British Academy. Its editorial board is made up of a panel of advisers from a number of disciplines and occupations: members include: Rosemary Cramp, Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at Durham University; Leslie Webster, retired from the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities at the British Museum; Richard Bailey *OBE*, Emeritus Professor of Anglo-Saxon Civilisations at Newcastle University; and Sir David Wilson, former Director of the British Museum (1977-92) and honorary professor of University College London. The *project's* objective is to identify, record, and publish in a consistent format, the earliest

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<sup>46</sup> Most famously, Fred Orton has noted this; see Orton, 1999; 2003. He has, however, reduced an entire project into an anonymous monolith - understandably to avoid casting personal aspersions - but this does, nevertheless, lead to some confusion (see below p 39).

English sculpture dating from the seventh to the eleventh centuries.<sup>47</sup> Its role in aiding our understanding of sculptural works cannot be over estimated.

The sculpture is published in regional catalogues of the individual monuments, fully illustrated by scaled photographs, and accompanied by general discussion of their relationships and significance with full bibliographic references.<sup>48</sup> The authors of each of the nine volumes published so far come from diverse disciplinary and research backgrounds,<sup>49</sup> and together they have provided a scholarly directory of extant and now-lost Anglo-Saxon sculpture, which makes previously inaccessible works accessible to all scholars. Nevertheless, the manner in which stylistic analysis has been employed by some of the *project's* authors has attracted some criticism.

From the *project's* website, it can be seen that their primary objective is to identify and record the relationships and dates existing between individual monuments. As part of this process, stylistic analysis is called upon as a means of classifying the specific visual characteristics of each monument; by using the carved motifs as indices, corresponding forms, traits, and tendencies are charted to show the internal relationships evident amongst groups of monuments in a given location. With this information, a chronological framework is constructed based upon type-specific modes of stylistic expression. As a methodology it has yielded some remarkable results, including the identification of centres of production using similar forms and motifs on a diverse range of monuments. An example of this is the relationships discovered between the Masham Column, the Cundall-Aldbrough cross shaft and the Hovingham panel from North Yorkshire (Figs 10-12). In this case, Jim Lang, drawing on previous scholarship, examines the common motifs and templates and suggests that they may have derived from a common source of origin even

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<sup>47</sup> CASSS website, [http://www.dur.ac.uk/Corpus/intro\\_page](http://www.dur.ac.uk/Corpus/intro_page) (accessed, March 5th, 2012)

<sup>48</sup> CASSS website, [http://www.dur.ac.uk/Corpus/intro\\_page](http://www.dur.ac.uk/Corpus/intro_page) (accessed, March 5th, 2012)

<sup>49</sup> Cramp, 1984; Bailey & Cramp, 1988; Lang, 1991; Tweddle *et al*, 1996; Stafford & Stocker, 1999; Lang, 2002; Cramp, 2006; Coatsworth, 2008; Bailey, 2011

though they are located several miles away from each other, and are visually and functionally different.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, connections between the Bewcastle (Cumbria) and Ruthwell (Dumfries) monuments have long been recognised through the correspondence of scenes and motifs incorporated in their decorative schemes (Figs 13 & 14).<sup>51</sup>

Despite this, some scholars have criticised such uses of stylistic analysis because it fails to explain the meanings behind visual forms, and for the way that it marginalises the role of the individual in the creative process.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, it has been also criticised for its failure to elucidate the differences between forms and motifs displayed on stone sculptures. Art historian, Fred Orton is one of the *project's* most recent and vocal critics. Drawing on Meyer Schapiro's definition of style,<sup>53</sup> he explains that, 'to investigate style is to look for constraints that are explained by an organising principle regarded as determining the character of the parts and the patterning of the whole',<sup>54</sup> and that:

The Corpus is concerned with organising its objects into a series where each member is characterised by the degree of its similarity to the other members – it is based on seeing and explaining the development of similarities of form, decorative elements, and occasionally quality and expression, and ways of carving...via a catalogue of connected approximates.<sup>55</sup>

He argues that the *Corpus* needs similarity, given that its primary concern is to establish homogeneous relations between all stone sculptures in a defined spatio-temporal area.<sup>56</sup> He proposes that, as the universal cannot explain the specific and that the judgemental framework of the analysis requires a pre-organised system of evaluations, stylistic analysis

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<sup>50</sup> Lang, 1991:147; c.f. Hawkes, 1999: 204-15; 2002: 337-48

<sup>51</sup> E.g. Conway, 1912: 193; Collingwood, 1913: 294-95; Cramp, 1984: 19-23; Bailey & Cramp, 1988; Lang, 1983: 187. For an extended Bibliography, see [www.dur.ac.uk/corpus/bibliography\\_folder/bibliography.php3](http://www.dur.ac.uk/corpus/bibliography_folder/bibliography.php3) (accessed March 5th, 2012)

<sup>52</sup> Sidebottom, 1999: 206-19

<sup>53</sup> See below p.39

<sup>54</sup> Orton, 1999: 216-26

<sup>55</sup> Orton, 1999: 220

<sup>56</sup> Orton, 1999: 221

is necessarily governed by principles of classification and discrimination.<sup>57</sup> This means that any thing that falls outside the given criterion is therefore anomalous and is consequently forced into groupings that are difficult to rationalise. Phrases like ‘most closely related to’, ‘associated with’, reminiscent of’ and/or ‘analogous to’ are called upon by Orton as evidence of how the *project* manipulates its judgement criterion to handle things that fall beyond the boundaries of its classificatory system, while failing to identify which authors might be invoking any one of these approximate frames of reference.<sup>58</sup>

In the light of these perceptions, Orton proposes that the differences between sculptures provide a more logical analytical framework within which to work, as these may point to diverse functions for monuments that have previously been considered as similar.<sup>59</sup> Concentrating on the Ruthwell and Bewcastle monuments (as his sole examples), he demonstrates how individual scenes, although displaying similar subject matter, can be understood to signify something different depending on the audience it was intended to be seen by, or the type of community from which it derived. So, for example, Orton cites the predominance of Latin used in the inscriptions of the Ruthwell shaft as opposed to the vernacular used on the Bewcastle shaft. He argues that the conscious selection of language may suggest that the makers responsible for their production were appealing to two different audiences, Ruthwell - displaying the language of clerics - being more appropriate in a religious setting, and Bewcastle - with its vernacular script - appealing to a more secular community of viewers.<sup>60</sup>

This lengthy rehearsal of Orton’s argument is necessary as it shows how alternative attitudes to stylistic analysis are beginning to surface in the study of Anglo-Saxon material.

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<sup>57</sup> Orton, 2003: 86

<sup>58</sup> Orton, 1999: 221

<sup>59</sup> Bailey (2003: 97) defends the project’s use of analysis based on similarities perceived through stylistic evidence by arguing that ‘such issues are important, not least because they have implications for patronage, the audience and the meaning of individual monuments’.

<sup>60</sup> Orton, 1999: 223



Although Orton's work has not gone without criticism from the academic community, it serves as a good example of how scholars are re-thinking the role of approaches based on style in the study of Anglo-Saxon art.<sup>61</sup> In order to comprehend some of the underlying tensions within the field, a consideration of the theoretical matrix behind stylistic analysis is required. In addition, it is necessary to contextualise the historical background of this kind of scholarly approach.

With this in mind, one point to consider is that Orton's notion of style is not only very specific, but it may not necessarily reflect the understanding of style invoked by the Corpus authors. Moreover, his perception of style is derived from a style definition outlined by the art historian, Meyer Schapiro, who outlined his understanding of style when commenting on Focillon's scholarship.<sup>62</sup> In this specific context, he proposed that:

...style is a system of forms with a quality and a meaningful expression through which the personality of the artist and the broad outlook of a group are visible. It is also a vehicle of expression within the group, communicating and fixing certain values of religious, social and moral life through the emotional suggestiveness of forms. It is, besides, a common ground against which innovations and individuality of particular works may be measured. By considering the succession of works in time and space and by matching variations of style with historical events and with the varying features of other fields of culture, the historian of art attempts, with the help of common-sense psychology and social theory, to account for the changes of style or stylistic traits.<sup>63</sup>

For Schapiro, style, in the context of Focillon's formalist approach to art history, is a form of expression and an indicator of personality. It is suggestive of the psychological state of the creator(s) and the group within which the work originates. While Schapiro cites dating and locating works as facets of his definition, his main description resides in the emotional suggestiveness of stylistic modes of communication and expression. Ultimately influenced by Marxism, his approach to style considers the social conditions behind the stylistic traits

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<sup>61</sup> For an example of such criticism of Orton, see Bailey, 2003: 93-103

<sup>62</sup> For Schapiro's comments on 'Style' in relation to Focillon's scholarship, see: Schapiro, 1957; for Focillon's own views, see: Focillon, 1938 (Bonny & King, 1969)

<sup>63</sup> Schapiro, 1957: 51-52

and seeks to explain the power structures that inform stylistic choices made.<sup>64</sup> Drawing on this scholarship, Orton's antipathy towards 'Corpus scholarship'<sup>65</sup> is levelled at its failure to engage with the role of the individual in the formulation of style. In response, Orton regards the monuments in isolation, as psychological products of specific groups controlled by the social circumstances of their time; the Corpus project, in contrast, relies on group paradigms and shared similarity of form, and fails to contemplate their socio/psychological origins. With this in mind, it should be questioned whether it is actually possible to reconcile interest in the individual or group from such a Marxist perspective, or whether such a view serves only to provide a psychological or sociological context for the individual or group rather than actually identifying them.

Overall, it seems that this kind of theoretical conflict arises from different attitudes to what constitutes style. It seems that while the Corpus project favours one definition, Orton adopts another; in this case, Schapiro's, which was ultimately derived from Marx and introduced in response to a specific scholarly debate of the 1930s-50s. However, it is also necessary to note that Orton's reversal of analysis of style from one based on similarity to one of difference does not necessarily dispense with style analysis; it merely replaces one evaluation criterion with another, and in itself is a form of stylistic analysis. It is also useful to keep in mind that the views of style favoured by the 'Corpus' and Orton each find their basis in philosophical understandings of styles put forward in the nineteenth century, by nineteenth-century philosophers; both approaches could thus be deemed equally problematic in terms of their theoretical basis.

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<sup>64</sup> Schapiro's Marxist view of art history can be most clearly detected in his work on the monastery of Santo Domingo De Silos (Schapiro, 1977).

<sup>65</sup> Orton, 1999: 220

### Style as Defined in Archaeology

The fracture that occurs in this example may be explained further by taking into account some of the existing formulae used throughout the nineteenth century for describing what is meant by 'style'. The etymology of the word suggests that it derives from the Latin word 'stilus': a tool used to inscribe marks into wax tablets. The implication is that the personal marks of the individual using a stilus gave rise to the word's (much later) association as a distinguishing means of expression. Given the perception of style as a recognisable individual characteristic, it was easily called upon in the service of Archaeology.<sup>66</sup> In 1816, the newly formed Danish Royal Commission for the Preservation and Collection of Antiquities employed the Danish scholar Christian Jürgensen Thomsen (1788-1865) to organise and catalogue the various objects and artefacts owned by the Danish government.<sup>67</sup> His background in numismatics provided him with a starting point for organising the collection, as coins could supply a securely datable framework into which the other objects could be situated. Using the coins' epigraphy and the images depicted on them as chronological and regional indicators, Thomsen began to arrange the other items in the collection into similar groups. Recognising style in this manner as a means of identifying date and location, he developed a methodology deemed a scientific approach, an empirical scheme of classification that aspired to the level of a natural science.<sup>68</sup> Although a pioneer of stylistic analysis, Thomsen did not attempt to provide a definition for style. Rather, he and his followers used style intuitively as a distinguishing characteristic in the analysis of archaeological finds without any attempt at a theoretical rationalisation of its usage.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Gombrich, 1960: 8; Speake, 1980: 5; Sauerlander, 1983: 253-70

<sup>67</sup> Trigger, 1990: 73-109; Hawkes, 2007a: 143

<sup>68</sup> Thomsen is commonly identified as the founder of scientific archaeology and is credited with defining the three-age system of 'stone age', 'bronze age' and 'iron age' (Trigger, 1990: 73-109).

<sup>69</sup> For stylistic analyses developed in numismatic contexts without definition, see Worsaae, 1843; Thoms, 1849; Evans, 1850.

Indeed, as recent work by Jane Hawkes demonstrates,<sup>70</sup> Collingwood's 1927 work on *Northumbrian Crosses* used a similar typological approach.<sup>71</sup> As a follower of John Ruskin, Collingwood was fully conversant with the art historical theories of his day, including Hegel's definition of style as a product of a guiding 'world spirit'.<sup>72</sup> While Collingwood's earlier works display the kind of themes and ideas commonly associated with art historical discourses, his work on the stone sculptures of Northumbria takes a more formalistic, archaeological approach. As Hawkes notes,

Collingwood's distinctive stylistic approach emerges only when he starts considering the sculpture as a collective body of material, rather than as a series of individual monuments, ... it is only when Collingwood looks at the material collectively that he begins to invoke what were archaeological methods of analysis, and to publish almost exclusively in archaeological journals.<sup>73</sup>

Hawkes' analysis shows that Collingwood was elaborating on traditional art historical uses of style analysis by constructing something 'other', something more systematic and scientific.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, in one of his earlier (1907) articles on Anglo-Saxon sculpture Collingwood explains that 'it is necessary to compare the forms before us, and to study their materials and technic; then to examine their subject matter, figures, animals and ornament; and finally, to suggest a grouping of the remains in accordance with our analysis'.<sup>75</sup> One of the tacit implications of this is that, for Collingwood, style resides in the outward projection of similarity. He subordinates the function of the monuments and the purpose of their decorative schemes in favour of highly specific visual characteristics such as resemblances of technologies, materials, contents and forms. These factors function as symptomatic markers of specific places and periods of origin. As noted by Orton and

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<sup>70</sup> Hawkes, 2007a: 142-152

<sup>71</sup> Collingwood, 1927

<sup>72</sup> Hawkes, 2007a: 146

<sup>73</sup> Hawkes, 2007a: 150-51

<sup>74</sup> Hawkes, 2007a: 151

<sup>75</sup> Collingwood, 1907: 268-69, cited from Hawkes, 2007: 151

others, Collingwood's methodology is the direct predecessor to that used by the authors of the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* volumes.<sup>76</sup> This type of stylistic approach, with its diagnostic value for specifying particular historical contexts, has formed the backbone of subsequent archaeological analyses. However, its place is starting to be re-evaluated by archaeologists who are increasingly self-conscious about their discipline's lack of a definitive formula for what constitutes style.

Put succinctly, Gadmar, one of the few theoreticians identifiable in both of the historiographies of archaeology and art history, has said that, 'the notion of style is one of the un-discussed concepts upon which our historical consciousness is based'.<sup>77</sup> His concern with the use of style-based research without a fully formulated definition perhaps instigated a call to arms as, since his discussion in 1965, archaeologists have begun to reconsider their discipline's use of the methodology. This has resulted in the construction of new definitions of style emerging in the field and the appearance of 'new archaeology'.<sup>78</sup> For example Wobst's hugely influential 'Information-Exchange Theory' of 1977 stated that 'style functions in cultural systems as an avenue of communication ... [it is] that part of the formal variation in material culture that can be related to the participation of artefacts in processes of information exchange'.<sup>79</sup> The communicative power of styles as vehicles of historical, cultural, and social information has sparked interest in how style is transmitted - especially in relation to applied and decorative arts. This was because decorative forms were perceived as repositories of cultural information.

Building on this idea, James Sackett argued that in traditional archaeological approaches 'style involves a choice between functionally equivalent alternatives, and a

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<sup>76</sup> Orton, 2003: 65-92. Collingwood is also cited by Cramp see: Cramp, (1984b: vii).

<sup>77</sup> Gadmar, 1965: 466

<sup>78</sup> 'New Archaeology' or 'Processual Archaeology' developed in the latter part of the 1950s. Its aim was to approach the archaeological record through more scientific and anthropological approaches than had previously been used in traditional, cultural history based archaeology; see Willey & Philips, 1958; Binford, 1962; Binford & Binford, 1968

<sup>79</sup> Wobst, 1977: 321

style is a highly specific and characteristic manner of doing something, which by its very nature is peculiar to a specific time and place...'.<sup>80</sup> By contrast, he proposed that 'style resides in the choices made by artisans, particularly choices that result in the same functional end'.<sup>81</sup> Sackett termed this *isochrestic variation*; these are variants that are equivalent in use that are learned or socially transmitted. Variation may therefore reflect both social interaction and historical context.<sup>82</sup> Put more simply, style and function are inextricably linked. Certain styles are passed down and reproduced by subsequent generations who preserve or alter the original inherited forms. These may be externally influenced by contact with outside sources or learned through interaction and exchange with persons or objects outside the realms of their own personal experience. Variations in styles caused by this kind of transmission may be traced to provide evidence of social and cultural relations.

Responding to Sackett's assessment of style, Polly Wiessner proposed that 'style is a form of non-verbal communication through doing something in a certain way that communicates information about relative identity'.<sup>83</sup> She proposed that 'style transmits information about personal and social identity that is used in fundamental human cognitive processes of identification via identification and comparison'.<sup>84</sup> This definition elaborates on the communicative power of style as a transmitter of cultural information. As Michelle Hegemon has noted, Wiessner's analysis assigns style as 'an active component of human activity', rather than as a 'passive diagnostic code'.<sup>85</sup>

While style's apparent capacity to 'actively' communicate cultural data has begun to be recognised, some have argued that it is also an expression of feeling, not merely a

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<sup>80</sup> Sackett, 1977: 370; 1982: 62

<sup>81</sup> Sackett, 1977: 377

<sup>82</sup> Sackett, 1977: 371

<sup>83</sup> Wiessner, 1985: 160-66; 1990: 105

<sup>84</sup> Wiessner, 1989: 53-63

<sup>85</sup> Hegemon, 1992:517-36

vehicle for the communication of ideas.<sup>86</sup> However, these more recent archaeological theories are in marked contrast to the work of earlier archaeologists such as Thomsen and his followers, whose work privileged linked assemblages and shared similarities of form as the basis of their analyses. Recent accounts of archaeology's historiography demonstrate the perceptible shifts within the discipline and seek to explain this type of methodological disparity.<sup>87</sup>

### The Art Historian: Style and Cultural History

Turning to consider some of the major historiographic developments made in art historical discourses on style, it is also possible to trace some of the ambiguities that occur within these contexts, particularly with regard to the relationship between style and cultural history. Since its notional beginnings, the question of style and its relation to cultural history has been central to the discipline of art history. As early as 1755 style had been considered a marker of human creativity and of social and historical development. Indeed, cyclic patterns of decline and maturity of art styles dominated early art historical treatises.<sup>88</sup> The most famous of these early works is probably that of Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-68), the 'Father of Art History'.<sup>89</sup> For Winckelmann, the art of antiquity was the apogee of human achievement; the art of ancient Greece and Rome displayed a style that reached aesthetic perfection because of the exemplary social conditions behind its creation.<sup>90</sup> Just as Giorgio Vasari's earlier *Lives of the Artists* had taken a biographical approach in order to show the origin, progress, change and decline of art,<sup>91</sup> Winckelmann's history showed that art shifted through a series of developmental

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<sup>86</sup> Holly, 1984: 25

<sup>87</sup> For Archaeology's historiography, see Trigger, 1990

<sup>88</sup> Morelli, 1890: 1-58; Wölfflin, 1960: 1-17

<sup>89</sup> Fernie, 1995: 68

<sup>90</sup> Winckelmann, 1755; Fusili 1765, facsimile reprint, 1999: 3-13

<sup>91</sup> Vasari, *Lives* (Bull, 1987)

progressions. However, unlike Vasari, he insisted on studying the cultural genesis of styles and on locating the technical developments evident in the art of specific cultures. As Eric Fernie notes, Winckelmann ‘elevated historical structure over individual life, writing what has come to be called cultural history’.<sup>92</sup>

Some two centuries later, Hegel considered the importance of cultural history in understanding what constitutes style in discussions of art. He postulated that an ‘Infinite Spirit’ or ‘idea’ behind history works itself out dialectically through time by manipulating human actors caught in its path.<sup>93</sup> His notion of history was as a biography of this ‘World Spirit’.<sup>94</sup> This kind of zeitgeist theory had a considerable impact for understanding the concept of style as it suggested that any prevailing style deriving from a particular culture in a certain time is the result of the external influence of the ‘spirit of the age’.<sup>95</sup> This meant that the spirit-force could guide humankind to make things look a particular way, in a certain time and place through ‘style’. Hegel regarded all periods as movements and saw them as symptoms of the omnipotent demiurge, a phantom that resided in the human collective. Alois Riegl (1858-1905), Hegel’s contemporary, proposed that universal laws existing throughout history governed the development of art,<sup>96</sup> the first law being that art always progresses without regression or pause. Riegl used the term *kunstwollen* (aesthetic volition) to describe the spiritual conditions of particular periods. He suggested that *kunstwollen* was that metaphysical force which wills art, an urge that was felt instinctively rather than acquired through an assessment of style. Ernst Gombrich (1909-2001) questioned both Hegel and Riegl’s hypotheses by asking who and what was doing the urging.

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<sup>92</sup> Fernie, 1995: 70

<sup>93</sup> Holly, 1984: 28

<sup>94</sup> Bosanquet, 1905: xxi.

<sup>95</sup> Hegel, 1837 (Hartman, 1953:68-69)

<sup>96</sup> Riegl, 1901, cited by Fernie, 2001: 116



Indeed, Gombrich criticised Hegel's metaphysical notion of style because it relegated the role of the individual in the formation of style to an inert, will-less drone. Like Shapiro, Gombrich believed that the individual, the artist, was the active agent, not a mythical, supra-natural entity that exerts its pervasive control over the passive collective. He thus condemned Hegel's synchronic approach to history (and aesthetics) by asserting that 'movements, not periods, are started by people. A movement has a core of dedicated souls, a crowd of hangers-on. Movements have their outward signs: their styles of behaviour, style of speech, dress etc.'<sup>97</sup> For Gombrich, these outward signs and styles were traceable through the contemplation of the technologies used or rejected by particular cultures or societies. He argued that, 'it is always fruitful to ask for the reasons which made a culture or society reject a tool or invention which seemed to offer tangible advantages in one particular direction. It is in trying to answer this question that we discover the reality of that closely knit fabric which we call culture'.<sup>98</sup> Although Gombrich has been criticised, by amongst others, Norman Bryson, for accepting the traditional historical canon of art without question,<sup>99</sup> his 'ecology' of art has had far-reaching consequences for modern art historians, and particularly for the scholarship of Anglo-Saxon art.

In the study of Anglo-Saxon metalwork, for example (as with the study of the sculpture) stylistic analysis has been traditionally invoked as the principle means of investigation. This has been the case since the early-twentieth century when the archaeologist Bernhard Salin, in his book *Die Altgermanische Thieornamentik* of 1904,<sup>100</sup> devised a system of classification for the animal motifs commonly associated with Anglo-Saxon metalwork. Salin was a student of Oscar Montelius at the University of Upsala. Building on the work of his supervising professor, he created three categories that he called

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<sup>97</sup> Gombrich, 1969: 35-38

<sup>98</sup> Gombrich, 1969: 37

<sup>99</sup> Bryson, 1983: 21

<sup>100</sup> Salin, 1904

‘Style I, II and III’. His ‘Style I’ contained the fragmented, broken-bodied type of animal usually related to the earlier period of animal motifs (Fig. 15a). Salin argued that these animals, with their exploded body parts, were Scandinavian in origin, although influenced by earlier trade and military exchange with Rome and by Roman metalwork techniques such as chip carving; he dated his ‘Style I’ to the fifth and sixth centuries.<sup>101</sup> His second style group contained inter-twined zoomorphic animals. Their hallmark features include serpentine or ribbon-like bodies, modified heads, feet and hips, and complex, harmonious interlacing of animal forms (Fig. 15b). Salin believed that this group derived and developed from ‘Style I’, and thus dated it to the seventh century. ‘Style III’ comprised the comparatively sophisticated interlaced animals with more modified heads, feet and hips and more sinuous, curvilinear bodies (Fig. 15c); he dated this group to the eighth century.<sup>102</sup>

Subsequent scholars have adopted Salin’s classification of Anglo-Saxon animal motifs as the standard by which animal ornament is to be described and classified.<sup>103</sup> The effectiveness of his system in the pursuit of dating and demonstrating origins has thus received much scholarly attention, an interest that gathered momentum with the 1939 discovery of the Sutton Hoo burial site and its impressive array of high status metalwork that displayed some of the finest examples of animal interlacing.<sup>104</sup> The amount and quality of this metalwork forced a reconsideration of Salin’s approach as many of the Sutton Hoo pieces fell outside the boundaries of his system of evaluation; they offered resistance to the underlying systems of judgement set out by Salin in his analytic criterion (Fig. 16).<sup>105</sup>

Salin’s system of animal motif classification is particularly problematicised by the work of Niamh Whitfield. Perhaps influenced by Gombrich, she uses close visual analysis

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<sup>101</sup> Salin, 1904: 128

<sup>102</sup> For a more complete discussion of Salin’s classification, see Speake, 1980.

<sup>103</sup> Although, for modifications, see Kendrick, 1934

<sup>104</sup> Bruce-Mitford, 1975; Carver, 2005

<sup>105</sup> E.g. Leigh, 1984: 34-42

to illustrate the spread and influence of technologies associated with ‘Celtic’ and Anglo-Saxon metalwork styles. Her work on the Hunterson Brooch, for example, explains the use of underlying geometry and schematic measurements as contributing elements in aiding our understanding of why certain forms look the way they do (Figs 17 & 18).<sup>106</sup> Although she does not specifically allude to style in her analysis of the Hunterson Brooch, she does accept that its appearance is ‘similar to the Lindisfarne Gospels’, and can therefore ‘be dated to a similar period’.<sup>107</sup> Her most recent work traces the geographical spread of filigree ornament and the localised manufacturing techniques associated with its production. Through a detailed consideration of the regional origins of filigree and the technological methods used in its manufacture, she has persuasively demonstrated how certain technological developments may or may not have filtered through to various communities or indeed, different countries and cultures.<sup>108</sup> By tracing the transmission of specific forms, motifs, and methods associated with filigree ornament production, her work prompts questions about the reliability of Salin’s system of identification as her findings often suggest alternative paradigms of spread, influence, and dating to those outlined by Salin.

Although Whitfield uses technology as a determining factor in her study, it can still be regarded as a form of stylistic analysis with the criterion of judgement moving from considerations of similarity of visual form to similarities perceived through examination of production, skill and technique. Whereas Salin’s system was based on a stylistic approach similar to that established by early scholars like Thomsen, Whitfield’s notion of style has more in common with that laid down by Gombrich. This demonstrates how, without a universalised definition of what constitutes style, a number of subtle variants on the theme can co-exist within the field.

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<sup>106</sup> Whitfield, 1999: 296-311

<sup>107</sup> Whitfield, 1999: 306

<sup>108</sup> Whitfield, 2007: 18-39

However, facing this problem head-on, Catherine Karkov, in her introduction to her co-edited book on Anglo-Saxon styles proposed, in contrast to Meyer Schapiro's definition of style as 'constant form', that: 'style in Anglo-Saxon culture might best be defined not as the constancy of form, but more generally as "the ordering of forms" (verbal and visual)',<sup>109</sup> adding that, 'Anglo-Saxon styles in general are characterised by 1) Ambiguity and 2) a love of complex pattern and surface decoration'. She continues by noting that, 'ambiguity could carry a number of meanings and serve a variety of functions', and that ambiguity 'may be viewed as a device designed to make the viewer or reader think about meaning'.<sup>110</sup> Such a view of style raises the possibility of style's dynamic role in the creation of meaningful works; as such, it provides a useful peg upon which to hang some of the ideas presented here. However, for present purposes, a supplementary clause is also necessary: namely, that style is that part of creation that involves a unique way of doing something that becomes synonymous with a particular person or group, or that is so successful in its objective as to inspire adoption and re-duplication by others.

Nevertheless, it remains the case that there is no simple way of defining style and for this reason, the application of stylistic analysis in the investigation of works of art frequently generates more questions than answers. As has been outlined, style may be understood as a means of communication; a signature of cultural development; a mark of technological advancement or decline; a symptom of an age; an assay of a time or place; a psychological or emotional expression; or a means of personal or group identification. It is also clear that different scholars have formulated different ways of applying stylistic analysis with varying and sometimes conflicting results. Despite this, its stronghold in discussions of Anglo-Saxon art remains intact, although art historians like Orton, Ó Carragáin, Hawkes, and Bailey have made headway in loosening its grasp in the field of

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<sup>109</sup> Karkov & Brown, 2003: 2

<sup>110</sup> Karkov & Brown, 2003: 3

Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture,<sup>111</sup> as has the work of Youngs and Webster in the study of Anglo-Saxon metalwork.<sup>112</sup> However, in the analysis of Anglo-Saxon illustrated manuscripts, style is hardly discussed as an issue. Style and its analysis is the natural condition of manuscript investigation, it is applied without qualification and hardly receives any critical attention.

### Manuscripts, Palaeography and Style

Within the field of manuscript studies, palaeographers, codicologists and art historians have traced the evolution of the written word through the examination of graphic forms and analyses of the methods of book production. While codicologists have focused on the technical make-up of manuscripts by identifying the materials, techniques and methodologies applied to manuscript construction and have traced these technical attributes to particular periods in time to help date manuscripts, the palaeographer has focused on the written word itself as a means of disseminating information. The palaeographer has charted the origins of writing in order to establish date and provenance; possible models of inspiration; the scribe(s)/hand(s) responsible for production; the patron or commissioner, and the functions of particular kinds of manuscripts. By recognising the developmental patterns of influences affecting written forms in particular periods, the palaeographer has created a relative chronology of writing.

Through comparisons with other extant sources and identification of particular graphic tendencies, manuscripts can be located within the canon of the history of writing.<sup>113</sup> In the study of Western manuscripts this is generally made possible through the recognition of various types of script (such as majuscule, miniscule, rustic capitals, English

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<sup>111</sup> Hawkes, 1995; 1997; 1999, Bailey, 1996; 1999; Orton, 1999; Ó Carragáin, 2005

<sup>112</sup> Youngs, 1989; Webster, 2003

<sup>113</sup> Gaur, 1987: 14-17

uncial, insular miniscule.).<sup>114</sup> By formulating a methodology that seeks to emulate the type of practices carried out in the natural sciences (geology, metallurgy or palaeontology), that use analysis based on type-specificity as a means to locate single specimens within a larger pre-established group, palaeographic stylistic approaches have come to be regarded as ‘empirical’ forms of research. A by-product of this is that images and decoration contained in manuscripts have tended to be given similar empirical treatment. However, in applying this kind of analytical framework to images, some of the more idiosyncratic qualities of artistic styles, such as traits that lay beyond the expected stylistic normative categories and those that sit outside the boundaries of value criteria are often overlooked. This can be demonstrated by considering some of the nomenclature used in assigning and assessing images contained in manuscripts.

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<sup>114</sup> E.g. Bischoff, 1990; Lowe, 1960; Brown, 1991

**PART 2**  
**A CASE STUDY: EZRA, DAVID, AND SOME PROBLEMS OF**  
**STYLISTIC ANALYSIS**

Introduction

Visual comparison of two images contained in separate manuscripts commonly attributed to Northumbria in the first half of the eighth century by formal aesthetic evidence provides a useful demonstration of some of the complexities arising from the application of generalised stylistic terms used in stylistic analysis of Anglo-Saxon manuscript images. Indeed, close visual examination of styles exhibited in these images exposes some of the analytical problems arising from judgements formulated from notions of constant aesthetic form. The two miniatures selected are the depiction of Ezra from the Codex Amiatinus and David Rex from the Durham Cassiodorus (Figs 19 & 20).<sup>115</sup> These works have been specifically chosen as they are deemed to have much in common in terms of their origins and production, yet at the same time can equally be viewed as examples of artworks displaying apparently different artistic styles. Scrutiny of their content and creative milieu brings these shared features and divergences to the fore.

Similarities

The first feature that the Ezra and David images can be seen to have in common is that both constitute parts of image programmes contained in large format codices. The Codex Amiatinus, housing Ezra's image, is a pandect; (contains all the books of the Bible in a

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<sup>115</sup> Codex Amiatinus, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, MS Amiatinus 1, first quarter of the eighth century (Alexander, 1979: 32-35); Durham Cassiodorus, Durham, Durham Cathedral Library, MS B II 30, dated on palaeographic grounds to the second quarter of the eighth century (Alexander, 1978: 32-35. cat. 7)

single volume). Made-up of 1029 folios, it weighs 53k; its pages measure around 540mm x 345mm and closed, including its bindings, the manuscript is 253mm thick. The Durham Cassiodorus, likewise, is a single volume compilation; it contains three epitomized books of Cassiodorus' Commentary on the Psalms. It is bound with 261 folios, weighs 9.54k, with each page measuring 420mm x 295mm. Although in terms of its heft the Durham Cassiodorus falls short of the Amiatinus' long time comparison with the weight of a female Great Dane,<sup>116</sup> weighing in at around the same as a 'corpulent spaniel',<sup>117</sup> its pages (roughly corresponding to the size of a modern A3) are very close in size to those of the Amiatinus. As such, both codices form part of relatively small group of extant large format insular manuscripts.<sup>118</sup>

Furthermore, both volumes are commonly understood to have been produced at the twin monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow in the first half of the eighth century, with Jarrow in particular being singled out as their probable place of origin. As far as Amiatinus' attribution is concerned, its ascription to Jarrow has required a great deal of detective work on the part of many generations of scholars. This is because for around a thousand years the Codex Amiatinus was believed to be an Italian manuscript.<sup>119</sup> Although little is known of its earlier whereabouts, its story is picked up in the fifteenth century when it was donated to St Saviour's Abbey on Monte Amiata (from where it takes its name) and where it remained until 1786 when it was moved to Laurentian Library in Florence.<sup>120</sup> It was not until 1886 that Giovanni Battista De Rossi (1822-1894), then head librarian of the Vatican library, identified it to be one of the three new translation Bibles produced at Jarrow under

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<sup>116</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 2

<sup>117</sup> Bailey, 1978: 3

<sup>118</sup> Bailey, 1978: 22; Marsden, 1994: 103-04

<sup>119</sup> Westwood, 1884: 15-18; Zimmermann, 1914: 262-69; Baldwin-Brown, 1921: pls.xxxii-xxxix; Colgrave, 1958: 10

<sup>120</sup> Castaldi, 2001, paper given at the 'City and the Book', International Congress, Florence, May-June, 2001



the instruction of its abbot, Ceolfrith, described by Bede in his *History of the Abbots*.<sup>121</sup>

The key Bedan text he identified reads:

He [Ceolfrith] added three copies of the new translation of the Bible to the one copy of the old translation, which he had brought back from Rome. One of these he took with him as a present when he went back to Rome in his old age, and the other two he bequeathed to his monasteries.<sup>122</sup>

De Rossi discovered that Amiatinus' colophon (Fig. 21),<sup>123</sup> had parts of its script written over erasures. These stated that the manuscript was produced by Peter the Lombard (abbot of St Saviour's in the late ninth century), but this had in fact, been altered from an earlier inscription, though no trace of a palimpsest had survived. Through comparison with Bede's written account of the book's creation, De Rossi was able to restore the majority of the colophon's falsified text. He suggested that it had originally said that the work was by Ceolfrith of the British (*Ceolfridus Britonum*) and was therefore able to assign the manuscript to Jarrow.<sup>124</sup>

Shortly after his breakthrough, the English biblical scholar, Fenton Hort (1822-1892) proved De Rossi's theories about the colophon to be correct. He recognised that the *Anonymous Lives of the Abbots*,<sup>125</sup> with its account of Jarrow's triple book project and its description of Ceolfrith's journey to Rome to donate one of his large codices to the shrine of the apostle, which also recorded the original text of the colophon, provided the evidence that it was Ceolfrith of the English (*Ceolfridus Anglorum*) who was responsible for producing the manuscript:

...he [Ceolfrith] had three Pandects copied: two of them he placed in his monasteries' churches so that all who wished to read a chapter of either testament could quickly find what they wanted, while the third one he

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<sup>121</sup> De Rossi, 1886

<sup>122</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, 15 (Plummer, 1896: 379-80; trans. Farmer & Webb, 1998: 203): it ut tres pandectes nouae translationis, ad unum uertuae translationis quem de Roma adtulerat, ipse super adiungeret; quorum unum senex Romam rediens secum inter alia pro munere sumpsit, duos utriusque monasterio reliquit.

<sup>123</sup> Codex Amiatinus, fol.1<sup>v</sup>

<sup>124</sup> The Amiatinus colophon reads: *Cenobium ad eximii merito venerabile Salvatoris/quem caput ecclesiae dedicat alta fides/Petrus Langobardum extremis de finibus abbas/ devoti affectus pignora mitto mei/ meque meosque optans tanti inter gaudia Patris/ in coelis memorem semper habere locum.*

<sup>125</sup> Anon, *Hist. Abb.* (Plummer, 1896: 387-423; trans. Farmer & Webb, 1998: 213-29)

decided to offer when he was going to Rome as a gift to St Peter, Prince of the Apostles.<sup>126</sup>

Later, the *Anonymous*, gives an account of Ceolfrith's death on his way to Rome, where he was to deliver the Amiatinus:

So when the father had been buried, some of the brothers who had escorted him returned home to tell in his own monastery where and when he had died: some however completed the proposed journey to Rome to deliver the presents which he had sent. Amongst these was the Bible (as we have said) translated from the Hebrew and Greek originals to the interpretation of the blessed Jerome, which had written as its beginning a verse as follows: "To the body of sublime Peter, justly venerated, whom ancient faith declares to be the head of the Church, I Ceolfrith, abbot from the furthest ends of England send pledges of my devoted affection, desiring that I and mine may ever have a place amidst the joys of so great a father, a memorial in heaven".<sup>127</sup>

This text clarified the colophon's altered inscription and thus supplied convincing evidence of Amiatinus' Jarrow attribution.<sup>128</sup> Although at the time still unpublished on the Continent and therefore apparently unknown to De Rossi,<sup>129</sup> the *Anonymous* provided confirmation of his emerging conclusions about the true content of the colophon.<sup>130</sup> It should be noted however, that another scholar, George Forest Browne, had already proposed '*Ceolfridus Anglorum*' as an alternative rendering of the colophon, sending his findings to the *Guardian* newspaper shortly before Hort's announcement in the journal, *Academy and Literature*.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Anon. *Hist. Abb.*, 20 (Plummer, 1896: 395; trans. Farmer, 1998: 220): Ita ut alia tres Pandectes faceret describe, quorum duo per totidem sua monasteria posuit in aecclesiis, ut cunctis qui aliquod capitulum de utrolibet Testamento legere uoluissent, in promptu esset inuenire quod cuperent; tertium autem Romam profecturus donum beato Petro apostolorum principi offerre decreuit.

<sup>127</sup> Anon. *Hist. Abb.*, 37 (Plummer, 1896: 402; trans. Farmer & Webb, 1998: 227): Sepulto igitur patre, quidam ex fratribus, qui eum deduxerunt, patriam rediere, narraturi in monasterio ipsius ubi et quando transiret e corpore; quidam uero dispositum Romam iter peregere, delaturi munera quae miserat. In quibus uidelicet muneribus erat Pandectes, ut diximus, interpretatione beati Hieronimi presbiteri ex Hebreo et Greco fonte transfusus, habens in capite scriptos huius mundi uersiculos: "Corpus ad eximii merito uenerabile Petri, Dedicat aecclesiae quem caput alta fides, Ceolfridus, Anglorum extremis de finibus abbas, Deuoti affectus pignora mitto mei, Meque meosque optans tanti inter gaudia patris in caelis memorem semper habere locum".

<sup>128</sup> Hort, 1887, 373: 148. See also Chazelle, 2003: 129-57

<sup>129</sup> Hort, 1887, 373: 148-49

<sup>130</sup> Corsano (1987: 4-5) provides a useful bibliography of the Amiatinus' early studies

<sup>131</sup> Browne, 1888, 849: 89; 1915: 183

Nevertheless, as well as firmly locating Jarrow as the Amiatinus' place of origin, identification of these early written accounts also helped to limit the manuscript's dating parameters. As De Rossi had demonstrated it to be one of the three new (Vulgate) translation biblical pandects copied from the old Latin translation (*antiqua translatio*) of the Bible brought back from Rome by Ceolfrith, that his first trip to Rome had occurred in around 678 when he presumably acquired the old translation model, and that he had died in Langre on his way to Rome for a second time in 716, this supplied a logical *terminus a quo* and *terminus ante quem* for the Amiatinus' Jarrow production.<sup>132</sup> However, it should be noted that at this time the *Academy* writers still believed that the manuscript's images had been lifted from an earlier, sixth-century, Italian manuscript or had been produced by an Italian artist working in Northumbria.<sup>133</sup> It was not until Bruce Mitford identified the material consistency of the Amiatinus' images that their Northumbrian design and production was definitively identified.<sup>134</sup>

The date and place of origin of the Durham Cassiodorus, on the other hand, have proven much harder to determine with any certainty. However, like Amiatinus, it is also commonly held to be a creation of Wearmouth-Jarrow's scriptoria and once more Jarrow has been credited as its likely place of origin. This longstanding association derives from its recording in cathedral booklists of Durham Cathedral library of the twelfth century, and 1391,<sup>135</sup> where it is listed amongst the Cathedral's earliest manuscripts. It is believed to be one of the many books recovered by the monks of Wearmouth-Jarrow when they moved to Durham during the Norman ecclesiastical reformation.<sup>136</sup> Moreover, style-based studies of the manuscript seemingly confirmed its Jarrow origins. For example, philological evidence for its Jarrow derivation was proposed by Lowe who identified that distinctive uncial

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<sup>132</sup> For discussion of Ceolfrith's journeys to the Continent, see Wood, 1995: 11-15

<sup>133</sup> Browne, 1887: 309; 1888: 307-308; Hort, 1889: 41-43

<sup>134</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967; 1969

<sup>135</sup> Raine, 1838

<sup>136</sup> Alexander, 1978: 46

letters (*ALEPH/BETH*) seen in the margins of fol.202<sup>v</sup> (contemporary with the Amiatinus text) were of an ‘Amiatinus/Jarrow type’.<sup>137</sup> Later, Carl Nordenfalk, developing the ideas of Adolph Goldschmidt, also saw similarities between the ornamental frames of the Durham Cassiodorus and another manuscript associated with Jarrow, the Valenciennes Apocalypse (Fig. 22), in which he also saw the influence of its Byzantine-influenced, seventh-century model in the emaciated-figure style of the David image on fol. 172<sup>v</sup> of the Durham manuscript.<sup>138</sup> However, the security of its Wearmouth-Jarrow attribution has been challenged,<sup>139</sup> by Richard Bailey, amongst others, who cast doubt on these observations by pointing out that such characteristics were not necessarily exclusive to manuscripts originating from Jarrow.<sup>140</sup>

However, its historical association with a particular named Jarrow resident further complicated the case for Jarrow as the Durham manuscript’s creative centre and in this respect a further parallel with the Amiatinus can be observed. This is because at one time or another in their scholarship both the Durham Cassiodorus and the Codex Amiatinus have been linked directly to Bede. His presumed role in the origination of the Durham Cassiodorus stemmed from instructions given for its 1846 rebinding, which stated that the work should be titled: ‘Cassiodorus on the Psalms from the hand of Bede’.<sup>141</sup> This information was probably gathered from the manuscript’s fourteenth-century guard leaf that bore the inscription ‘the Cassiodorus on the Psalms in Bede’s hand’.<sup>142</sup> However, as Bailey calculated, six scribal hands (seven if the Düsseldorf leaf is counted as part of the Durham edition),<sup>143</sup> are identified in the text.<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, the textual abridgement of

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<sup>137</sup> Lowe, 1960: 24; c.f. Bailey, 1978: 22

<sup>138</sup> Nordenfalk, 1977: 87; Goldschmidt, 1947: 33; Bailey, 1978: 22

<sup>139</sup> E.g. Bullough (1982: 1-69) suggested that the Durham Cassiodorus derived from York

<sup>140</sup> Bailey, 1978: 23

<sup>141</sup> ‘Cassiodorus super psalterium de manu Bedea’

<sup>142</sup> ‘E Cassiodorus super phalterium de manu Bede’

<sup>143</sup> Bailey, 1983: 51-55

<sup>144</sup> Bailey, 1978: 6-7

the original sixth-century Psalm commentary was a work well within Bede's literary capabilities. Once more however, Bailey cast significant doubt on the manuscript's Bedan provenance. Applying stylistic analysis to the zoomorphic creatures in the image's border, he identified them as later, ribbon-bodied type of creatures set on wiry interlaced backgrounds like those seen in later manuscripts such as the Lindisfarne Gospels, Codex Aureus and the Leningrad Gospels and placed the date for Durham at *c.*750, a date after Bede's death.<sup>145</sup>

Leaving such stylistic observations aside, to return to the part played by Bede in the manuscripts' formation, it seems that while his hand in the production of Durham is difficult to verify, his involvement in Amiatinus' formulation is perhaps more tenable. Indeed, Paul Meyvaert's work in this area has done much to tie Bede to the Amiatinus' design and planning.<sup>146</sup> He proposed that Bede could have been responsible for composing the Amiatinus' chapter headings.<sup>147</sup> He also suggested that he may also have had a hand in designing the Amiatinus' images, providing evidence of Bede's own interest in the tabernacle and Ezra, and his production of commentaries devoted to these subjects as grounds for his involvement in the designs of the bifolium image of the tabernacle and the Ezra page included in the manuscript. In addition, he points out that Bede may have orchestrated the verse couplet accompanying the image of Ezra, going so far as to suggest that he could actually have written it above the image himself.<sup>148</sup>

Notwithstanding whether or not Bede had a hand in the creation of these two works, what may be determined is that he had at least seen Durham's and Amiatinus' sixth-century manuscript models. This is shown to have been probable from studies that have identified the works from which the Amiatinus and Durham Cassiodorus took their

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<sup>145</sup> Bailey, 1978:19-21

<sup>146</sup> Meyvaert, 1996: 827-83

<sup>147</sup> Meyvaert, 1996: 827-83

<sup>148</sup> Meyvaert, 2005: 1115

inspiration that have disclosed the common palaeographic ancestry of these sources. They have revealed that both the Amiatinus and Durham Cassiodorus are adaptations of continental Late Antique models. Indeed, not only that, but their recognised sources are believed to have been written by the same author and, in all likelihood, were produced in the same scriptorium. The manuscript exemplars in question are the Codex Grandior, an Old Latin (*vetus Latina*) translation of the Greek Septuagint, generally accepted as Amiatinus' model manuscript source, and the *Expositio Psalmorum* that formed the textual basis for the Durham Cassiodorus. Both of these works were produced in the sixth century under the supervision of the Roman statesman, Cassiodorus Senator at his scriptorium in Squillace near Naples.

Cassiodorus was chief adviser and scribe to Theodoric and the Ostrogothic administrators of the western empire based in Ravenna in the early sixth century. He also founded a library for Christian studies in Rome with Pope Agapit, but because of the unpredictable political climate of Ravenna and Rome in the period, he eventually retired from public office and returned to his family estate at Squillace where he established a monastery, Vivarium. Cassiodorus believed that the tumult he had witnessed would bring his era of Roman Christian dominance to an end. Therefore, he began preserving scripture for following generations by copying and reproducing texts that would aid in the education and spiritual well-being of Christians in the future.<sup>149</sup> The now missing Codex Grandior (described in another of Cassiodorus' works: the *Institutiones*),<sup>150</sup> and his *Commentary on the Psalms*<sup>151</sup> (also recorded in his *Institutiones*), formed part of this sixth-century scribal project. Migrating north, the Codex Grandior and Cassiodorus' *Expositio Psalmorum* are

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<sup>149</sup> O'Donnel, 1979: 26-80

<sup>150</sup> Cassiodorus, *Institutiones* (Mynors, 1937; trans. Halporn & Vessey, 2004)

<sup>151</sup> Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum* (Adriaen, 1958)

believed to have found their way to Wearmouth-Jarrow amongst the many books and items brought back from Rome by Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrith.<sup>152</sup>

Working from this premise, Amiatinus scholars have pieced together the scarce references extant in Cassiodoran and insular works in order to secure this identification. Thus, in the *Institutiones*, Cassiodorus explains that he had in his possession three entire Bibles, two in Latin and one in Greek: one was a single volume; the Codex Grandior, one was in nine volumes; the Novem Codices; and one was a small Bible; the Codex Minutior.<sup>153</sup> The Codex Grandior is considered as the source for the Amiatinus' first gathering of folios, while the Novem Codices has been suggested as one of the sources of the Amiatinus' Vulgate text.<sup>154</sup> In his *Commentary on the Psalms*, Cassiodorus explains that he had had made paintings of the tabernacle and the temple that were placed in the opening of his large Bible (Codex Grandior).<sup>155</sup> As Bede says that he had consulted the 'sketch of the temple made by the ancients',<sup>156</sup> this work was identified as Cassiodorus' Codex Grandior.<sup>157</sup>

However, alternative works by Cassiodorus have also been proposed as alternative or additional models for the Amiatinus. Karen Corsano, for example, proposed that the *Institutiones* itself may have supplied the relevant information for the inspiration for Amiatinus' opening quire, observing that the Ezra image shows a large Bible on Ezra's lap, perhaps the Codex Grandior, has nine volumes in the cupboard behind him, the Novem Codices, and a small book on the floor by his feet, the Codex Minutior.<sup>158</sup> However, as Meyvaert and others have argued, there is no evidence to suggest that the *Institutiones* had

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<sup>152</sup> Sanday, 1887: 184

<sup>153</sup> Cassiodorus, *Institutiones* 1: 14: 2 (Mynors, 1937: 40)

<sup>154</sup> This is an area of Amiatinus' scholarship that has generated much debate. Neuman De Vegvar (1987: 142-49) provides a useful commentary of the shape of the scholarship on this subject.

<sup>155</sup> Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum* 86 (Adriaen, 1958: 789-90): Nos enim et tabernaculum, quod eius imago primitus fuit, et templum ipsum fecimus pingi et in pandecte nostro corpore grandiore elegimus conlocare; quatenus quod scripturae diuinae de ipsis textus eloquitur, oculis redditum clarius panderetur.

<sup>156</sup> Bede, *XXX Quaest.* 18 (Hurst, 1962: 311-13; trans. Trent Foley & Holder, 1999:120)

<sup>157</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1969: 8-9

<sup>158</sup> Corsano, 1987: 3-34

ever reached Northumbria, and as Carlotta Dionisotti shrewdly commented ‘it was a mean trick of fate to deprive Bede of Cassiodorus’ *Institutiones*, in which he would have found so many of his interests warmly and sympathetically treated’.<sup>159</sup> Moreover, as Meyvaert observes, there is no hint in any of Bede’s writings that he had the *Institutiones* at his disposal.<sup>160</sup> For others, such as Pirette Michelli, another of Cassiodorus’ works presented itself as the most feasible model for the Codex Amiatinus: the *Novem Codices*.<sup>161</sup> Like Corsano, she considered the image of Ezra a key piece of evidence, as it displays nine books of scripture in Ezra’s cupboard. For Michelli, the division of scripture delineated on the spines of the books portrayed in the image, but different to those actually contained in the Amiatinus, seemed to point to Cassiodorus’ *Novem Codices* being physically present in Northumbria.<sup>162</sup>

Now, whether Cassiodorus’ *Institutiones* or *Novem Codices* reached Jarrow or not, what is almost certain is that Bede was able to consult the Codex Grandior in order to see its tabernacle and temple pictures and had studied Cassiodorus’ Psalm commentary in its complete form.<sup>163</sup> That Bede had seen the Codex Grandior is ascertained from comments he made in his discussion of the Temple’s courts in which he says:

Now, in point of fact, as he mentions himself in his commentary on the Psalms, Cassiodorus Senator, in the picture of the temple which had put in the pandect distinguished three ranks in the colonnades [...] These distinctions which we have found in Cassiodorus’ picture we have taken care to note here briefly, reckoning that he learnt from the Jews of old and that such a learned man had no intention of proposing as a model for our reading what he himself had not first found to be true.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Dionisotti, 1982: 129

<sup>160</sup> Meyvaert, 2005: 1100

<sup>161</sup> Marsden, 1995: 76-201; Michelli, 1999: 345-58

<sup>162</sup> Michelli, 1999: 354

<sup>163</sup> Bailey, 1983: 189-93

<sup>164</sup> Bede, *De Temp.*, 2 (Hurst, 1969: 192-93; trans. Connolly, 1995: 66-67): Has uero porticus Cassiodorus Senator in pictura templi quam in pandecte posuit ut ipse in psalmorem expositione commemorat triplici ordine distinxit [...] Haec ut in pictura Cassiodori distincta repperimus breuiter adnotare curauimus rati eum ab antiquis haec Iudaeis didicisse neque uirum tam eruditum uoluisse in exemplum legendi proponere quae non ipse prius uera esse cognouisset.



His familiarity with the Psalm commentary is attested by his remarks that:

Cassiodorus, the former senator who suddenly became a Doctor of the Church [...]. For when he carefully examined in his outstanding commentary on the Psalms what Ambrose, Hilary, Augustine, Cyril, John, and the other fathers have said, he showed beyond a doubt that he was educated by the “elders of the Jews”, i.e. by those who confessed and praised God.<sup>165</sup>

Regardless of whether Bede had a direct or indirect role in the production of either manuscript or not, their association with his monastery, Jarrow, may be further attested by the function and placement of the images within their individual works. Here, once more, another correspondence between the two manuscripts may be noted: namely, both manuscripts utilise their images as visual introductions to texts they precede. Both the David and Ezra images function as physical dividers of individual books or texts contained in a single codex. Thus, the Amiatinus’ book of the Old Testament is prefaced by images contained in the opening quire: the bifolium image of the mosaic tabernacle, and the image of Ezra, its New Testament, by an image of Christ in Majesty.

Similarly, the Durham Cassiodorus text, in a comparable fashion, is split into groups of fifty psalms and their accompanying commentaries by images of David: David Rex is placed before Psalm 51, and the image of the Warrior David before Psalm 101. Moreover, as Bailey has suggested, a third image (now lost) would probably have been placed at the manuscript’s opening to introduce the first group of fifty psalms.<sup>166</sup> In this respect, the Durham Cassiodorus represents a very early example of a Psalter divided into three sections, a practice that was duplicated by later, eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon

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<sup>165</sup> Bede, *In Ez.* 2: 6: 8 (Hurst, 1969: 295; trans. DeGregorio, 2006: 89-90): Qualis fuit Cassiodorus quondam senator repente ecclesiae doctor qui dum in expositione psalmodum quam egregiam fecit diligenter intuitus est quid Ambrosius quid Hilarius quis Augustinus quid Cyrillus quid Iohannes quis ceteri fratres dixerint edoctum se procul dubio a senioribus Iudaeorum, id est confitentium et laudantium Deum, probavit.

<sup>166</sup> Bailey, 1978: 10

artists.<sup>167</sup> If Bailey's assumption about a further image being included at the opening of the Durham manuscript is correct, as seems reasonable, then both the Codex Amiatinus and the Durham manuscript would each have contained triple-image programmes: three discrete, illustrated folios employed as visual interludes to the texts they partition. This selective scheme of using just three images could be symptomatic of a Wearmouth/Jarrow codicological preference, or at least, be indicative of an artistic manuscript convention practiced by the twin foundation's manuscript makers.

Remembering that the Amiatinus was one of a trinity of Bibles produced at Jarrow, and that it contained prefatory materials describing the threefold division of scripture according to Jerome, Augustine and Hilary, with each of their surmounting *tabulae anatae* bisected by roundels displaying depictions of a lamb, interpreted as the Son, a portrait of a bearded man, identified as the Father, and a depiction of a bird, signifying the Holy Ghost (Figs 23) it is possible that the presence of only three full-page images in the manuscript may have contributed, both numerically and symbolically to this triumvate scheme.<sup>168</sup> Indeed, the absence of carpet pages, evangelist pages or accompanying narrative images, all common features of other early biblical manuscripts, bolsters this suggestion. The occurrence of a similar tri-image scheme in the Durham Cassiodorus, although representing a logical division of a hundred and fifty psalms into three groups of fifty, may equally reflect an affectionate, local revival of a codicological symbolism developed at Jarrow during its triple Bible initiative. Application of a threefold image scheme in this manner may have held a deeply symbolic theological role for their making community and audiences because of its potential as a design with Trinitarian resonance. Indeed, assessment of the images' iconographic content discloses more about their placement and

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<sup>167</sup> For discussion of the tripartite form and possible influence of early Irish Psalter tradition which had three figural images at the three divisions, not related to the meaning of the adjacent psalm texts but together forming a David/Christological programme, see Openshaw, 1992: 41-60.

<sup>168</sup> For discussion of diagrams, see Farr, 1999: 336-44

function within their individual manuscripts and exposes more about how they interact symbolically with the texts they divide.

Looking closely at the images, a number of common iconographic attributes can be discerned between Ezra and David Rex (Fig. 24). For instance, both images display representations of seated male figures. Both men are dressed in classical garb (although Ezra also wears the accoutrements of a Jewish high priest); both are shown in the process of composition, have halos and are drawn barefooted. As well as these physical similarities, both images are accompanied by descriptive texts. From their respective inscriptions, they are in turn identified as the prophet and priest, Ezra, and King David.<sup>169</sup> Here another common feature is discernable: both men are associated with Old Testament books of the Bible: Ezra, identified by the accompanying couplet as the person responsible for restoring the books of the Jewish law from memory after they were destroyed by fire when the temple of Jerusalem was sacked by the Chaldeans, and King David, who is credited with composing much of the Book of Psalms. As such, both images seem to have been construed as types of author portrait. Their manuscript placement seems to assert this, as Ezra's image is situated in the first quire, placed at the opening on the entire biblical text, while David's image is located before a section of his psalms. Thus, each 'author' prefaces his respective work.

Their role as biblical writers is further communicated by depictions of their individual modes of communication used in the creation of their sacred works. In the case of Ezra, this is expressed through representations of writing materials such as quills, writing desk, books and various tools associated with the scribe's art and in the David image, by his instrument of composition, the lyre. In this sense, both images can be seen to have the same functional end: to serve as authorial prefaces to self-penned Biblical texts.

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<sup>169</sup> Ezra inscription: 'Codicibus sacris hostili clade perustus Esdra do feruens hoc reparauit opus'. David inscription: 'David Rex'

However, the occurrence of three images dividing the texts (certain in the Amiatinus and highly probable in the Durham Cassiodorus) could indicate something more about the symbolic role of the images beyond their traditional use as author portraits.

This is due to both images being interpretable as typological images of Christ. So, for example, Bailey, recognising the cruciform markings delineated in David's halo, and observing the style of curled hair worn by David as a type seen in depictions of Christ in Late Antique apse mosaic images, pointed out that the Durham image(s) represent *typus Christi*. He explained that the Durham David images:

Stress in visual terms the prophetic nature of the psalms and the typological, shadowing role of David. In so doing they speak out the same message as the text they accompany: the psalms are connected with Christ, and David is a type of Saviour.<sup>170</sup>

Applying an analogous line of reasoning to the Ezra image, Meyvaert argued that Ezra's placement before a cupboard containing books of the New Testament, texts written after his time, is best rationalised if Ezra is understood as a Christological figure.<sup>171</sup> Scott DeGregorio makes a similar observation, commenting that the image of Ezra the scribe prefigures Christ as the Heavenly Scribe depicted in the image of Christ in Majesty placed before the text of the New Testament in the Codex Amiatinus.<sup>172</sup> When understood from this perspective, both images can be seen to carry a similar thematic function: they each contribute to their manuscripts' didactic purpose by revealing Christ in the three persons of the trinity and as the inspiring 'Word' and inspiration for the biblical texts they preface.

Thus, in the Amiatinus and the Durham Cassiodorus we have two outsized manuscripts, each (tentatively) assigned to Jarrow in the first half of the eighth century. Each has, at one time or another in its historiography, been associated with Bede. It is likely that their respective manuscript models were not only produced at the same place

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<sup>170</sup> Bailey, 1978: 11

<sup>171</sup> Meyvaert, 1996: 881

<sup>172</sup> DeGregorio, 2006: 232

and within around forty years of each other, but were produced under the supervision of the same author, Cassiodorus. In terms of their physical appearance, both images depict seated Jewish patriarchs credited as Old Testament authors. Each figure is shown in the act of composition. The figures share a number of common iconographic attributes. Both carry an underlying Christological symbolism. From this assessment, and without the images at hand, it might be assumed under usual analytical assumptions that the images would show some degree of stylistic affinity; however, this is not wholly the case. Returning once again to the images, but this time looking more closely at the styles they exhibit, rather than finding more similarities, as may be anticipated, a number of differences are detectable.

#### Differences: ‘Classical’ and ‘Insular’

In previous studies, the portrait of Ezra has generally been described as ‘classical’ and David as ‘insular’.<sup>173</sup> However, by taking into account what these stylistic labels have come to mean in the scholarship of these works, and what, if at all, such understandings of style may have meant to Anglo-Saxon manuscript producers, it seems that their application is both restricted and restrictive. Indeed, by assessing the degree to which these images conform or detract from such encapsulating stylistic descriptors it may be possible to recognise some of the images’ more idiosyncratic aspects.

#### Ezra and ‘Classical’ Styles

What does it mean to describe something as ‘Classical’? In the broadest possible sense, a classical style may be defined as something exhibiting artistic characteristics deriving from the arts of ancient Greece and Rome.<sup>174</sup> However, more specifically, for the Anglo-Saxon artists reproducing such styles, it is the arts of the Late Antique Roman world that have

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<sup>173</sup> E.g. Bruce Mitford, 1967: 4-10; Bailey, 1978: 10

<sup>174</sup> Oxford English Dictionary

been generally identified as the prevailing ‘classical’ influence.<sup>175</sup> Thus, in formal terms, ‘classical’ images are commonly expected to show certain artistic qualities and distinguishing features, such as compositional balance, harmony, symmetry and proportion.<sup>176</sup> Truth to nature was a desirable quality so works ought to be rendered in an illusionistic manner, with figures showing movement, vitality, and dynamism. Any drapery in an image should be realistically modelled and conform to the shape to the human forms beneath. Figures should be rendered as anatomically correct and their body mass and musculature should be convincing. Looking at the Ezra portrait, such ‘classical’ features may be detected (Fig. 25).

Ezra is situated in an interior setting, the component parts of which are presented, to scale, in a logical manner: the proportions of the furniture, Ezra, and his scriptorium tools are balanced and scaled in agreement with each other. The scene is painted in a variety of hues and tints arranged in superimposed washes to produce the effect of three-dimensional modelling. Effort has been made to create highlights and shadows throughout the composition through the use of various viscosities of paint and gradations of tone. This can be seen, for example, in the modelling of Ezra’s arm, where the tonal range alters from a sea-green colour, through to a grey-green and then to whitish-grey, or in the effect of recessed panels in the door of the cupboard achieved by the inclusion of white highlights each producing convincing three-dimensional effects. Modulation of colours and tonal strength gives the appearance of a scene bathed in bright light, in this case emanating from outside of the upper right-hand corner of the scene. Ezra’s drapery, catching the ‘light’, flows to the shape of his body visible through his garments. These naturalistic features, naturalistic contouring, use of light and shade, and mimetic rendition of the human form

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<sup>175</sup> Hawkes, 2003a: 69-99

<sup>176</sup> Vitruvius, *On Architecture* VI (trans. Hicky Morgan , 1960: 174-80)

have led to this image being classified as a ‘purely Classical type’,<sup>177</sup> and as being ‘as Late Antique and non-insular as its script’.<sup>178</sup>

Other ‘classical’ features observed in the image’s design outwardly corroborate this. So, for example, the similarity between Ezra’s cupboard, with its ‘classical’ architectural pediment and columnar fittings, and that seen in the mosaics of Galla Placidia’s mausoleum in Ravenna was recognised, and seemingly pointed to the image’s ‘Roman’ pedigree (Fig. 26).<sup>179</sup> Similarly, the Roman style *amphora* (vases) depicted on the cupboard seem to hint at its classical source. For Nordhagen, however, it was Ezra’s elongated form, curved back and thin feet that suggested the work of a Byzantine school, best exemplified by his resemblance to figures seen in the frescos of the seventh-century church of Santa Maria Antiqua in the Roman Forum in Rome (Fig.27).<sup>180</sup> Unlike exponents of the copyist theory, such as Bruce Mitford, who saw the inexperienced attempts at perspective seen in the Ezra portrait, seen for example in the form of the writing table or the irrational placement of the cupboard against the wall, as misunderstandings made by the Northumbrian artist,<sup>181</sup> Nordhagen, recognised comparable illogical perspectival features in Sta Maria Antiqua’s frescoes and saw these traits as evidence of Amiatinus’ Byzantine inheritance.<sup>182</sup>

On this point, it is worth observing that this outwardly illogical use of perspective is also a feature of the arts of sixth-century Ravenna. Such examples as the altar table administered by the Jewish high priest, Melchisedek, depicted in the mosaic panels of San Vitale show a comparable skewed perspective, as does the writing table accompanying an image of John the evangelist in the same mosaics (Figs 28 & 29)). This is also a quality

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<sup>177</sup> Colgrave, 1958: 10; Bruce Mitford, 1967: 16

<sup>178</sup> Neuman De Vegvar, 1981: 132

<sup>179</sup> Browne, 1887: 309

<sup>180</sup> Nordhagen, 1977: 3-5

<sup>181</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 12

<sup>182</sup> Nordhagen, 1977: 6-8

witnessed in the carved images adorning the ivory throne of Maximian, in which several perspectival irregularities can be discerned (Fig. 30). It seems in these examples that the distortion of three-dimensional spaces is useful as it allows the viewer to apprehend all of the image components in a single glance. This is particularly evident in Melchisedek's altar displaying important iconographic details such as loaves of bread, marked with the cross, which serve as iconographic signifiers of Christ's crucifixion and his body celebrated in the Eucharist (Fig. 31). Thus in tilting the table forward in this manner, the observer has a privileged view of its contents. If Ezra's model was indeed a sixth-century Cassiodoran bible (Cassiodorus may have seen works exhibiting similar distorted objects while he was in Ravenna), it may have contained comparable perspective manipulations and therefore the re-duplication of these anamorphically skewed objects may also be a further indication of the Ezra image's 'Roman / classical' heritage.

Whether this is indeed the case, so successful was the Ezra image in epitomizing the very essence of the 'classical' style, that it lured many of its viewers into thinking that it was the real thing. However, its ostensibly Roman style, once recognised as a Northumbrian work, was accounted for by its visual proximity to its supposed antique model, apparently contained in either the *Codex Grandior* or the *Novem Codices*.<sup>183</sup> Nevertheless, as compelling as this idea is, it does not necessarily bear close scrutiny. In part, this is because neither the *Codex Grandior* or *Novem Codices* has survived; there is thus no way of determining with any degree of certainty if a model image for Ezra's portrait ever existed and if it did, whether it offered an exact iconographic or stylistic prototype for the Amiatinus image. On this point, it has been suggested that Cassiodorus' bibles may have contained a portrait of their author, and that seeing this image, but not understanding its significance, the Northumbrian makers of the Amiatinus manuscript

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<sup>183</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967



mistook it for an image of Ezra.<sup>184</sup> Alternatively, it has been proposed that Ezra's designers understood, but altered it to create a new image of Ezra, albeit one formally based on its model.<sup>185</sup> Another view is that the Codex Grandior image may have actually depicted Cassiodorus in the guise of Ezra;<sup>186</sup> as both men were associated with safeguarding texts in times of uncertainty it could have been contrived as a symbolic introduction to a conserved text.

However, a problem with these suggestions is that Cassiodorus makes no mention of a self-portrait, or otherwise, being included in his manuscripts in his description of them in the *Institutiones*. Indeed, as Cassiodorus was not the actual author of the texts he is surmised to have prefaced, only their conduit of preservation, the likelihood of him being credited as an author in this way is difficult to rationalise.<sup>187</sup> Bede too fails to make reference to any such image, only describing the images of the tabernacle and the temple in his discussion of the Cassiodoran work. A further problem is the scarcity of early iconographic sources available for Ezra who does not seem to feature in the Roman, Christian iconographic pantheon, or indeed, receive a great deal of literary attention from early patristic writers, whose texts may have provided iconographic information on the subject of Ezra.<sup>188</sup> Indeed, as the Codex Grandior's text was of the Old Latin (*Hexaplaric*) translation, and Amiatinus is of Jerome's Vulgate, it has been presumed that other (Vulgate) manuscripts were also on hand for the Jarrow scribes and artists to exploit as master-copies for their large-format trio of bibles.<sup>189</sup> As such, some creative synthesis of

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<sup>184</sup> Meyvaert, 2005: 1119

<sup>185</sup> Meyvaert (2005: 1118-19) has identified dry point tracing marks on the surface of the vellum, which he suggests show the act of copying, and alteration of the original Cassiodoran image. The security of this is debateable, as the same tracing indentations could also have occurred if the Ezra image itself was copied.

<sup>186</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 14

<sup>187</sup> C.f. Michelli, 1999: 347

<sup>188</sup> As DeGregorio (2005: xxii) points out, Cassiodorus says that he had his colleague Bellator translate a single homily on Ezra written by Origen; this, however, has not survived. Bede's commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah therefore represents the first and only complete exegesis of these books.

<sup>189</sup> Bede refers to 'nostri codices' (our copies) suggesting that more than one Vulgate text was available to him (DeGregorio, 2006: 163, note 4). For transmission of biblical texts, see Gameson, 1994.

the available sources may have been necessary to construct an ideal semblance of how the Amiatinus and its sister volumes should be arranged, and perhaps to decide what their images would look like, how they should be used, seen, and experienced.

### David and 'Insular' Styles

Before continuing with this, however, it is necessary to contextualise what is understood in modern scholarship by the term 'insular'. This in itself is a complicated undertaking, and one that would require more space and time than this study allows, but in general terms, it is best summarised as a term describing artistic styles present in the arts of the British Isles and Ireland in the early medieval period (fifth to ninth century). It is an expression that has come to be used as a terminological bridge that straddles many of the art-making cultures and ethnicities co-existing in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales (manuscript evidence has shown that Bede's description of the various peoples inhabiting the islands only goes so far in outlining the reality of cross-cultural fertilization occurring in the period at his time of writing).<sup>190</sup> As such, the arts of the Picts, Welsh, Irish, and Anglo-Saxons are yoked together within this lexical entity. Despite its apparent vagaries, it has become an expedient way of describing a multifaceted cultural situation in which transmission of artistic styles is not only difficult to situate precisely in time, but is also often indeterminable in terms of precise cultural origins. 'Insular', therefore, has come to signify not only the range of artistic styles produced by the various peoples, but also the

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<sup>190</sup> E.g. Michelle Brown's work on the Lindisfarne Gospels has highlighted the many and varied regional and foreign styles present in the manuscript's images and decoration (Brown, 2003; 2011).

possibilities of multi-ethnic and cross-geographical influences upon the prevailing styles without any inferred cultural, national or geographic bias.<sup>191</sup>

Aesthetically, the early ‘insular’ style (of the fifth and sixth centuries) displays characteristics such as the use of complex patterns, often including dissected, or fragmented animal imagery (Fig. 32). Designs often have shimmering surfaces that generate luminosity and light-play (Fig. 32a). Insular works of this early period are usually highly structured, with dense patterns crammed into small spaces and the complexity of the designs are underpinned with elaborate frameworks. Compartmentalisation is a common trait of this style, with borders, frames, and delineated fields providing enclosures for packed displays of interlaced and zoomorphic patterns contained within. These structural boundaries articulate, segment and delineate the picture field by controlling the limits of the patterns, and add linearity and geometric order to the crowded patterns they frame. Such containing spaces may be interspersed with masks or bosses that break-up or alter the directional flow of patterns (Fig. 33a). Although segregation of the field of decoration is an assay of the insular style of this time, a concurrent trait is the interconnectedness of forms. Typically, interwoven elements dominate compositions. These may show twinned elements entwined or confronted forms merging into a single motif, or facing forms flanking a central motif. In these instances, multiple, or repeated motifs often combine to form single shapes (Fig. 33b).<sup>192</sup>

The later insular style (of the seventh and eighth centuries), influenced by the influx of Christian forms, while preserving some earlier stylistic tendencies, such as dense patterning, knot work and zoomorphic interlacing, becomes more fluid and sinuous in its execution, with forms being more curvilinear and organic than linear (Fig.34). The

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<sup>191</sup> Michael Ryan (forthcoming, 2013) has recently discussed some of the theoretical problems that have arisen surrounding the term ‘insular’.

<sup>192</sup> Leslie Webster (2003: 11-30) analyses such ‘insular’ style characteristics in her discussion of ‘Encrypted Visions’.

structure of designs is more embedded, with complex geometric schemes underlying patterns, and complex grids creating matrices for interwoven schemes (Fig. 35). Figures become more widely used, as do floral forms, and animals become more developed, showing a range of movements and contorted poses (Figs 36-38). This 'insular' style displays a sophisticated use of planar space with ambiguous foreground/ background interplay (Fig.39). Pictorial elements often morph from one form into another in seamless progression (Fig. 40). Above all, instead of the naturalistic rendering of three-dimensional forms rendered through tone, endemic of the classical style, insular works privilege two-dimensional forms rendered in line, filled with solid blocks of colour.

The image of David embodies many of the artistic characteristics associated with 'insular' style.<sup>193</sup> For example, it is contained and confined by a broad, decorated, panelled frame, whose segments are filled with a variety of patterns, which include confronted creatures, back-biting beasts and recognisable animals, as well as lithe interlacing (Fig. 41). There is no background context for the image, David is located not in a room or exterior setting, but set against a plain vellum surface decorated with concentric circles made up of dots (Fig. 42). The form of the figure is delineated through the use of line, rather than gradations of tone, and rather than being drawn freehand, it has been formed by the aid of a curve-generating template.<sup>194</sup> Holes in the vellum also indicate that a compass has been used to draw the halo and other circles in the miniature. These features hint at an underlying geometric ordering of the image rather than a naturalistic development. Overall, the image is flat and two dimensional, and although some modelling is achieved on the robes, their tubular form is governed by thickly drawn outlines and variations of saturation of a single colour. There is an absence of directional lighting; instead, high-pitched, intense colours contained within graphic outlining strokes give the effect of flatness: highlights

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<sup>193</sup> Bailey, 1978: 10

<sup>194</sup> Bailey, 1978: 14-15

and shadows, although tentatively evoked in the drapery, are absent elsewhere in the image. David's face is distilled into its most basic elements; there is little attempt at realistic modelling, rather, shapes and lines delineate his facial features.

Other motifs seemingly confirm David's 'insular' heritage. For example, the style of lyre held by the figure is very similar to the Anglo-Saxon stringed instrument found at Sutton Hoo, but differs significantly to those found on the Continent (Fig. 43). Likewise, David sits on a throne whose finials terminate with confronted beast heads, from whose mouths pour finely drawn knots. Chairs with animal detailing, such as the lion-footed chair in San Stefano Rotondo in Rome, may have provided the inspiration for throne images such as this; however, in these instances indigenous 'insular' beasts take the place of classically drawn animals (Fig. 44). A further 'insular' animal motif may be recognised in the form of the lions in the upper and lowermost frame of the image, which have a mask-like shape delineating their eyes, ears and cheeks. Such 'masks' are a common stylistic occurrence in insular manuscripts, seen for example in the evangelist symbols depicted in the Echternach Gospels and the Codex Amiatinus. Another masked cat, this time of the domestic variety, appears in the border of the incipit of the *Liber Generationis* at the opening of Matthew in the Lindisfarne Gospels (Figs 45a-d). Together, these motifs seem to further belie the David page's 'insular' origins.

Yet, despite their apparent conformity to their classificatory labels of 'classical' in the case of Ezra and 'insular' in David's instance, further consideration of the images demonstrates that the confines of their associated stylistic labels create some analytical problems. This is due to the fact that the Ezra portrait is not merely 'classical' and the David image is not simply 'insular'; indeed, the image of Ezra betrays distinctly 'un-classical' qualities and, as intimated, the 'insular' image of David displays characteristics

that are identifiably ‘classical’. The simultaneous occurrence of two distinct styles seems to threaten the diagnostic surety of their assigned stylistic descriptors.

### Ezra’s ‘Insularism’ and David’s ‘Classicism’

In his groundbreaking study of the Codex Amiatinus, Bruce-Mitford noted, the Ezra image, although outwardly ‘classical’ in style, modelled in light and shade to create a lifelike image of a man located in three-dimensional space, is articulated with black, graphic outlines around its painted forms.<sup>195</sup> This instinct to stylise, where form is rendered in line rather than light and shade, is one of the predispositions of traditional insular art. Likewise, he observed that the use of metallic appliqués is an equally un-classical characteristic.<sup>196</sup> Whereas in classical manuscript tradition, metallic areas are more commonly executed in metallic paint, the Anglo-Saxon artist, perhaps drawing from his indigenous metalwork traditions, beats the metal into fine foil and applies the metal directly on to the image. This can be seen in Ezra’s halo, in the background and in the border where gold and silver foils are applied (Fig.46a & b). These delicate metal foils are over-painted with delicate patterns: another artistic phenomenon alien to ‘classical’ art but common to the insular arts.<sup>197</sup> This lack of technical fidelity to its proposed ‘classical’ model (Codex Grandior), in a Gombrichian synthesis, may be explained through the technological milieu of the Anglo-Saxon scriptorium or through the material preferences of the Northumbrian artists or patrons.

However, as well as these ‘insular’ technical manifestations, the Ezra image also displays stylistic traits that betray its insularism. For example, the vine scroll pattern decorating Ezra’s bench, although ultimately deriving from a ‘classical’ source is redolent of the insular style, seen in examples such as the carved fragment of a cross from Hexham,

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<sup>195</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 13-14

<sup>196</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 13

<sup>197</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 11-13

Northumberland (Fig. 47). Also the decoration of the cupboard, although depicting ‘Roman’ forms, is articulated by square frames and also displays a geometric pattern of opposed triangles containing small crosses, reminiscent of geometric patterns seen adorning the background of the decorated initials of the Lindisfarne Gospels’ *Novum Opus* Preface *incipit* page (Fig. 48). Another distinctly ‘un-classical’ feature is the square cushion upon which Ezra sits. As Bruce Mitford noted, this style of furnishing is unfamiliar in the ‘classical’ imagery of seated figures, which are more usually shown sitting on rounded bolster cushions (Figs 49a-b)).<sup>198</sup> Another anachronistic feature of the Ezra page that seems to defy ‘classical’ identification is the curve-generating tool depicted on the floor by Ezra’s feet (Fig. 50). This insular scribal implement was first identified by Richard Bailey in his discussion of the David pages, in which he suggested that the bodies of the figures were constructed using such a tool.<sup>199</sup> However, this type of geometric template is redundant in a naturalistically drawn ‘classical’ image such as Ezra. Thus, in the face of its apparently ubiquitous presence in an insular scriptorium, this tool is, nevertheless, out of place in a ‘classical’ setting.

Together, insular stylistic traits such as the use of black outlines, patterned, shimmering surfaces, and framing panels, and insular motifs such as Ezra’s square cushion point to a ‘classical’ image that is augmented with ‘insular’ artistic mannerisms. Returning to the image of David, it is possible to identify a number of ‘classical’ stylistic vestiges in this ostensibly ‘insular’ image.

As well as conspicuously ‘classical / Roman’ features identified by Bailey, such as the ‘Roman’ style of David’s hair and the concentric circles adorning the background of the David image that recall those seen in Late Antique apse mosaics,<sup>200</sup> further symptoms of the ‘classical’ style can be determined, the clearest manifestation being David’s pose.

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<sup>198</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 11

<sup>199</sup> Bailey, 1978: 14-15

<sup>200</sup> Bailey, 1978: 10-12

The figure is seated in a hieratic, monumental attitude; his posture delineated by the course of his drapery, which is drawn in a style reminiscent of ‘classical’ models in its arrangement. For example, it is remarkably similar to that of Luke the evangelist depicted in the sixth-century Italian Gospel book associated with Augustine of Canterbury (Fig. 51).<sup>201</sup> Indeed, as well as offering a close approximation of David’s drapery folds, this image also displays the same bodily pose and head position. Thus, David’s head is drawn in an equivalent three-quarter profile and is tilted to the side in a comparable manner. Like the Luke image, David also has naturalistically painted flushed cheeks rendered in a rose-lake colour that is diaphanous in its execution, rather than solidly painted. Such details show that the David’s stylistic content, like Ezra’s, is binary: both, to slightly varying degrees, contain ‘classical’ and insular’ stylistic traits.

#### Ezra, David and Stylistic Analysis

The appearance of two different artistic styles co-existing side-by-side in these examples would traditionally be viewed as an indication of the degree to which the images conform to or deviate from their Italian models. Ezra’s classical appearance would be explained by its proximity to its antecedent, whereas David’s insularism may be put down to it differing more substantially from its image source. The stylistic differences perceived may also be explained by them being produced under different conditions such as being made in either/or different places, by different people, in different times. The styles detected are assessed alongside other existing examples to establish where they fit within a pattern of already identified styles. This act of comparing and matching works fixes and groups images into their most logical place within the canon of extant works in order to construct a timeline for their creation and to identify artistic ‘schools’, artists’ hands or centres of

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<sup>201</sup> Augustine Gospels, Cambridge: Corpus Christi Library, Cam. MS.286, fol.129<sup>v</sup> (Wormald, 1954)



creation. However, as the preceding discussion shows, this is a difficult undertaking with these particular examples as they are each assumed to derive from the same place, and are made by the same community and within a limited timeframe (consensus places them, at their broadest range, forty years apart, and at its shortest range, only sixteen years apart). Moreover, the presence of two different styles in each image creates further problems as in this situation a decision has to be made as to which of the images' two styles is most dominant and therefore offers the higher degree of usefulness in terms of comparative data. A further problem highlighted by these examples is that it is seldom explained what happens in between the times separating the images that causes such a drastic visual and stylistic shift. The change from one distinct style to another is usually couched in terms of progression or decline, which assumes that styles disappear once a new one comes along. Such a view presupposes a kind of entropy that causes styles to vanish from an individual's memory or creative talent base once time progresses and fails to account for the psychological impulses driving such changes (it is theoretically possible that these images were produced within the lifetime of a single scriptorium worker and could represent an 'early' and 'late' phase of a single artist's oeuvre). Moreover, styles can easily be reproduced after their time of popularity has expired, can occur simultaneously, be invented or re-invented by an individual, or be rejected or revived for a particular purpose. As such, in the hands of an artist, style does not dissipate entirely in time, nor does it remain stagnant and fixed. It is flexible and amenable to changing conditions and can be chosen for a specific purpose.

Such speculations may be demonstrated by moving on to compare the Ezra page with another image contained in the Codex Amiatinus: that of Christ in Majesty, and the David Rex with its companion image: the Warrior David. In doing so, a further point of correspondence between the manuscripts is uncovered: both contain images displaying

different styles to one another. Indeed, the images that follow Ezra and David in their respective manuscripts display styles identifiably less ‘classical’ than their predecessors.

#### The Codex Amiatinus’ Ezra and Christ in Majesty Pages

The image of Christ in Majesty on fol. 796<sup>V</sup> of the Codex Amiatinus depicts Christ, enthroned in the cosmos, flanked by two angels, with depictions of the four evangelists and their accompanying animal symbols occupying the four corners (Fig. 52). An elaborate ribbon that changes direction in each quadrant surrounds the central medallion. The scene is framed with an intricate metallic embellished border. This page’s iconography recalls Late Antique *Majestas* images, such as those seen in the triumphal arch mosaic between the original nave and chancel of the basilica of San Lorenzo in Rome, and in the apse mosaic of San Vitale in Ravenna, in which Christ sits upon a globe and is flanked on either side by angels (Figs 53a & b). Similarly, the central medallion, rendered in concentric circles of dark blues, speckled with white stars, contained within an ornate border is also a recurring Late Antique motif seen, for example, in the domed vault of Galla Placidia’s Mausoleum, and in the apse mosaic of San Appolinare in Classe (54a & b). Likewise, ribbons such as that surrounding the mosaic images in Galla Placidia’s Mausoleum provide a comparable ‘classical’ source for that seen in the image. Although seemingly ‘classical’ in its iconographic content, Bruce Mitford observed that the character of the image’s style is distinctly ‘insular’. This he identified in the heavy black outlines used to define the figures, in the rigid poses of the figures and animals, and in the technical processes used to formulate the image. Indeed, his close analysis of the technologies, pigments and methods applied in this image showed a technological accord evident in all of Amiatinus’s imagery, which led him to the conclusion that all were produced by the same hand.<sup>202</sup> He went on to

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<sup>202</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 4

explain that the inclusion of both ‘classical’ and ‘insular’ styles in the Codex Amiatinus were the result of copying different image sources.<sup>203</sup> This implies that the makers utilised whatever visual sources they had available to them, regardless of what style the source images displayed.

He further argued that just as the ‘classical image’ of Ezra was an ‘insular’ reworking of an Italian original, the ‘naïve, gauche’ drawing displayed in the Christ in Majesty image was best explained as a copy of ‘an impressionistic Late Antique model (such as the Cotton Genesis)’.<sup>204</sup> For him, the factor demonstrating production by the same ‘insular’ hand is the shared use of materials and techniques used in their production. A formal analysis of these elements was used to support his argument. However, convincing as this might be, it fails to explain fully why the images look the way they do, or why one appears to replicate faithfully its classical source while the other is apparently infested by ‘insular’ stylistic devices.

In turning to consider this lacuna, it can be assumed that a number of sources for the Christ in Majesty could have been available to the makers of the Amiatinus image. For example, Bede explains that the church of St Peter’s at Wearmouth was adorned with panel paintings that Benedict Biscop had brought back from Rome. One, that was located on the church’s north wall, depicted St John’s vision of the apocalypse.<sup>205</sup> While no information is given by Bede of the appearance of this image, it is possible that it depicted the enthroned Christ surrounded by the four living creatures, representing the evangelists, like those seen in the Amiatinus image. Similar iconographic models for this type of image have survived in public art deriving from the Late Antique period. Examples include the apse mosaic of Sta Pudenziana in Rome (c.390) and the triumphal arch mosaic situated

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<sup>203</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1967: 8

<sup>204</sup> Bruce-Mitford, 1967: 18

<sup>205</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, 1:6 (Plummer, 1896: 369-70): *Quintum, pictures imaginum sanctarum quas ad ornandam aecclesiam beati Petri apostoli quam construxerat detulit... imagines visionum apocalipsis beati Iohannis, quibus septentrionalem aequae parietem ornaret.*

over the nave of San' Apollinare in Classe, c.549 (Figs 55a & b)). Therefore, it seems feasible that images like these, perhaps seen in apse mosaics or on other forms of public art on the Continent, may have been visually familiar or verbally communicated to the image-makers by pilgrim travellers.<sup>206</sup> Other sources for the Christ in Majesty may have been included in the many volumes of books that Biscop and Ceolfrith brought back from Rome.<sup>207</sup> If, as seems likely, the makers had potential access to a number of iconographic types of *Majestas* image, it seems reasonable to consider why they rendered theirs in a style different to that used for the other figural image in the manuscript. Why did they not simply copy a model that offered a closer stylistic resemblance to the Ezra page?

In addressing this question, it could be hypothesised that the Amiatinus artist was fully aware of 'style' as a means of communication or ideological expression. It is likewise feasible that the artist was aware that different artistic styles could be manipulated to produce particular symbolic effects. Here, the placement of the *Majestas* image at the beginning of the New Testament, and so isolated from the earlier images, may be crucial. It is not unlikely that the makers were consciously invoking a different style as a means of differentiating between the two Testaments: the overtly 'classical', antique Roman style seen in the Ezra image being used for the Old, and the more 'insular' style seen in the *Majestas* being used for the New. What is more, it is possible that the invocation of 'traditional' and 'modern' styles manifested on these folios may have been appropriated as a means to signify important tenets of Christian doctrine.

This may be demonstrated by considering the religious context of the images. Thus, in his letter to the Corinthians, Paul explains that the Old Testament is a shadow, a pre-figuration, of the Gospels that should be understood as a prophecy of Christ to come.<sup>208</sup> As

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<sup>206</sup> For more information about this type of transmission, see Hawkes, 2002.

<sup>207</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, 1: 6 (Plummer, 1896: 369): *Primo quod innumerabilem librorum omnis generis copiam adportavit.*

<sup>208</sup> 1 Corinthians 10: 11

Jennifer O'Reilly has explained, Bede, drawing on a wealth of early Christian patristic sources on the subject of pre-figuration available to him in his library at Jarrow, sought to explain in his own exegetical writing, the unity of the Bible.<sup>209</sup> Indeed, evidence of the way that images were used to illustrate this key concept of Christian theology is supplied by Bede in his *Historiam Abbatum*.<sup>210</sup> He explains how amongst the treasures that Benedict Biscop had amassed in Rome,

He brought back paintings of the life of Our Lord for the chapel of the Holy Mother of God which he had built within the main monastery, setting them, as its crowning glory, all the way round the walls. His treasures included a set of pictures for the monastery and church of the blessed apostle Paul, consisting of scenes, very skilfully arranged, to show how the Old Testament foreshadowed the New. In one set, for instance, the picture of Isaac carrying the wood on which he was to be burnt as a sacrifice was placed immediately below that of Christ carrying the cross on which He was about to suffer. Similarly, the Son of Man lifted up on the cross was paired with the serpent raised up by Moses in the desert.<sup>211</sup>

Perhaps the two figural images contained in the Codex Amiatinus served a similar purpose, only in this instance; style was employed as a means of signifying the shadowing-nature of the two texts. It could be suggested that the invocation of a temporal shift, through the use of the 'classical' and 'insular' styles, has been invoked to connote the shadowing-nature of the two testaments. Thus, the images, which at first glance seem to be visually distinct, serve to physically separate the Testaments, while at the same time, through their material and technological parity, serve to connote their unity.

Understood in this way, the styles applied in Amiatinus' images contribute to their symbolic content. Indeed, style selection may have formed a significant part of the creative

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<sup>209</sup> O'Reilly, 1995: xvii-lv

<sup>210</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, (Plummer, 1896: 305-87)

<sup>211</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, 1: 9 (Plummer, 1896: 373; Farmer & Webb, 1998: 196): Nam et tunc dominicae historiae pictures quibus totam beatae Dei genetricis, quam in monasterio maiore fecerat, aecclseam in gyro coronaret, adtulit; imagines quoque ad ornandum monasterium aecclseamque beati Pauli apostolic de Concordia uetris et noui Testamenti summa ration conpositas exhibuit; uerbi gratia, Isaac ligna, quibus immolaretur portantem, et Dominum crucem in qua pateretur aequae portantem, proxima super invicem regione, picture coniunxit. Item serpenti in heremo a Moyse exaltato, Filium Homini in Cruce exaltatum comparauit.

process. Moreover, if it is assumed that makers of such images were aware of stylistic differences, and familiar with the origins and heritages of such styles, then their directed usage in new works may be significant.

Thus, as three bibles were commissioned by Ceolfrið, it would seem that this impressive book-making project would have required a great community investment, not only in terms of gathering raw materials, but also in the amount of scriptorium labour and hours needed to produce such a large amount of written and painted folios. It is fair to assume that a considerable amount of forward thinking, organisation and co-operation would have been required to bring a project of this magnitude to fruition.<sup>212</sup> Some pre-planning is likely to have preceded such a task, including perhaps, decisions about what form the texts and images would take, what their layout and function would be, and what form of writing, what types of pictures, and which artistic styles best suited their creative requirements. Within this organisational process, it is likely that the Ezra and *Majestas* designers were mindful of the messages their images could convey, and were alert to the potential messages that could be transmitted by their stylistic choices.

As such, the decision to re-appropriate the styles witnessed in a 'Roman' model for the Ezra image shows not only that the Northumbrian producers of the Amiatinus had access to good quality 'Roman' images, but also that they were visually engaging with external products and translating their content for their own explicit needs. Within this cognitive procedure, recapturing classical forms and styles in their own works may have been construed as not only an act of visual and cultural homage, but also a logical way of expressing and bolstering their personal affiliation with the Roman Church through the visual osmosis of its aesthetic forms.

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<sup>212</sup> Gameson, 1992: 2-9

Considered in this light, additional indigenous (insular) flourishes incorporated into the Ezra design may have been used to connote a number of things. So, for example they might signify the Northumbrian community's desire to demonstrate their native artistic skills to Continental viewers. Thus, the metalwork prowess required to handle the metallic elements in the image could be indicative of the Northumbrian makers' aspiration to impress their Mediterranean counterparts by applying a more accomplished artistic technique to that commonly practiced in Continental manuscripts. Or, if the Amiatinus was always intended as a gift to the Holy See, it is equally possible that the material value of the metal applied to the manuscript was selected because it could (metaphorically) symbolise the spiritual 'richness' of the Northumbrian community, or even perhaps materially elevate the status and intrinsic value of their manuscript over and beyond that of its original model or Continental counterparts.<sup>213</sup>

In a similar way, the heavy outlining strokes characteristic of Anglo-Saxon manuscript drawings added to the inherently 'classical' image of Ezra may have functioned as means of differentiating this manuscript from others donated to the apostolic shrine. By maintaining the essential 'classical' character of the image, but augmenting it stylistically to formulate a new rendition through the inclusion of line drawing, shining metals and patterned adornments, Amiatinus' makers may have been personalising their papal gift. This stylistic interplay may have been used as a means of declaring their knowledge of 'classical' forms, while at the same time introducing a foreign audience to their own mark-making traditions. Through the incorporation of 'insular' artistic embellishments, something of themselves could have been communicated to the manuscript's prospective

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<sup>213</sup> Despite the apparent evidence from the *Anonymous*, there is much contention surrounding the question of whether the *Amiatinus* was initially created as a presentation copy of the Bible or whether it was only utilised later by Ceolfrith as a gift to the Apostle's shrine. Some have argued that the dedicatory inscription was a later addition and that this suggests that the *Amiatinus* was not originally intended as a gift. However, Laurence Nees, Celia Chazelle and Paul Meyvaert have convincingly argued that it was always intended to be gifted to Rome. They evidence this through the manuscript's high quality text and manufacture. See, Nees, 1999: 149-75; Chazelle, 2003: 131-57; Meyvaert, 2005: 1087-1131.

Continental audience. This may have had the effect of visually affirming its makers' place within the Universal Church<sup>214</sup> through their repatriation of an essentially 'Roman' manuscript that included artistic clues to its 'insular' creators.

### The Durham Cassiodorus David Rex and Warrior David

Although the David Rex image and the Warrior David occupy the same manuscript, like the Ezra and *Majesta* images, their stylistic content is very different (Figs 56a & b). So, for example, comparing the shape of the figures' heads, David Rex has a naturalistically rendered hairline derived from the shape of his spiral curls, whereas, the Warrior David's face is tear-drop shaped with circular curls framing the pointed-shape of his forehead. Moreover, the facial features of the Warrior David are drawn in black and have no supplementary colouring, unlike the David Rex with its pink flushed cheeks. In their garments too, a shift in style is detectable. While the David Rex shows some effort in depicting the drapery folds through use of shading, there is no such attempt in the Warrior image, which instead has its drapery fully rendered in graphic lines with some cross-hatching to delineate the material's folds. Another identifiable difference between the images is their colour palette: the Warrior image's is strictly limited in its colour range compared to the colourful scheme of the David Rex. This is particularly noticeable in Warrior David's monochromatic border, which has no animal interlacing, just multi-strand knot work and geometric key patterning, compared to the multi-coloured interlace that teems with animals in the David Rex image. Stylistic analysis may explain such differences as being the result of the images being produced by different artists; however, this has been shown not necessarily to have been the case.

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<sup>214</sup> The notion of the Universal Church is given full exegetical treatment by Bede in his *De Templo* (Connolly, 1995), and *De Tabernaculo* (trans. Holder, 1994). The exegesis of the 'Universal Church' is fully rehearsed in O'Reilly, 1995: xvii-lv.



While some commentators saw the perceptible stylistic differences in these images as evidence of different artists' hands at work,<sup>215</sup> Bailey demonstrated that the curves delineating the bodies of these figures are the same curvature and size and so determined that the same template had been used for both images, arguing that despite their clear stylistic disparity, they could have been produced by the same artist.<sup>216</sup> Like Bruce Mitford's technical evaluation of the Codex Amiatinus' images, Bailey bases his conclusions on the technical unity of the Cassiodorus images. While this goes some way to explain how the images may have been constructed, it does not, however, explain their stylistic differences.

In the Ezra and *Majestas* images, their stylistic distinctions may be put down to them being copied from models displaying dissimilar styles as Bruce Mitford noted, however the visual separation of the David images is not so easily explained, as the differences in stylistic content are 'insular'. This could suggest, in this instance, that the variety of styles used is important for understanding more about the images. So, for example, as far as the Davids' frames are concerned, the shift in style from animal inhabited interlace in the David Rex frame to un-inhabited interlace and geometric patterning in the Warrior frame may be meaningful. Thus, as Bailey observed, the typological image of Christ/David standing upon a two-headed creature in the warrior image is placed before a section of the psalms that includes Psalm 90, which reads: 'Christ trampled down the asp and the basilisk...' may reflect this Psalm's content.<sup>217</sup> It seems viable; therefore, that the creatures seen in the David Rex frame have been excluded in the Warrior's frame so as not to detract from its bestial iconography, so, by omitting animal forms from the border, the symbolic significance of the two-headed creature depicted in the image is uncontaminated. Indeed, this is a phenomenon that may be detected in other

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<sup>215</sup> Nordenfalk, 1977: 87

<sup>216</sup> Bailey, 1978: 14-15

<sup>217</sup> Bailey, 1978: 11. Psalm 90: Super apsidem et basiliscum ambulabis et conculcabis leonem et draconem.

manuscripts as a similar absence of zoomorphic and animal forms in the text and decoration of the Echternach Gospels, with its four dedicated animal symbol pages, could point to a stylistic strategy of not using animal tropes when animal iconography is central to image content.<sup>218</sup> Therefore, by displaying geometric and knot work panels instead of animal interlacing, the warrior image preserves its animal's iconographic integrity by not distilling its message, and so presents a clearer reflection of its informing narrative text. The manipulation of style in this manner may have been useful for communicating complex Christian messages to a local community of newly converted Christians, or to younger members of the monastic community.

In the case of the Durham Cassiodorus, then, the wide range of 'insular' artistic traits, and the preservation of 'classical / Roman' forms could imply that the manuscript was always intended to stay in the region or was created for a local patron and therefore reflects indigenous taste for elaborate interlacing, zoomorphic animals, flat colours and curvilinear and geometric patterning. Evidence of the manuscript's regional provenance certainly suggests this.<sup>219</sup> It was categorised by Mynors as part of his first grouping of early Durham manuscripts: the inference being that this Anglo-Saxon manuscript always remained in the area.<sup>220</sup> The 'classical' Roman elements preserved by the artist, such as the David Rex's posture and drapery arrangement, and the Warrior David's *contraposto*-like pose, may have served to remind the viewer that they were viewing a copy of an ancient Roman text, or that they were part of the wider orthodox community of Christians which held Rome as its heartland, whereas, the variety of 'insular' styles formed from linear patterning and flat, uniform colour may have presented a rendition of the Christian message, imparted through the artistic language most easily accessed by the manuscript's immediate community of viewers. Therefore the various styles, 'classical' and 'insular',

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<sup>218</sup> See Chapter II.

<sup>219</sup> Alexander, 1979: 46

<sup>220</sup> Mynors, 1939: 21-22

may have been yoked together to serve a dual purpose: firstly, to appeal to its local audience, and secondly, to re-enforce regional identity with the Roman Church through its stylistic nod towards classicism.

The perceivable stylistic differences occurring across the images in these manuscript examples could hint, on the one hand, that scriptorium artists were not overtly fussy about styles being different, suggesting that stylistic consistency was not necessary, as it was the image's content that was most important, not the style in which it was rendered. On the other hand, however, such a view is completely at odds with what is known of Anglo-Saxon society, a society in which symbolism is an intrinsic quality of its arts and literature. In which case, by asking why particular styles are used, rejected, manipulated, repeated, developed, and shaped may disclose more about these works than previously recognised.

### Conclusions

Overall, it is clear that consideration of some of the many existing definitions of style highlights the problems and benefits of discussing artworks in regard to their stylistic appearance. A selective historiography of style demonstrates how generations of archaeologists and art historians have responded to the question of how to define style, while raising questions about the reliability of imposing judgemental criteria onto works of art. In the main, many of the problems addressed here have remained unresolved, but have, nevertheless, indicated the potential advantages and pitfalls of stylistic investigations into the study of Anglo-Saxon art. This is illustrated through consideration of styles seen in the full-page miniatures of the Codex Amiatinus and the Durham Cassiodorus. This initial comparative study has indicated that the makers of these particular manuscript images were apparently aware of the power of style to convey symbolic information. From this, it

can be speculated that their image-makers were seemingly aware of style's ability to confer meaning in their artworks. It has been suggested that an epistemological approach to style was present in the decision-making processes involved around the production of these high-calibre manuscripts. This certainly seems to be evident from the blending of classical and insular 'styles' witnessed in the Amiatinus Ezra and the Durham Cassiodorus David Rex images, which in all likelihood reveals a rational selection on behalf of the makers, suggesting that particular styles were intentionally utilised as bearers of specific symbolic meanings, chosen to convey distinct contemporary agendas to both their native and Mediterranean viewers. This seems to indicate that an intellectual theory of style existed in the minds of image-makers working in the period.

Earlier, the question of whether stylistic analysis was an unavoidable consequence of interacting with images was posed. From this investigation, a few points on the issue may be raised. Although to answer this question it is necessary to ask others, for example *how* is style visible? What essential character of a visual object makes it have style? And, is style visible in a single, unique object? It seems that in considering these questions, that style may only be perceived and quantified if it exists in multiples, that it has to subsist more than once for it to be recognised. If this is indeed the case, then perhaps it is only by comparison, and through side-by-side observation that style can be determined to exist in a particular work. In the case study presented above, stylistic comparison has revealed both the stylistic similarities and differences evident in these images, but has also offered other insights such as how style could be utilised to shape, differentiate, and enhance picture content. It may be assumed then, that style and its analysis as well as answering questions about date, provenance, technologies, and identification of types, may also be useful for answering other questions about the nature of art and aesthetics in Anglo-Saxon society. In the following Chapter these ideas will be further developed.

## CHAPTER II

### STYLE AND MEANING IN THE ECHTERNACH GOSPELS

#### Introduction

Having considered some of the theoretical problems inherent in defining style and some of the issues encountered in stylistic analysis as a result, here, through in-depth formal and reflective visual analysis of the image contained in the Echternach Gospels,<sup>221</sup> the proposition that Anglo-Saxon art makers had a ‘theory of style’ is examined. It will be suggested that style, as well as being used in art historical and archaeological research as a diagnostic code for unlocking chronological and topographical information, may just as usefully be employed as an instrument for revealing Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards aesthetics and the place of art in Anglo-Saxon society.

With this in mind, re-examination of some of the stylistic features of the painted evangelist pages displayed in the Echternach Gospels reveals much about the ways that artists/makers could manipulate (some of) the essential characteristics of certain styles and their various conceptual constituents as a way of imbuing their works with meaning. At the same time, it is possible to identify how makers of such works, rather than blithely following the prevailing trends of the day, or faithfully replicating pre-existing works, were instead fully aware, and so able to exploit to various degrees, style’s inherent ambiguity in order to create innovative artworks.<sup>222</sup> Viewed in this way, style can be seen as a crucial, active component in the service of communication, one that is rich in meaning and so a vital resource for providing insight into Anglo-Saxon approaches towards art and its function.

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<sup>221</sup> Echternach Gospels, Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat.9389, Northumbria (?), late seventh /early eighth century (Alexander, 1978: 42-43, cat. 11)

<sup>222</sup> Karkov & Hardin Brown, 2003: 1-9

Indeed, visual evidence indicates that the makers of the Echternach Gospels, like so many Anglo-Saxon art producers, were working in a manner that consciously employed style, managing it in full recognition of its potential, as a means of maximising their ideological intentions: namely, they were working from the assumption that there was congruence between what they wished to represent visually, and the style/manner employed in its production. By examining some of the ‘tastes’, ‘traits’ and ‘artistic tendencies’ discernable in Echternach’s painted pages, it becomes evident that style could function as a vital component in the construction of meaningful imagery. Moreover, it becomes further apparent that the makers of such works were decisively exploiting style in order to communicate complex, rationalised religious, cultural and social messages.

Through various visual approaches, it is evident that rather than inertly emulating pre-existing styles, the manuscript’s image-makers were re-appropriating and adapting style as a means of encoding their images with important messages. As such, this creative process of organisation and selection seems to indicate that style, and its manipulation, played a significant role in expressing ideas central to the Christian faith, while also promoting the aesthetic preferences and artistic values of its makers and prospective audiences.

This chapter begins by asking what insular artworks can tell us about the creative minds at work in Anglo-Saxon scriptoria, over and above what can be gleaned from formal stylistic, codicological and literary analysis. By looking at how style is employed in the formulation of images contained in the Echternach Gospels, it will be suggested that geometric style was fully exploited as a visual expression of important Christian ideas and as a means of engaging the viewer and alerting them to crucial doctrinal ideas implanted in the visual programme of these images. Following this, the role of style in the construction of the manuscript’s evangelist symbols will be considered. By this means, some of the

tactics employed by the maker to create a comprehensive system of visual stimuli intended to guide the viewer to specific Christian messages embedded in the designs will be uncovered. Finally, the word ‘imago’, present in each of the images, will be considered in terms of both its stylistic make-up and its possible semiotic meanings.

### Problems Inherent in Assessing the Characteristics of Anglo-Saxon Style

For those studying the art of the Anglo-Saxons it is almost redundant to note that extant material objects and written sources are at best, scanty. For the art historian of Anglo-Saxon art this dearth of extant material can be particularly problematic. Charles Dodwell outlined some of the problems encountered as a result. He observed that, ‘if the survival pattern of the various crafts of the Anglo-Saxons has distorted our knowledge of their arts, it has also falsified our understanding of their visual tastes’; he went on to demonstrate this by highlighting the various destructive agents (fire, Vikings, Normans, ‘Reformations’, iconoclastic activities) that have eradicated countless objects.<sup>223</sup> He concluded that, ‘if the categories of art have not survived or survived only inadequately, then the only recourse left to us is literary descriptions and comment’,<sup>224</sup> noting moreover, that:

even if survivals of art had been more evenly distributed, we would still have to go to the written sources to learn something of the position of the artist in society, of the community’s attitude to him and, not least, of the relationship of the secular artist to the monastic one.<sup>225</sup>

Here, Dodwell’s point is supported by his observation that no panel paintings have survived but descriptions of them (such as the image of Christ painted on a panel carried by Augustine, or those brought back from Rome by Biscop and Ceolfrith described by Bede),<sup>226</sup> have survived in the written record. Thus, our only knowledge of certain forms of art comes from the written record as no examples have survived – the objects exist only in

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<sup>223</sup> Dodwell, 1982:12

<sup>224</sup> Dodwell, 1982:12

<sup>225</sup> Dodwell, 1982:12

<sup>226</sup> Bede, *HE*, 1: 25 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 75); Bede, *Hist.Abb.* I: 6 (Plummer, 1896: 369)

our imagination, inspired by written description in the sources.<sup>227</sup> From this, it follows that one of the main analytical problems of stylistic study, particularly in relation to the examination of specific characteristics of a particular style, is the fact that the stylistic criteria is formulated upon a (mis)representation of objects that had once existed – the stylistic norm can never include objects that no longer survive.

Exacerbating the situation is the fact that, just as the corpus of Anglo-Saxon art has been inherited only in partial form, so too has the written record describing such art objects. As Dodwell remarks, it is only *en passant* that art objects are mentioned at all: ‘no written material relating to the Anglo-Saxon period has a primary or even significant interest in art and even when reference is made, it requires literary excavation’.<sup>228</sup> He also observes that while the classical period had proto-art historians like Pliny and Vitruvius, and the middle ages produced writers on art such as the German monk, Theophilus (1070-1125), the Anglo-Saxons had no dedicated commentator on art.<sup>229</sup> Thus, even when art objects are discussed at some comparative length, the ekphrasis is still only as an aside, often included to reflect the accomplishments of a well-known, high-ranking individual such as a saint, ecclesiastic or king. From such records, be they hagiographic, historical or legal, it is impossible to glean a full understanding of how the objects looked or how they functioned visually in the society that produced them.

A second point to bear in mind when seeking to examine the manipulation of specific characteristics of a particular style is the manner in which ‘style’ has been treated in the scholarship. While analysis of style may have provided a resource for art historians and archaeologists working on Anglo-Saxon material, and has had a significant bearing on

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<sup>227</sup> Although see Hawkes, 2007: 259-75 for suggestion of reflected survivals in the extant sculpture produced under the aegis of Wearmouth Jarrow.

<sup>228</sup> Dodwell, 1982: 15

<sup>229</sup> Dodwell, 1982: 15



understanding much about the place and time of the works under scrutiny,<sup>230</sup> the scholarship has only engaged marginally with questions relating to crucial issues such as influence, patronage, audience and reception, display, function and purpose, to name but a few.

Indeed, traditional stylistic analysis largely neglects consideration of the role of the individual in the creative process; the part played by the artisan, scribe, or craftsman whose creative identity is everywhere evident in surviving works, whose unique and individual talent and imagination may have instigated particular styles, styles that others may have wished to replicate or adapt, is usually ignored. In part, this can be explained by the perception that artistic originality was not entirely relevant to the early medieval mindset, that the practices of art makers were governed by the constraints of religious dogma. However, extant works belie many such assumptions about the artistic slavishness of these works. Indeed, many of the works display a conscious desire to meet vernacular tastes for beauty, artisanship, material quality, and visual ingenuity. Moreover, they provide significant evidence of the Anglo-Saxons' pleasure and understanding of colour, texture and luminosity, their fascination with pattern and abstracted forms and their appreciation of line and letterforms to a degree that anticipates modern graphic arts.

In considering the characteristics of insular styles, such intellectual barriers erected by traditional stylistic analysis are evident. However, if the focus is shifted from these conceptual 'blocks' to turn to look at the art itself, that is, not as evidence for constructing a body or a corpus of apparently related art works, but as evidence for the way art might have been considered by contemporary artists (and viewers), then it may be possible to gain further insight into the processes of making artworks and how they functioned within their community.

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<sup>230</sup> See Chapter I, pp 35-37

### Case Study: The Echternach Gospels

Confronted with the fragmentary nature of historical sources relating to artworks such as the Echternach Gospels, those seeking to discover information regarding its date, place and circumstances of production have called upon the services of stylistic analysis to fill the voids left by history. Questions about its reason for creation, date of its manufacture and possible place of origination have dominated such academic research. In attempting to answer these questions, those studying Echternach have focused on the geographic origins of the manuscript, and have considered this in relation to the manuscript's palaeographic style. However, in many ways, the scholarship on the Gospels presents it as one of the most problematic of Anglo-Saxon artworks, both in terms of its provenance and its controversial appearance. A brief survey of its historical background and historiography makes this clear.

### The Echternach Gospels: Style, Date and Provenance

As Jonathan Alexander explains, the Echternach Gospels were taken to Paris in around 1802 after the monastery at Echternach was secularized during the French Revolution.<sup>231</sup> It is currently housed in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale.<sup>232</sup> Like other Echternach manuscripts, its contents were recorded on its opening folio in the fifteenth century; however little else is certain about its earlier provenance.<sup>233</sup> The information about the manuscript that is generally accepted has been gathered from what is known about the monastery at Echternach where it was discovered, and its founder, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, Willibrord (658-739).

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<sup>231</sup> Alexander, 1978: 42-43

<sup>232</sup> For images of the manuscript's contents supplied by the Bibliothèque Nationale, see <http://mandragore.bnf.fr/jsp/rechercheExperte.jsp>

<sup>233</sup> Alexander, 1978: 42-43

Willibrord entered the monastery of Ripon as an oblate under the abbacy of Wilfrid of York. As an eight year-old, he may have experienced the usurpation of Wilfrid in 666, when Archbishop Theodore placed Chad on York's archiepiscopal throne while Wilfrid was being consecrated in Gaul, and may have seen his reinstatement in 669. As part of Ripon's community, he would have experienced Wilfrid's extensive rebuilding programme, which took place from 671-78, and may have witnessed the production of Wilfrid's empurpled and gold gilded manuscript made for Ripon's rededication.<sup>234</sup> In 678 King Egfrith's second wife, Iurminburg, perhaps out of jealousy over Wilfrid's continuing patronage by Egfrith's first wife, Aethilthryth, turned the king against Wilfrid and summoned Archbishop Theodore.<sup>235</sup> This time, Theodore divided Wilfrid's diocese into three and installed a new bishop for each sub-district, forcing Wilfrid into exile in Frankia where he set about the conversion of the pagan Franks.<sup>236</sup> Rather than following Wilfrid, Willibrord went into voluntary exile in Ireland at the Anglo-Saxon monastery of Rath Melsigi (probably in Co. Carlow), where, for twelve years, he studied under the tutelage of the Northumbrian bishop, Egbert.<sup>237</sup> It was only in 690, when he was 31 that he embarked on his own mission to take the Christian message to the Franks, assuming the role once occupied by his mentor, Wilfrid, making his base in Utrecht. In 695, he went to Rome and was consecrated archbishop of the Franks by Pope Sergius. During times of political turbulence, he retreated to the monastery of Echternach (in modern day Luxembourg), given to him by Plectrude, Pippin II's wife. It was here c.698 that he founded his monastery and established a scriptorium.

With this biographical information the discussions about the manuscript's date and place of production that have dominated its study have presented theories based on what is

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<sup>234</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.*, (Colgrave, 1927:37)

<sup>235</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.*, (Colgrave, 1927:49)

<sup>236</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.*, (Colgrave, 1927:51-55); c.f. Bede, *H.E.*, 4: 12 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 371)

<sup>237</sup> Bede, *H.E.*, 5: 9 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 475-81)

known of Willibrord's life, although these have been articulated palaeographically for the most part.<sup>238</sup> For example, the codicologist and philologist François Masai (1909-79) argued that the genesis of insular manuscript illumination, like that displayed in the Echternach Gospels, emerged fully formed, 'like Athena from the brow of Zeus', at Lindisfarne, and that Northumbria could take credit for all the manuscripts previously attributed to Ireland.<sup>239</sup> Likewise, Julian Brown, a self-proclaimed follower of Masai,<sup>240</sup> along with Rupert Bruce-Mitford, favoured Lindisfarne as the manuscript's *locus* of production, arguing that the same hand had produced both the Durham Gospels and the Echternach Gospels,<sup>241</sup> and so dubbed the scribe the "Durham Echternach Calligrapher".<sup>242</sup> Christopher Verey, one of the editors of the Durham Gospels facsimile,<sup>243</sup> went on to demonstrate through textual comparison that it, and Echternach, along with Durham A.II.16, and the Cambridge-London Gospels,<sup>244</sup> were, in their various textual relationships, 'each to a lesser or greater degree [connected] with Lindisfarne',<sup>245</sup> or at least belonged to a Northumbrian textual family, and could be dated to *c.*690.<sup>246</sup>

However, Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, whose historical analysis led him to suggest that the Echternach Gospels was produced at Rath Melsigi where Willibrord had spent his time in exile, questioned the attribution of the Gospels to a Northumbrian oeuvre.<sup>247</sup> Nonetheless, Nancy Netzer disputed such assumptions in her studies of the cultural interplay evident in Echternach scriptorium's book production, arguing that Northumbrian influence in

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<sup>238</sup> For more information on the palaeographic transmission and identification of the Echternach Gospels, see Brown, 1980; Verey, 1998; 1999; Ó Cróinín, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2005; Edwards, 2007.

<sup>239</sup> Masai, 1947:126-7; c.f. Henry, 1948: 267-79

<sup>240</sup> Brown, 1980: 45

<sup>241</sup> Durham Gospels, Durham; Cathedral Library MS A.II.17 (Alexander, 1978: 40-42, cat. 10)

<sup>242</sup> Brown, 1956; 1960:96-97, 103-104,158, 187, 246-49

<sup>243</sup> Verey, *et al.*, 1980

<sup>244</sup> A.II.16, Durham: Durham Cathedral Library, MS A.II.16 (Alexander, 1978: 45-46, cat. 16); Cambridge-London Gospels, Cambridge: Corpus Christi College Library, MS 197(b), and London: British Library, MS Cotton Otho C.V. CLS II, 148a and 148b (Alexander, 1978: 44, cat. 12)

<sup>245</sup> Verey, 1999: 334

<sup>246</sup> Verey, 1998: 105-116

<sup>247</sup> Ó Cróinín, 1984: 17-49

manuscript making extended beyond Northumbria to Ireland and Francia through pilgrims and travellers, and so clear attribution of Echternach to a particular place is problematic.<sup>248</sup>

This view was endorsed and elaborated upon by Michelle Brown who explored these collaborative exchanges and cross-cultural influences occurring in the production of insular manuscripts in her discussion of Echternach and its relationship to the Lindisfarne scriptorium.<sup>249</sup>

Adding further fuel to the debate is George Henderson's art-historical discussion, which focuses on the style of the images and their setting. He observed Pictish influences in the forms of the creatures and proposed Iona or the monastery of Mayo, where Egbert, Willibrord's mentor, had been abbot, as possible sites for the manuscript's production.<sup>250</sup>

As this brief and selective historiography of the Echternach Gospels demonstrates, with these types of scholarly focus, the manuscript clearly highlights some of the limitations of stylistic analysis whether of script or image, as little agreement amongst scholars is evident. While these approaches concentrate almost exclusively on the questions of dating and geographic placement, they provide detailed observations concerning letterforms and decorative motifs, which through comparison with perceived similarities in other manuscripts and artefacts are used to argue a specific point of view. Other aspects of the manuscript and its art, however, are placed beyond the limitations of debate. Yet, by shifting the questions away from dating and locating and instead considering these artworks as evidence of the creative minds at work in Anglo-Saxon (or Anglo-Saxon influenced) scriptoria, it may be possible to disclose more about the images and come closer to understanding more about their function within the manuscript and about some of the ideas informing their design.

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<sup>248</sup> Netzer, 1994: 4

<sup>249</sup> Brown, M. 2003: 55, 171, 234, 241, 262

<sup>250</sup> Henderson, 1987: 94-95

### The Images of the Four Living Creatures

As noted, being generally accepted to be dated c.690 or slightly later, the Echternach Gospels is one of the earliest surviving insular manuscripts.<sup>251</sup> It contains four full-page coloured miniatures displaying the symbols associated with the four gospel writers: in this case, a man representing the evangelist Matthew, a lion for Mark, a Calf for Luke, and an Eagle for John (Figs 57a –d).<sup>252</sup>

As has been often explained, these four symbolic creatures take their form and inspiration from (primarily) two scriptural theophanies: Ezekiel 1:4-16 which describes the four living creatures witnessed by the prophet in his vision of the heavens; and John's vision described in Revelations 4-7,<sup>253</sup> which describes the four creatures surrounding God's heavenly throne.<sup>254</sup> As early as the second century, through the writings of Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (c.121-200), these visionary creatures came to be identified with the four gospel writers.<sup>255</sup> Later, Jerome and then Gregory the Great, in his *Homilies on Ezekiel*,<sup>256</sup> elaborated on their significance by explaining that as well as representing the four evangelists, the symbols could be understood to signify four phases of Christ's life.<sup>257</sup> However, it was Jerome, in his exegetical prologue to his commentary on Matthew in his Vulgate translation of the Bible, who as well as interpreting the four creatures as mystical images of the Son of God, recommended the order and allocation of the symbols to their associated evangelists. The *Plures Fuisse* (the opening words of the prologue), as it became known, explained the correlation between each of the four creatures and the opening lines of each of the Gospels.<sup>258</sup> Jerome's order and assignment of the creatures

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<sup>251</sup> Alexander, 1978: 42-43

<sup>252</sup> For accounts of Evangelist pages and their exegetical significances, see Cronin, 1996: 111-17; O'Reilly, 2003: 141-89.

<sup>253</sup> See below p. 153

<sup>254</sup> E.g., O'Reilly, 1998: 49-94; 2003: 168; Brown, 2003: 346

<sup>255</sup> Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 3.11, 8 (Wigan Harvey, 1857: 48-51)

<sup>256</sup> Gregory the Great, *Hom. Hiez.* (Adriaen, 1971)

<sup>257</sup> For the influence of these works on Bede see particularly, Hurst, 1960:10

<sup>258</sup> See, Jerome *Com. Matt.* (Hurst & Adriaen, 1969); *Com. Hiez.* (Glorie, 1964)

was widely accepted as the authoritative standard, although the ordering of the evangelist pages in the Book of Durrow<sup>259</sup> appears to testify to a preference for Irenaeus' scheme (associated with the Old Latin translation of the Bible) continuing in insular manuscript tradition,<sup>260</sup> and in the writings of Bede,<sup>261</sup> it appears that Augustine of Hippo's order provided the authoritative account.<sup>262</sup>

**Table 1: Patristic Authors' Assignment of Symbols to Evangelists**

	<b>Irenaeus</b> <i>Adv. Haer.</i>	<b>Jerome</b> <i>Mat. preface</i>	<b>Augustine</b> <i>De Cons. Evang.</i>	<b>Bede</b> <i>Com. On Luke</i>
<b>Matthew</b>	Man	Man	Lion	Lion
<b>Mark</b>	Eagle	Lion	Man	Man
<b>Luke</b>	Calf	Calf	Calf	Calf
<b>John</b>	Lion	Eagle	Eagle	Eagle

Despite these variations in the symbols' association with the evangelists, full-page miniatures of the Gospel writers and/or their symbols are a recurring feature of insular gospel books, and survive in a number of forms and formats, these being visually classified into four distinct types: Evangelist portraits pages, Evangelist symbols, four-symbols/cross pages, and tetramorph pages.<sup>263</sup>

Evangelist portraits, for example those found in the Lindisfarne, St Gall, and Lichfield Gospels display each of the Gospel writers accompanied and identified by their

<sup>259</sup> Book of Durrow, Dublin: Trinity College Library, MS 57, folios? (Alexander, 1978: 30-32, cat. 6; Meehan, 1996)

<sup>260</sup> Nordenfalk, 1968: 119-40; Werner, 1969: 2-17

<sup>261</sup> Bede, *In Lucam* (Hurst, 1960)

<sup>262</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the development of the exegesis of the four creatures in Christian tradition see O'Reilly, 1998: 49-94

<sup>263</sup> Discussion of Four-Symbols pages and Tetramorph pages has been omitted for the sake of brevity. For information on these, see Netzer, 1994: 103-12; and Baker, 2012

associated symbols (Figs 58a-c).<sup>264</sup> The tradition of prefacing a work with a portrait of a writer originated in the Late Antique practice of providing a portrait of the author as a book's preface. In a Christian context, Italian gospel books, such as that brought to Kent by Augustine, may represent a source for insular human author evangelist portraits (Fig. 59).<sup>265</sup>

However, the evolution of insular evangelist symbol pages has proven much harder to establish. While representations of the evangelists' four associated creatures are a common feature of the mosaic arts of the Late Antique period, found in the apse mosaics of many of the major Roman churches, where they are typically depicted in their apocalyptic, half-bodied, winged, haloed and/or book-carrying mode and are rendered in a naturalistic, figurative manner (Figs 60a -b). The full-bodied, terrestrial type (without attributes) although also found in early mosaic programmes (as at S. Vitale, Ravenna), tend to be accompanied by their Gospel writers and are also rendered in a naturalistic manner (Fig. 61a-b); as such they do not provide a secure art historical source for the insular *zoo*. Hence, the versions seen in the earliest insular gospel books (such as Durrow and Cambridge-London MS197b),<sup>266</sup> which display the full-bodied evangelist symbols without attributes unaccompanied by their human authors, and depict them in a highly stylised, graphic manner, cannot be so easily traced to a specific art historical source (Figs 62-63). This has led to the assumption that they may well represent an insular manuscript invention.<sup>267</sup> If this is indeed the case, Echternach's evangelist symbols, being amongst the

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<sup>264</sup> Lindisfarne Gospels, London: British Library, Cotton MS Nero D.iv; Lichfield Gospels, Lichfield: Cathedral Library, MS s.n. (Alexander, 1978: 35-40, cat.9); St Gall: Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 1395 (Alexander, 1978: 66-67, cat. 44)

<sup>265</sup> Augustine Gospels, Cambridge: Corpus Christi College Library, MS286. See discussions in Wormald, 1954; Alexander, 1978; De Hamel, 1986.

<sup>266</sup> Book of Durrow, Dublin: Trinity College Library, MS 57 (Alexander, 1978: 30-32, cat. 6); Echternach Gospels, Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, lat.9389 (Alexander, 1978: 42-43, cat. 11); Cambridge-London, Cambridge: Corpus Christi College Library, MS197b, and London: British Library, MS Cotton Ortho C.V. CLS II, 148a and 148b (Alexander, 1978: 44, cat. 12)

<sup>267</sup> In the 1960s, Carl Nordenfalk suggested that a Persian copy of a Gospel Harmony, now housed in Florence's Laurentian Library as Cod. Orient. 81 (whose colophon dates the manuscript to 1547), that was



earliest surviving examples of this type, could well be regarded as offering a glimpse into the creative origins of these symbolic images, and thus provide insight into how insular artists were using innovative approaches to design and how they appear to have combined long established iconographic modes of depiction with new stylistic approaches.

### The Formulation of the Images

Echternach's four painted pages are composites; they are made-up of three distinct pictorial elements: border, text, and figure (Fig. 64). Each of these visual components contributes to the each page's overall stylistic character. Yet, each of these discrete elements can also be understood as individual stylistic vehicles, or bearers of symptoms associated with a particular style. This means that multiple styles can exist on the same page and can be analysed accordingly. Moreover, each element can function symbolically independent of the other components while also contributing to a universal scheme. While this type of deconstructive method has been applied extensively in the study of specific iconographic motifs, and to reveal their contribution to multivalent iconographic programmes, consideration of style in this manner is uncommon. Taking each of the pictorial elements in turn, analysis of the role played by style in their composition and physical make-up may disclose some of the motivations driving the images' production.

### Echternach's Borders and Geometric Style

Echternach's evangelist pages are rendered in coloured pigment on vellum. A pattern of geometric lines makes up each of the borders; these appear to have been drawn with a

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presented by Stephanos V, a senior churchman of the Armenian Church, to the Farnese Pope, Paul III, preserves some of the features of its pre-Constantinian model (probably a second-century copy of Tatian's *Diatessaron*) in its text and imagery. He suggested that a similar copy of the *Diatessaron* may have provided the model for early Hiberno/ insular terrestrial, unaccompanied, evangelist symbols such as those found in Durrow and Echternach. However, this proposal was criticised by Meyer Shapiro and resulted in Nordenfalk's complete withdrawal of his thesis for a second-century model in his 1973 rejoinder (Nordenfalk, 1969: 119-40; Shapiro, 1973: 495-531; Nordenfalk 1973: 532-46).

straight edge (rather than drawn free-hand). At the very least, this suggests that the image-maker was concerned with producing neat, ordered lattices; it implies that the image maker(s) had access to the necessary tools to facilitate such an effect. Together, this suggests an apparent predilection for technical construction and linear precision, which in turn indicates that geometric accuracy, may have been one of the maker's 'aesthetic tastes'. Taking the Mark page as an example, it is evident that an underlying structural system has been created from which the image would emerge. Using the tools of the modern graphic artist (computer imaging), it is possible to reveal some of the geometric logic underpinning the manner in which the image was formulated and laid out (Fig.65).<sup>268</sup>

Here, it is important to stress that the grid applied in PhotoShop is positioned adjacent to the manuscript's lines, rather than on top of them, simply in order to maintain a view of the underlying image. It is also imperative to note that the apparent inaccuracies in the original image, such as the seemingly 'off-square' lines on the right side of the page, are not necessarily due to scribal error. Indeed, it is far more likely that these linear discrepancies are a direct consequence of environmental changes affecting the vellum. When vellum becomes dry, it shrinks; alternatively, when it gets wet or absorbs moisture from the atmosphere it can pucker or stretch. Over a period of centuries such environmental conditions are likely to have altered the original position of the lines included in the image's borders. Any assumption that the image-makers were in anyway negligent when it came to maintaining geometric accuracy is thus unlikely to be substantiated.<sup>269</sup>

Looking more closely at the border of the Mark page, with its super-imposed grid, some of the design tactics employed by the makers are disclosed. For instance, it seems that the artist responsible for the image has made an effort to maintain the stroke width of

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<sup>268</sup> In contrast to the work of Robert Stevick in this area, which will be discussed below (109-10), this analysis shows the linear and symmetrical consequences of Stevick's proposed mathematical scheme.

<sup>269</sup> Hull, 2003: 52

the borderlines throughout the composition by sandwiching the red pigment between very thin black guidelines. The effort, practice and dextral skill it would require on the part of the artist/scribe to accomplish this effect is remarkable, while the quality of line achieved further demonstrates that neatness and linear precision were sought after artistic qualities.

What is certain is that in order to achieve this degree of linear accuracy, the artist/scribe would have required considerable command of the materials and technologies (page and pigment) necessary to generate the frame. This would have included technical insight into conditions such as: ink/paint viscosity (too thick and the edges would be ragged; too thin and the ink would run and the colour would be insipid); colour blending (maintaining the same tonal range throughout the border); knowledge of substrate properties (such as the way that vellum behaves when it is worked on – say for example, how the ‘nap’ effects the quality of line, or how quality of the skin effects creative results).

In considering the skills base of the manuscript artist, by looking at the images produced, it is possible to determine much about the decision-making processes involved in image production. For example, by looking at the treatment of the vellum upon which images are rendered, further information may be gathered. Thus, if the vellum used for images was of a different quality or thickness to that used for text, this may reveal something about the status of the image in relation to the text, or, it may indicate that in the production of images, vellum was prepared differently to that supplied for text because images were intended to function differently.<sup>270</sup> This type of technical analysis indicates that, by looking at the construction of the manuscript and its images, it *is* possible to determine something about the image and its maker, and, indeed, provide information about the image that has not been transmitted in contemporary written sources. Yet, it tells

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<sup>270</sup> A notable example of this is the vellum used for the images contained in the Codex Amiatinus, Florence: Bibl. Mediceo-Laurenziana, Amiatino 1, which have areas coated in a greyish powdery gesso (Bruce Mitford, 1967: 12-17)

us little about the role of art and its place in Anglo-Saxon society. While Dodwell believed that this information could only be uncovered through written sources, it is arguable that, over and above the formal considerations just outlined, the artworks themselves can provide valuable insight, and in considering style in other ways, it may be possible to reveal some of the aesthetic and sociological mores informing such imagery.

This can be demonstrated by returning to the image to look more closely at its physical construction. Here, one tool in particular seems to have been vital for the formulation of this image: the ruler or straight edge. From the grid super-imposed on the image, it is clear that the image-maker has been concerned to produce accurate, straight lines, to render correct right angles in each corner, and to preserve an equal distance between the outer and inner borderlines. The border's parallel red/orange lines are almost entirely equidistant throughout the composition. The only variation from this is the seemingly deliberate narrowing of the parallel space that occurs in the vertical centre-lines that emerge from the border and the small horizontal protuberance in the border scheme that demarcates the space between the lion's front paws. Both these thinner border elements are of the same thickness and thus constitute intentional variations – they occupy the lines of horizontal and vertical symmetries of the drawn page (quarter-folding symmetry). These thinner border elements, which break from the equidistant border into the pictorial space at the vertical and horizontal quarter lines, add dynamism to the composition by serving to focus the gaze of the viewer on the lion, creating the effect of sight lines that steer the viewer's gaze to the image contained within the border. Moreover, if the border is considered as a type of optical ambulatory, a visual path that encourages the viewer's eyes to wander around the image, then these narrower, in-shooting protuberances serve to guide the viewer back to the central focus of the image: the lion of St Mark. This device for directing the viewer's gaze is supplemented by the 'L'-shaped elements that

emerge from the border into the picture area. Conforming to a clock-wise rotational symmetry of 180°, they provide symmetrical anchorage to the composition, while also serving as additional directional focusing agents.

Supporting the proposition that visual steering devices form part of the designer's scheme, is the fact that similar guiding lines occur at the very beginning of the manuscript, seen in the arrangement of lines demarcating the information contained in the manuscript's Eusebian canon tables (Fig. 66).<sup>271</sup> Placed before the biblical texts, the canon tables with their directional frames may have played a significant role in introducing the viewer to a way of seeing that required visual interaction with linear and geometric forms. Additionally, despite the tables' texts being read horizontally across the page, the tables contents can be viewed as a linked and cohesive whole. Examination of the tables makes this process clear.

It is evident that the numerical information contained within the canons has been written first, with the surrounding frames added later. This is made clear on fol.13<sup>f</sup> where the frame's dividing line has been 'kinked' to accommodate a column of numbers that have been 'justified' in the incorrect starting position. The layout of the text therefore determines how the frames are drawn. Marking-out the frames could have involved a simple exercise of drawing boxes and lines dividing each of the section. However, a much more sophisticated and developed ordering of the bordering and dividing lines has been applied, as the frames have been ordered to permit a continuous, unimpeded viewing experience.

Beginning with the first table, a double-yellow lined frame outlines the text. The opening frame (fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) has a small opening in its lowermost right-hand corner and the lines dividing each Evangelist's chapter agreements, rather than touching the top of the frame,

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<sup>271</sup> Fols 2<sup>v</sup>–13<sup>v</sup>

or being sectioned-off with a crossbar, are left open so the eye can travel around the table's contents. A small space in the opening table's frame, located in the bottom right-hand corner, guides the eye out of this box and in to the next table on the following folio that has a small opening at the uppermost corner of the left-hand side of its frame that accommodates visual continuation. In the second frame, small spaces alternate at the head and foot of each column. These line-breaks allow the viewer to start at the head of the opening column and travel, in an uninterrupted visual progression into the following columns and out of this frame, into the next, which is opened at the top to accommodate and continue the viewing experience. This programme of openings and spaces in the frames and their dividing lines continues across all twenty-three pages of tables in a continuous flow, and comes to its conclusion with the closing of the last frame in its bottom right-hand corner.<sup>272</sup>

Therefore, the canon tables, with their visual steering frames, provide not only a stimulating visual effect, but also rehearse the viewer in a way of seeing that requires the eye to be navigated, through linear frames, around the entire composition. Perhaps most importantly, they also serve to call attention to the interconnectedness of the Gospel texts: while the tables' contents display the unity of the four Gospels through textual analogies, the frames harmonise the texts by rendering them as an observable whole. From this, it may be suggested that like the canon table frames, the linear frames bordering the evangelist symbols provide viewing spaces that direct the eye to important Christian messages.

Proposing, however, that the designer employed visual tactics to mediate the viewing experience is risky, as it is impossible to provide conclusive evidence that the effects generated by the geometric scheme were originally intended by the artist.

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<sup>272</sup> McGurk, 1998: cat.59

Nevertheless, the visual evidence of such a strategy being in operation is compelling, especially as this facet of the design – the guiding of the view – can be determined in other insular works of art and has been recognised by others as a characteristic of the visual arts produced in the period. Jane Hawkes for example, in her work on the Sandbach monuments, recognised the part that colour may have played in guiding the viewer to connect related figures in the iconography in order to comprehend the visual relationships between certain characters.<sup>273</sup> In a related manner, Jim Lang proposed that repeated forms, or ‘leitmotifs’ seen in the Frank’s Casket may have served as pictorial guides linking individual scenes to an overall pictorial narrative.<sup>274</sup> From this, it seems reasonable to surmise that the guiding of the view discerned in Echternach’s borders forms a related part of a much wider insular artistic tradition of visual steering.

As such, rather than being an accidental, albeit fortuitous, consequence of arranging lines in a structured grid, it seems that a premeditated system of geometric ordering has helped to achieve such visual effects in Echternach’s borders. Indeed, over and above the intrinsic capacity of linear grids to steer the view is their geometric ordering and placement. Some scholars have gone to great lengths to investigate this feature of manuscript art and the role of insular geometric styles.<sup>275</sup> Of particular interest here, is the work of Robert Stevick, who explains the underlying geometry behind many insular artworks, including the Evangelist pages of the Echternach Gospels.<sup>276</sup> He argues that, by using only a straight edge and a compass, it is possible to determine the mathematical rationale underpinning the Echternach’s evangelist frames. For example, he shows that knowledge of the divine proportions of the ‘golden section’ is evident from their

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<sup>273</sup> Hawkes, 2003

<sup>274</sup> Lang, 1999: 247-55

<sup>275</sup> On the construction of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon pattern and its geometry see: Romilly Allen, 1904; 1909; Bain, 1951; Bruce Mitford, 1956-60; Henry, 1965; Backhouse, 1981; Guilmain, 1987

<sup>276</sup> Stevick, 1986: 284-308

construction and that ratios of 'true measure' provide a mathematical logic for their arrangement.<sup>277</sup>

Stevick's compelling analysis adds another term to the stylistic lexicon relating to this image: 'rationalised' (constructed from an underlying set of mathematical principles that have been thought out and planned as part of the production process). It is this forward planning and conceptualisation of the borders' design that permits the suggestion that an underlying theory of style was present in the minds of the manuscript's maker/s: that, from the onset of the pages' production, the makers were cognisant of (geometric) style's part and ability to affect meaning in the creation of their artworks. As such, it seems that as the borders were not created in an intellectual void, but were organised geometrically for particular purposes.

#### Divine Geometry and the Celebration of Artifice

Stevick's analysis demonstrates that the borders of Echternach's pages look the way they do because of the set of underlying geometric laws governing their layout. The 'rules' of mathematical proportion are called upon to determine the placement of the graphic elements in the borders.<sup>278</sup> As a result, it is possible to say that the patterns comply with a mathematical ideal held by their creator; they are not randomly constructed or arranged serendipitously, but are planned and rationalised to conform to an idealised mathematical scheme. Why the images' maker(s) would choose to work within these geometrical parameters requires scrutiny.

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<sup>277</sup> The Golden Section or Divine Ratio is expressed as  $2:\sqrt{5}-1$ , which has the decimal equivalence of 1.6180. Its conventional notation is  $\Phi$ . For a more detailed analysis of the 'true measures' seemingly underpinning the Echternach pages, see Stevick, 1986: 286- 89.

<sup>278</sup> I am grateful to Professor Stevick for explaining to me that the system of Euclidian mathematics used in his analysis is called upon to explain the formulation of these designs to a modern audience. He explained that the person using only a straight edge, a compass or even a piece of string, with simple training could quickly and easily generate a plethora of designs, that with simple tools and some basic geometric know-how and a creative mind, an entire world of shapes and forms can be generated (Robert Stevick: pers.com., Insular Art Conference, York, 2011).



Dating back to La Tène art,<sup>279</sup> complex geometric patterns of scrolls and interlacing were a traditional feature of the decorative arts of pre-Christian Britain and Ireland. While, in part, the continuation of this artistic tradition into insular Christian art can be explained as indigenous inheritance and continuation of local aesthetic custom, its predominant role in Christian artistic contexts may be explained otherwise.

Early Christian writers observed that geometry has the capacity to spawn a myriad of numerological and aniconic symbols, and as such could be readily called upon in the service of allegorical hermeneutics and mystic interpretation of Christian texts and images.<sup>280</sup> Augustine, for example, explains the relevance of numbers for the understanding meanings behind biblical texts, saying:

We should not underestimate the significance of numbers, since in many passages of sacred scripture; numbers have a meaning for the conscientious interpreter. Not without reason has it been said to praise God: Thou hast ordered all things in measure, number and weight.<sup>281</sup>

Here, Augustine paraphrases Wisdom: 11: 21, which explains that ‘God created all things in number, sequence and proportion’.<sup>282</sup> Thus, scripture itself presents a paradigm in which measure, number and proportion are meaningful in created objects. This is made clear in the instructions given to Noah by God for building the ark; those given to Moses for the creation of the tabernacle; to David and Solomon for the building of the Temple; and perhaps tellingly for current purposes, in the measurements of the heavenly Temple

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<sup>279</sup> La Tène art may be recognised as the first truly indigenous art of temperate Europe. The term is commonly applied particularly to the ‘Celtic’ arts of Europe. For a more fulsome definition, see Chadwick, 1970: 220-36.

<sup>280</sup> For an example of this kind of application of divine geometry see Hunter Dupree’s analysis of the significance of measurements in the St Gall Plan (Horn & Born, 1979: vol.3, appendix III: 133-40)

<sup>281</sup> Augustine, *De Civ. Dei* XI: 11: 30 (Dombart & Kalb, 1955: 350; trans. Dodds, 1950: 375): unde ratio numeri contemnenda non est, quae in multis sanctarum scripturarum locis quam magni aestimanda sit elucet diligenter intuentibus. nec frustra in laudibus dei dictum est: omnia in mensura et numero et pondere disposuisti; see also <http://clt.brepolis.net.ezproxy.york.ac.uk/llta//pages/Toc.aspx?ctx=685499/> accessed 03/10/2011.

<sup>282</sup> *Wisdom*, 11:21, Sed in sine his uno spiritu occidi poterant persecutionem passi ab ipsis factis suis disperse per spiritum virtutis tuae sed omnia mensura et numero et pondere disposuisti.

recorded in the theophanies of Ezekiel and Revelation.<sup>283</sup> The desire to work in a similar manner, by using a system of divine numbers within their manuscript's designs, may well have appealed to insular religious sensibilities, the display of geometric precision and proportional linear arrangement perhaps having a profound religious significance for both maker and viewer alike.<sup>284</sup> It is therefore possible that the desire to invoke the ideal measures of the Golden Section and the perfect ratios of 'true measure' in the Echternach Evangelist pages was part of a wider ideological concern to express, through the invocation of certain numerical and geometrical strategies, the Christian significances of particular numbers, shapes and forms. Indeed, echoing O'Reilly's work in this area,<sup>285</sup> Dynes has argued that the predominant visual evocation of the number four in Echternach's Mark page may have signified the unity of the four gospels, the four corners of the Earth or the four sacred rivers of the garden of Eden.<sup>286</sup>

Nevertheless, it is equally feasible that display of such geometric knowledge in artworks such as the Echternach evangelist pages can be seen as a demonstration of theological largess on behalf of the maker, visual evidence of manual and cerebral prowess, and an important indication of the aesthetic preferences of both makers and viewers through the physical execution of the geometric scheme itself. That is, by conforming to the laws of proportion, the image's makers are elevating the work from mere patterned decoration, into an intellectualised display of religious piety, numerical and geometrical knowledge and dextral skill – that 'how it is made' says much about the aesthetic tastes of the maker and viewer.

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<sup>283</sup> For Bede's descriptions of the types of allegorical interpretations required for detailed understanding of scriptural and patristic writings, see Bede, *De Schemata* (Kendell, 1975: 142-71; trans. Tannenhaus, 1973: 97-122). For examples of numerological exegesis, see Bede, *De Temp.* (Connolly, 1995).

<sup>284</sup> For an extensive bibliography of number symbolism in the Mediterranean before AD1000, see [www.kalvesmaki.com/arithmetric/numbers%20symbolism.htm](http://www.kalvesmaki.com/arithmetric/numbers%20symbolism.htm) (accessed 3/10/2011).

<sup>285</sup> E.g., O'Reilly, 1995

<sup>286</sup> Dynes, 1981: 35-41

This further implies that organised, schematic patterns, and skill, ingenuity and artistic assiduity were crucial hallmarks of the Anglo-Saxon aesthetic, or at the very least, the aesthetic invoked in the making of this manuscript. Indeed, this is one of the few instances where descriptions of Anglo-Saxon style or taste can be identified in the literary sources. For example, artworks are described as being of ‘excellent workmanship’ (*operas eximii*),<sup>287</sup> or ‘magnificently worked’ (*mirandi operis*).<sup>288</sup> These references to quality and manual prowess seem to imply that, in the evaluation of art objects; it was not only appreciation of form and material but also of the artistic skill of the maker that conferred value and status upon an object; that, the decisive factors by which Anglo-Saxon art was evaluated by its audience included manual adroitness in its value system. How this artistic taste or ideal was met, offers a potential insight into how particular artistic products were appreciated or critically received by their viewers.<sup>289</sup> Thus, it appears that an Anglo-Saxon concept of artistic beauty included an appreciation of quality of manufacture as well as the status or grade of material from which it was made.<sup>290</sup> If technical virtuosity is accepted as one of the desired qualities of Anglo-Saxon artworks, looking at the way the image has been formulated and how its stylistic character has been constructed, may divulge more about what the image-makers were trying to accomplish and how the image was intended to function within the manuscript.

### Bordering on Perfection?

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<sup>287</sup> Anon, *Hist. Abb.*, 9 (Plummer, 1896: 391)

<sup>288</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.*, 15 (Plummer, 1896:380)

<sup>289</sup> At the other end of the spectrum, this also helps explain comments in the sources criticising lavish, exuberant artistic excess such as Adomnan’s criticism of the nuns from Coldingham whose gowns were richly embroidered (Bede, *H.E.*, 4:25: Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 427), or St Æthelthryth’s insistence that the tumour on her neck was caused by the weight of gold and pearl necklaces that she had worn before she entered the convent (Bede, *H.E.* 4: 19: Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 397)

<sup>290</sup> For a more complete overview of the question of Anglo-Saxon taste and aesthetic appreciation, see Dodwell, 1982: 24-43

Turning to consider the evangelist pages' borders it appears that the decision to construct the borders in a manner that required both geometric order and exacting linear precision is quite typical of what is recognised as one of the key attributes of the Anglo-Saxon style or manner. What is atypical about the examples contained in Echternach is the uncharacteristic sparseness of Echternach's Mark, Luke and John symbol pages' frames. Indeed, the artistic restraint evident in three out of the four borders contained in this manuscript marks it out as being unusual in terms of its recognised stylistic content.

Comparisons with other symbol pages, like those of the Book of Durrow, for example, show just how different Echternach's borders are in terms of their stylistic character. Thus, in the Book of Durrow, the evangelist symbols are centrally aligned within wide borders, richly adorned with brightly coloured, elaborate interlacing and/or knot work. The only Evangelist page displaying any such ornament in its border in the Echternach Gospels is that of the Matthew page, whose border is filled with a combination of red/orange and yellow two- and three-strand interlace. However, the borders of the Mark, Luke and John pages display neither interlace, nor have they been block-coloured like those seen in the Cambridge-London Gospels (Fig. 67). Instead, their bordering frames contain blank channels of vellum.

Yet, just because these framing borders are empty does not necessarily mean that they are unfinished or devoid of purpose or significance. Indeed, the uncommon bareness of the frames strongly implies that they should be understood as representing a separate and unrelated genre of manuscript border to those witnessed in other insular manuscripts. Probably the best indication of this is that borders and frames of images are commonly utilised in other examples of insular art as zones of additional/supplementary iconographic meaning. The Ruthwell Cross and the Franks Casket, for example, have text located in borders accompanying the images they frame (the texts not merely serving as explanatory

narratives informing the images, but rather, adding other interpretive layers to their overall symbolic schemes).<sup>291</sup> Other borders, like that seen on the Hovingham panel, display iconographically relevant motifs such as inhabited vine scrolls (Fig. 68),<sup>292</sup> or, as in the case of the border framing the image of Christ's Temptation in the Book of Kells, they contain additional/complementary iconographic references (Fig. 69).<sup>293</sup> Such use of borders, as sites of iconographic meaning, finds its origins in the arts of late antiquity, where borders form component parts of much wider iconographic schemes.<sup>294</sup> As frames and borders continued to be used as areas of additional meaning in insular art, it is possible that the makers of the Echternach Gospels exploited and inverted traditional expectations by rendering three of their borders empty to create a particular effect, one that played with local artistic customs in order to generate an alternative mode of visual expression.

In view of this feature of the manuscript's art and the eccentricities of its curious frames, Dynes asserted that the frame of the Mark page is 'more allusive than iconic'.<sup>295</sup> Highlighting the iconographic difficulties of interpreting the border as a kind of floor or building plan of a significant building or city such as the Temple in Jerusalem or the Heavenly Jerusalem, or as a labyrinth, he argued that:

While it apparently has no specific, nameable referent, the character of the frame is clear. It constitutes a kind of latticework or cage, which both constrains the animal while at the same time, paradoxically, providing a foil for his triumph.<sup>296</sup>

Like Dynes, other commentators on Echternach have grappled with the problem of determining this feature the manuscript's bordering frames. Nordenfalk for example,

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<sup>291</sup> For Ruthwell see Ó Carragáin, 2005; for Franks Casket see Webster & Backhouse, 1991: 101-103

<sup>292</sup> For Hovingham panel see Clayton, 1990; Lang, 1991; Hawkes, 1991

<sup>293</sup> O'Reilly, 1994: 344-97

<sup>294</sup> See, for example, O'Reilly's work on the borders of the San Vitale mosaics, unpublished Ravenna conference paper, University of York, 28/ 02/ 2009

<sup>295</sup> Dynes, 1981: 39; although, (Neuman De Vegvar, 1997: 167-89) provides a convincing argument that the frames were iconic and perhaps central to the lion image's meaning.

<sup>296</sup> Dynes, 1981: 39

described them as ‘labyrinthine’, suggesting a twisted maze of confusing spaces, while, Alexander observed that:

The limited chromatic range with its abrupt contrasts further emphasizes the dynamic vigour of the designs. At the same time, there is a tendency to symmetry and balance, which makes itself felt on all the pages. [...] The tension in these pages is tangible, as if at any moment the symbols will explode from their containing frames.<sup>297</sup>

Like most viewers confronted with these uncharacteristic frames, Nordenfalk, Alexander and Dynes seem to be trying to make sense of the dynamic, disconcerting visual effects generated by the peculiar rectilinear frames. Their analyses highlight the spatial tension created by these graphic lattices. From the Mark symbol with its super-imposed grid, it may be possible to determine how such visual tension was created.

In the Mark/lion image (Fig. 70), the lion’s upper jaw follows the precise line of the outer border’s diagonal fold-line, the lion’s back follows the horizontal centre line, and the back of the lion’s head follows the vertical centre line. Visual disturbance occurs where the lion’s paws (front and rear) cross the frame. Indeed, the visual clash of the curvilinear (lion) with the rectilinear (frame) has the effect of placing the lion on a closer spatial plane to the viewer than the border, separating the image into two planar zones, and in effect, creating a three dimensional image. While the border can be seen to contain the lion’s form, seen in the way that the frame has been adapted to accommodate the lion’s tail, it is separate and discrete from it. Its detachment is made more visually apparent by its plainness and linear clarity when compared with the densely patterned, flowing form of the lion. Here, the ambiguous relationship between frame and the framed is further intensified by colour. The solid, rigid, dense, red/orange of the border, with its four square corner details rendered in brown-red (purple) appears ‘tattooed’ onto the surface of the vellum,<sup>298</sup> its permanence emphasised by the lion, which seems to float above the surface. This

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<sup>297</sup> Alexander, 1978: 42

<sup>298</sup> Dynes, 1981: 35-41

phenomenon can be best understood in terms of modern colour theory applied in painting, which dictates that warm colours ‘advance’ and colder colours ‘recede’.<sup>299</sup> Here, the four purple squares in each of the frame’s corners have the effect of pushing the frame into the background, whereas the predominant warm colours of the lion, orange and yellow, advance from the picture field, thus rendering the lion on a closer spatial plane to the viewer than the receding tones of the frame in the background.

Moreover, as Dynes notes, the arrangement of containing frame and contained form and independent linear background and curvilinear foreground creates a visual paradox: they are separate, but connected.<sup>300</sup> As a consequence, the spatial interplay evident between planes causes the surface of the vellum to vibrate between foreground and background; the individual but linked planar realms flicker on the page. This disquieting viewing experience forces the viewer to reconstruct the image, to pin down the elusive, shifting mass of lines and colours.

Like so many insular artworks, which blur the boundaries between foreground and background by utilising negative spaces as zones of positive imaging,<sup>301</sup> the Echternach Evangelist pages use spatial interchange and colour and form juxtapositions to baffle and amaze their viewers. While this characteristic trait of insular art occurs in other manuscript examples, it is more readily associated with interlaced, zoomorphic, and so-called ‘Celtic’ scroll designs with their complex patterns and multicoloured schemes. The ability to accomplish a similar effect without heavy pattern and an extensive colour palette perhaps shows not only an attempt to meet the expectations of local tastes and tradition, but also an innovative, imaginative and highly sophisticated approach to image making. Indeed, this creative use of planar space, and manipulation of pictorial zoning may offer potential insight into the unusual appearance of the three plain borders.

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<sup>299</sup> Harrison, 1987: 124

<sup>300</sup> Dynes, 1981: 35-41

<sup>301</sup> E.g. Stevenson, 1981: 1-27; Pirotte, 2001: 203-08

The trio of empty frames stand in marked contrast to the more embellished Matthew page. Thus, while Matthew's frame surrounds and supports the figure it frames and is tonally and proportionately in balance with the other elements on the page, generating little visual disturbance and providing a window-like view into the picture plane, conversely, the Mark, Luke and John frames deny the same viewer expectations. Although the shapes and arrangements seem familiar – Luke's page has crosses, a bird's perch may be recognised in the arrangement of the John page's border, and generally the patterns are reminiscent of those seen in Carpet pages – things are not quite how they should be. Their open aspect causes the viewer to want to continue the broken lines, to connect and make sense of the shapes and spaces, to draw mentally what is denied. As such, the bareness of the frames with their intermittent bilateral symmetries and ambiguous negative spaces allow the viewer to mentally fill the voids – to project their own interlace into the spaces left behind: the frames encouraging and facilitating a viewing experience that invites the onlooker to reconstruct in their imagination what is missing or hidden and in so doing, become part of the creative process. The openness of the frames and the spaces they form in the viewing space engender interaction from the viewer, all the while directing the focus on to the creature symbols. In effect, the frames serve as a net to catch the gaze.

In modern theoretical parlance, this type of visual response is termed *pareidolia*, the fanciful perception of a pattern or meaning in something that is vague or random. The Rorschach psychological test using inkblots, seeing recognisable forms in cloud patterns, and identifying the face of the Virgin burned into a slice of toast, are all examples of how the human brain seeks to make sense of the abstract visual world in this respect. However, the Gestalt effect, which describes how objects are perceived as a whole rather than by a sum of their parts, provides a clearer explanation of this impression, for gestalt theorists,



studying the psychology of visual perception, identified the human brain's capacity to arrange sights into their most simple order. They identified how the brain 'reifies' objects, that is, sees things in other forms, as part of this process in order to come to the easiest visual conclusion (Fig. 71).<sup>302</sup> To an early medieval audience, the visual effects generated in the Echternach Gospel's borders may well have inspired an analogous psychological response. Indeed, a visually literate early medieval religious viewer may well have been sufficiently visually astute to recognise this aspect of the border's design. Thus, just as the canon tables guide the viewer to a particular way of seeing their contents, it is feasible that the Matthew page provided a visual template of how to see the remaining borders in the manuscript. With this in mind, this can be demonstrated by turning to Echternach's Matthew page (fol.18<sup>v</sup>).

As Nancy Netzer observed, the shape of the Matthew frame can be seen to *insinuate* the form of the cross in its design (fig. 72).<sup>303</sup> Although no actual cross form is present, the juxtaposition of elements, when seen as a whole, 'reifies' the shape of a cross. This is achieved by the four square terminals that break into the picture plane at the mid-points of each horizontal and vertical frame that look as if they continue and intersect each other behind the figure's body. The figure, although not 'crucified' on the 'cross', like that seen in the Crucifixion page of the Durham Gospels (Fig. 73),<sup>304</sup> has enough iconographic resonance to bring to mind the symbolism of Christ crucified. This is compounded by the four square terminals, which hold the man figure in place and which divide the composition into four distinct spatial zones, which, in turn, demarcate, in the negative

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<sup>302</sup> Gestalt theory was developed in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century by psychologists such as Wertheimer, Köhler, and Koffka. For art historical uses of the gestalt effect, see e.g., Arnheim, 1943; Gombrich, 1979; Pirotte, 2001

<sup>303</sup> Netzer, 1994: 92. Here, Netzer discusses the Trier Gospel's Matthew frame but her observation is equally applicable to Echternach's. It is worth noting that Thomas, the Trier scribe, uses a variety of at least eight different patterns in his Matthew frame's interlace, whereas Echternach's scribe uses a regular pattern of two- and three-strand interlace. Thomas does, however, replicate the knots contained in the square terminals; this may suggest that the cruciforms contained within were significant enough for him to replicate.

<sup>304</sup> Fol. 38a<sup>v</sup>

space, the form of a saltire cross. Here, there is sufficient visual suggestion in the geometric arrangement of border and figural elements for the viewer to envisage the sign of the Cross both iconographically and spatially although it is not physically present: in a sense, the invisible becomes visible. Moreover, the frame itself bolsters this symbolic invocation of the cross through the arrangement of its interlace.

In the frame, interlace is sandwiched between thin, parallel, yellow borders. Three-strand interlace occupies the upper and lowermost parts of the frame, and two-strand interlace fills the two vertical sides. These seamlessly converge in each corner. At the mid-points of the border, the frame extends into the picture plane creating four junctions that each terminate in perfect squares. Unbroken, the interlace flows through the entire frame and converges in each square to form elaborate knots. Within each knot-filled square, it is possible to discern the shape of a cross embedded in the pattern.<sup>305</sup> While the emergence of ‘hidden’ crosses may be an inevitable consequence of lines overlapping each other, it is just as likely that interlace was exploited precisely because it has the intrinsic facility to form crosses in its arrangement. Indeed, this is made all the more evident by the way that the colours of the interlace have been offset in each square: red/orange interlace in the backgrounds and yellow interlace for the knots’ centres where the cruciform shapes are perceptible (Fig. 74).<sup>306</sup>

Rather than being a ‘happy accident’ or a product of a series of intersecting lines, the interlace seems to be structured and planned to contain crosses in its layout, this is seen in the way that the cruciform shapes have been isolated, and through the changes in colour and direction of the surrounding interlace. It is likely that a visual stress has been placed on this part of the design. Indeed, these apparently intentional variations in interlace

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<sup>305</sup> ‘Embedded’ and ‘hidden’ crosses are a subject that have generated much discussion amongst scholars. For broader discussions, see e.g. Stevenson 1981-82: 1-27; Hull, 2003: 163-69

<sup>306</sup> See Hull (2003: 164) for other examples of crosses formed in the negative spaces between interlace patterns and for an explanation of how these occur. Hull also underlines the problem in showing deliberate intention of the artist in producing these cross forms.

arrangement and colour placement appear to be co-opted as visual aids to guarantee that the viewer would not miss seeing the crosses that scintillate in and out of view in the border's interlace. In effect, the very style of the interlace in the Matthew border allows meaningful motifs to be encoded within the design and enriches the viewing experience, notwithstanding, whether or not these crosses were purposefully arranged or not, their presence and emphasis perhaps indicates that their presence was planned.

Overall, therefore it seems that the frame of Echternach's Matthew page has been constructed to include several allusions to the shape of the cross in its design. The style of the frame's interlace interacts with this process. Devices such as colour and directional changes in the interlace aid the process of uncovering these ephemeral cruciform shapes, helping the viewer to identify these forms. Before considering the significance of this and the part it played in the manuscript's symbolic scheme, it is worth returning once more to other frames contained in the manuscript to see if it is possible to identify equivalent visual strategies.

The recognition of cross forms evident in the Matthew page may have provided a visual paradigm for understanding the frames surrounding the remaining evangelist symbols. However, the experience of detecting crosses, implanted by the Matthew page, undergoes a perceptible shift when the Mark, Luke and John pages appear, as the visual accessibility of the Matthew page is denied. In these instances, the viewer has to work harder to reveal the encoded signs that they, by now, expect to find. They have to grapple with the spatial voids, work out the intermittent symmetries and rearrange in their minds the irregular shapes. However, with work, they are rewarded with visions of the cross. It is only through this interactive process that these forms begin to materialise. Filling the blanks and continuing the symmetries reifies the shape of the cross, and like the Matthew page, the Mark, Luke and John pages can be seen to display the creature as if placed on the

cross. In Figs 75a-d the framing lines have been joined and symmetrical patterns have been restored. Although these visualisations of the frames are personal interpretations and hypothesised reconstructions of the visual schema, it is arguable that these conjectural re-visualisations are only made possible by visual information furnished in the design. It is therefore practicable that others may too have come to the same visual conclusions.

So far, it has been established that although the borders vary in size and design, each provides evidence of an underlying geometric logic structuring their design: they are visually distinct, but connected by a prevailing mathematical ethos. Matthew's elaborate border with its repeated visual references to the shape of the cross seems to provide a visual model for understanding how to see the remaining, empty borders in the manuscript. Once more, although the frames' appearance is visually distinct, they are also structurally related. From these observations, it is possible to conclude that the geometric style used in Echternach's borders plays a significant role in enhancing the visual experience of contemplating these images, but perhaps more importantly, it has been used mindfully as a structure to aid in their understanding and as a framework upon which symbolic meaning can be built.

Despite clear visual distinctions between the Matthew page and its peers, such as the outline of the Matthew frame being rendered in yellow while the other three frames are drawn in red/orange and Matthew's border containing interlace while the others do not, the four frames surrounding the symbols can be seen to be connected stylistically. Through geometric ordering, the shapes and symmetries that they display in their designs permit the reification of significant motifs in their abstract arrangements that require interaction and reconstruction by the viewer. The linear characteristics of the geometric style in Echternach's four painted pages allows for this type of visual engagement. Examining the relationship between border and symbol makes this clear.

### The Echternach Gospel's Borders, Symbols and Metalwork Styles

As one of the most abundant motifs surviving in insular art, extant in a range of artistic contexts, the four evangelist creatures have received much academic attention.<sup>307</sup> Appearing in manuscripts, stone carvings and adorning a number of artefacts, their role, portrayal and meanings in insular art has been investigated using various methodological approaches (Figs 76-77). While some scholars have adopted formal visual methodologies in order to determine their stylistic origins and development,<sup>308</sup> others have considered their iconographic significances through exegetical approaches.<sup>309</sup> From this body of work, it is clear that in insular art, the four evangelist symbols can exist simultaneously in many and varied forms, and can convey varying meanings depending on their context and proximity to other iconographic motifs and texts: they are multivalent signifiers. No single characterisation can fully explain the entire gamut of Christian messages that they convey in their form as they symbolically interact as a link in so many exegetical chains of Christian belief. Indeed, Bede, himself explains that ‘the Living Creatures are interpreted in various ways’.<sup>310</sup> It is their polyvalency that permits the suggestion that style may have played a significant role in their artistic formulation in the Echternach Gospels as it may well have been utilised to differentiate particular aspects of their symbolic function and iconographical purpose. The role played by style in the construction of the Echternach Gospel’s evangelist symbols will therefore be questioned in the following sections, while the reasons why they may look the way they do and how they may interact with the other

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<sup>307</sup> E.g. Kitzinger, 1956: 228-48; Cramp, 1978: 118-30; O’Reilly, 203: 168-82

<sup>308</sup> E.g. Nordenfalk, 1973: 532-46; Werner, 1969: 2-17; 1981

<sup>309</sup> Cronin, 1996: 111-17; O’Reilly 2003: 168-82

<sup>310</sup> Bede, *Ex. Ap.* 5: 60 (Gryson, 2011: 281): Haec animalia multifarie interpretantur.

elements on the page will also be discussed. How style effects, bolsters, and anchors meaning in the context of this manuscript will also be considered by focussing the construction of the symbols and the role played by style.

### Echternach Gospels: Stylistic Influences

Before discussing Echternach's four beast symbols in this way, however, it is worth bearing in mind how they and other contemporary examples have been understood in terms of their stylistic outlook. This helps provide a context for the following observations and highlights some of the theoretical issues that have arisen in previous scholarship. In so doing, it becomes plain that simultaneous, albeit divergent, conclusions can be drawn based upon stylistic analysis. By focusing on one particular aspect of the symbols' style, their similarity to forms and motifs found in metalwork, a feature that has been long regarded as the most influential characteristics of their appearance, confirms this.<sup>311</sup>

For some scholars, the appearance of Echternach's styles was accounted for because of the skill and proficiency of the scribe in handling the tools and technologies of the scriptorium. Thus, in his chapter on the 'Limits of Likeness', which questions the bond between artistic copies and creativity, Ernst Gombrich cites the Echternach Gospels Matthew symbol as an example of a successful artistic insular copy of a continental original. He states that:

Confronted with the task of copying an image of a man, the symbol of Matthew, from a very different tradition, they were quite satisfied to build from those units they could handle so well. The solution in the famous Echternach Gospels is so ingenious as to arouse our admiration. It is creative, not because it differs from the presumed proto-type [...] but because it copes with the challenge of the unfamiliar in a surprising and successful way. The artist handles the letterforms as he handles his medium, with complete assurance in creating from it the symbolic image of a man.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> See for example, Werckmeister, 1963: 175-89 Nodenfalk, 1977; Calkins, 1983; Wilson, 1984; Henderson, 1987

<sup>312</sup> Gombrich, 1980: 66

For Gombrich it is the artist's 'skill to form', rather than his 'will to form', that yields the success of the copy from its supposed model.<sup>313</sup> In this view, it is the technical virtuosity of the scribe whose gift in handling the media and tools of the scriptorium who is able to transpose an unfamiliar form into something new and creative: the calligraphic mode in which the image is produced being the means of stylistic translation. Put more simply, the style projected in the image looks the way it does because of the facility of the scribe and because of the capacities and constraints of calligraphy. As persuasive as this view may be, there are problems with Gombrich's analysis. First, to a certain extent, it assumes that the artist was not capable of faithfully replicating the style evident in the original model and therefore, by necessity, applies a stylistic alternative to the original. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, this technical evaluation of copying and the ramifications it has on style elides the fact that insular scribes looked beyond the scriptorium as a technical proving ground for their skills and inspiration by drawing from motifs, techniques and patterns deriving from arts other than calligraphy.

Much earlier than Gombrich, Gottfried Semper, speaking of decorative patterns, placed prominence on human skill as a defining characteristic of style, arguing that pattern is closely connected with material and processes. Pattern, he suggested, was dependent on such techniques as weaving and basketry, and what counted in art was the skill of the hand.<sup>314</sup> The 'skill of the hand' for the particular peoples under discussion here was practiced in the production of woven textiles, elaborate embroidery and metalworking. It is metalworking, and in particular the production of high status, precious jewellery that has long been regarded as *the* premier mode of artistic expression of the early Germanic, pre-Christian settlers.<sup>315</sup> However, this art form emerged from pagan, secular society and was

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<sup>313</sup> Echternach's colophon states that the text was copied from an exemplar revised in 558 by Eugippius, abbot of a monastery near Naples.

<sup>314</sup> Semper, 1860, cited by Speake 1980: 6

<sup>315</sup> E.g. Bailey, 1996a: 23

closely associated with royal patronage and secular power. With its characteristic use of animal imagery, usually understood to have talismanic, apotropaic and magical symbolism, it at first seems to be an unlikely model for re-duplication in the processes of conversion to the Christian faith.<sup>316</sup> However, it seems that Anglo-Saxon and Celtic metalwork underwent a radical process of assimilation and quickly became an acceptable Christian artistic medium. George Henderson makes this point well:

The application of images in luxury metalwork to the service of Christ would then require, and represent a positive redirection and conversion. The Evangelist beasts would be designed to replace the heraldic or mythological dynastic animals ...<sup>317</sup>

The metalwork finds from Sutton Hoo seemingly provided the evidence that this incorporation of secular metalwork tropes into Christian graphic products occurred efficiently and quickly.<sup>318</sup>

The discovery of the Sutton Hoo ship burial in 1939 with its trove of some of the highest quality extant Anglo-Saxon metalwork certainly seemed to provide significant evidence of the ways that the artistic rhetoric of metalwork was swiftly absorbed into Christian artworks, and especially manuscript production (Fig. 78).<sup>319</sup> For example, the similarities between the Sutton Hoo sword belt fittings and the decorated pages of the Book of Durrow were recognised, suggesting that they might have derived from the same period of production.<sup>320</sup> While the manuscript itself had no definitive means of dating, the Sutton Hoo artefacts could be dated relatively securely through coin evidence to *c.*625.<sup>321</sup> The assumption was therefore, that the Book of Durrow could be dated to around the same time because of the similarity of its designs. As the earliest surviving insular Gospel

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<sup>316</sup> Hicks, 1993: 36-105; Speake, 1980: 77-79

<sup>317</sup> Henderson, 1999: 41

<sup>318</sup> Carver, 2005

<sup>319</sup> Bruce Mitford, 1965-1971; Carver, 2005

<sup>320</sup> Henderson, 1987: 32-33

<sup>321</sup> See discussion in Care Evans, 1986: 87-89



manuscript, Durrow could then provide a speculative starting point for a sequence of other undated insular manuscripts such as Echternach.

This, however, was called in to question by (amongst others) O'Sullivan who argued that, 'Any particular jewel can have a long life and may be old before it is reflected in a manuscript'.<sup>322</sup> Further complicating the issue is Lawrence Nees' view. He suggested that the flow of influence from the Sutton Hoo metalwork to the Durrow manuscript may well have been in the opposite direction: the manuscript being the inspiration for the jewellery, not the other way round.<sup>323</sup> From this, it seems that by using different media to establish dating sequences, there is a real danger of the arguments becoming circular.

The reliability of the Sutton Hoo treasures as secure dating material for the dating of early insular manuscripts has been further problematicised by the more recent finds recovered from the Prittlewell burial chamber (Essex), the 'royal' burial at Redcar (Co.Cleveland.), and most radically, by the Staffordshire Hoard, with its excess of 1050 pieces of precious metalwork.<sup>324</sup> Much evaluation of this material is still required, but this new body of metalwork objects has shaken the, until recent, firm analytical foundations of Sutton Hoo.<sup>325</sup> Nevertheless, despite the problems that these new discoveries highlight in traditional style analysis and its role in identifying dates and places for these art objects, the shared similarities observed between metalwork and manuscript art have exposed much more about early manuscripts than their prospective dates.

Janet Backhouse for example, in her study of the Lindisfarne Gospels, noted the visual proximity of the cross-carpet page at the beginning of Mark's Gospel (fol. 94) to millefiori glass and cloisonné garnets like those seen in the Sutton Hoo shoulder clasps. She also observed the similarity between the whorl patterns seen in Lindisfarne's XPI

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<sup>322</sup> O'Sullivan, 1994: 84

<sup>323</sup> Nees, 2007: 15

<sup>324</sup> Henderson, G & I, Staffordshire Hoard Symposium:

<http://finds.org.uk/staffshoardsymposium/papers/georgeandisabelhenderson> (accessed 5/3/ 2012)

<sup>325</sup> Nees, 2007: 1-17

monogram (fol. 29) and those adorning the reverse-side of the Tara Brooch. Metalwork's visual impact, she pointed out, could also be discerned in the patterns of stippled dots decorating the backgrounds of texts included in the Lindisfarne Gospels, such as those seen in the major initial page at the beginning of John's Gospel (fol. 211), which resemble the patterns of incised holes embellishing metal objects such as the Ardagh Chalice.<sup>326</sup> The inference from these observations is that the array of ethnic metalwork styles reproduced graphically in the Lindisfarne Gospels were far-and-wide ranging. Indeed, Michelle Brown has gone on to demonstrate the broad array of vernacular and foreign influences evident in the graphic reproductions of metalwork seen in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Her work has shown the extensive scope of cultural and social contacts such ethnic styles may disclose.<sup>327</sup>

Similarly, Bernard Meehan discussed the effects this process of metalwork replication had on the formulation of the four evangelist symbols in the Book of Durrow. He observed the similarity between Durrow's eagle symbol and raptor-like jewelled saddle mounts, like those dating from the fifth century that are now displayed in the Museum of Natural History in Bucharest (Fig. 79).<sup>328</sup> He also noted the cloisonné-like appearance of the man-symbol's robe, and indeed, the similarity of its form to Celtic bell shrines, like that associated with St Patrick, currently housed in Dublin's National Museum (Fig.80). His work seems to provide evidence that it was not just older metalwork objects deriving from the pre-Christian world that had been co-opted in the service of manuscript production, but also new metalwork objects recently produced as religious artefacts that were re-duplicated in drawn form.

However, for George Henderson it was not so much the metalwork itself that was the artistic catalyst, but the preparatory drawings used in the planning of metalwork that

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<sup>326</sup> Backhouse, 1981: 75

<sup>327</sup> Brown, 2003

<sup>328</sup> Meehan, 1996: 14

may have provided the means of transmission from metalwork to manuscript images. For him, it was the transference of the practice of drawing-out metalwork designs to visualise the completed product that had advanced and developed this feature of manuscript art.<sup>329</sup> He demonstrated this through a consideration of the similarities evident between Durrow's evangelist symbols and the animals depicted on the Sutton Hoo purse lid and shoulder clasps. He also observed the role that carved Pictish sculpture may have had on Durrow's calf-symbol, identifying the carved wolf stone from Ardross as a likely model. He argued that the geographic spread of these objects would suggest that drawings would have been a more likely means of proliferation of these designs, more readily exploitable than perhaps precious jewellery and immovable stones.<sup>330</sup> Here, Stevick's mathematical evaluations of metalwork objects, such as the Tara Brooch, may provide corroboration. His work shows that the system of geometric organisation used in the production of metalwork objects is analogous to that apparent in manuscript designs such as Echternach, the Book of Durrow, the Lindisfarne Gospels and the cover of the Stonyhurst Gospels.<sup>331</sup>

Although, regardless of whether it was metalwork, drawings of metalwork, or merely because metalwork was the prevailing artistic idiom of the period, which had honed and developed artistic skill in a singular direction, in terms of coming to a better understanding of the images themselves, this type of stylistic evaluation does little to explain why metalwork, a secular art with pagan associations, was so successfully assimilated into the practices of the scriptorium. However, some have begun to look at this aspect of insular manuscript art with a different focus.

Viewing the representation of evangelist symbols as stylistic products of devices associated with metalwork has been recognised to divulge much about the status of these symbols and insular manuscripts in general. Specifically, the use of colour in certain

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<sup>329</sup> Henderson, 1999: 19-55

<sup>330</sup> Henderson, 1999: 19-55

<sup>331</sup> Stevick, 1986: 182-92; 1987: 9-19; 1998: 5-16

decorated manuscript pages has been acknowledged to replicate the colours and qualities of precious materials: yellow being the colour used to suggest gold; red, garnets; blue, lapis lazuli, and so on.<sup>332</sup> This has led to the proposition that metalwork style invoked in manuscript images has the effect of connoting the preciousness of the Gospels, or as signifying the spiritual wealth of the Christian patron and/or viewer. This emulation of valuable metals and minerals not only has the consequence of conferring high status on the book as a materially precious object, but of also elevating the status of ‘the Word’ contained within through material specificity. The replication of valuable materials such as gold may also have reflected such biblical passages as ‘there is gold and a multitude of rubies; but the lips of knowledge are precious jewels’,<sup>333</sup> the emulation of precious materials in manuscripts perhaps being symbolic of sacred knowledge contained within the Gospels themselves.

Notwithstanding, the Bible contains a number of symbolic references to gemstones and luxury metals. Passages such as the description of Aaron’s priestly breastplate, adorned with twelve stones, explained in the Bible as signifying the twelve tribes of Israel, and the account in *Revelation* describing the foundations of the heavenly kingdom and its furnishings through allusions to gemstones, provide models for the allegorical and metaphorical use of precious materials.<sup>334</sup> These biblical accounts formed the basis of patristic tracts explaining the symbolism of gemstones. Epiphanius, Bishop of Constantia in Cyprus (c. 315-420) wrote the first of these.<sup>335</sup> It included a consideration of the symbolism of the twelve precious stones adorning Aaron’s breastplate. As Michael

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<sup>332</sup> Most influential in this regard has been analysis of Old English names of colours. In his important work on this subject, Barley (1974: 15-28) explained the qualitative nature of colour terms and revealed that the colour names often reflected the qualities of lightness, darkness, and glossiness to name but a few. Alexander (1975: 145-54) built upon this work by proposing some aesthetic principles in the use of colour in Anglo-Saxon art.; see also, Kidson, 1978.

<sup>333</sup> Proverbs 20: 15

<sup>334</sup> Exodus: 28; Revelation: 4:3

<sup>335</sup> Epiphanius, *De Gemmis* (Blake & de Vis, 1934)

Lapidge has explained, this work became the inspiration for future lapidary texts and was used at the Canterbury school by Theodore and Hadrian in the seventh century in their commentary on *Exodus* and their explanation of the stones of the Heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>336</sup> Moreover, Lapidge observed that, ‘at approximately the same time an anonymous author, perhaps an Anglo-Saxon, compiled a Latin treatise on precious stones which has been preserved as part of the so-called *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae*’.<sup>337</sup> Bede drew from this text in his *Explanation of the Apocalypse*, in which he discussed the significance of some gemstones. Speaking of Aaron’s breastplate, he stated:

[the breastplate’s sixth stone] which is entirely of blood-red, signifies the glory of the martyrs ... and is with reason put in the sixth place, seeing that our lord was incarnate in the sixth period of the age, and was crucified on the sixth day of the week for the salvation of the whole world.<sup>338</sup>

As Peter Kidson noted in his discussion of Anglo-Saxon Lapidaries, the predominant use of red stones used in Anglo-Saxon metalwork, specifically garnets, may have reflected such knowledge of the symbolic qualities of gemstones.<sup>339</sup>

Against this kind of traditional milieu of understandings of precious materials, the artistic emulation of luxury metalwork and precious materials seen in insular manuscript art may indicate that in this particular aspect of manuscript production, the metalwork styles emulated can be understood to function metaphorically. Indeed, if the reproduction of metalwork and its motifs is viewed as an intellectual paradigm, some of the aesthetic choices behind this artistic impetus may be equally telling. In addition, the extent to which this artistic trait is exploited visually may also be significant for comprehending why this secular, pagan art form was adapted and re-invented for Christian creative ends, and go some way to enlighten us as to why Echternach’s evangelist images look the way they do.

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<sup>336</sup> Lapidge, 2001: 278

<sup>337</sup> Lapidge, 2001: 278

<sup>338</sup> . Bede, *Ex. Ap.* (Gryson, 2001: 543; trans. Marshal, 1878: 154); cited from Kidson, 1978: 27: Qui ex integro sanguinei colouris est, martyrum gloriam significant [...] merito sexton loco positus, cum dominus noster et sexta aetate saeculi incarnates, et sexta feria sit pro totius mundi salute crucifixus.

<sup>339</sup> Kidson, 1978: 27

### Metalwork and Meaning in Echternach's Matthew Page

Matthew's is the first of the four Gospels. In the manuscript, the *Imago Hominis*, is the first of the full-page miniatures.<sup>340</sup> It is possible, therefore, that the Matthew symbol page was designed with the express purpose of providing a lavish pictorial introduction to the entire New Testament narrative; a visual mechanism to mentally prepare the viewer for what was about to follow in the entire gospel text. As a means of maximising the visual and symbolic impact of this opening image, the evocation of metalwork may well have provided, albeit metaphorically, the kind of intrinsic material substance that was deemed equal to such an illustrious task. Looking at Echternach's Matthew border (Fig.81), rendered in 'gold' and 'garnet' red, it has black pigment filling the negative spaces left by the interlace. This gives a corresponding visual effect to niello, a compound of copper, silver, and lead sulphides that forms a black paste, which when inlaid into the background of chip-carved, granulated and interlaced metalwork enhances the details of the metalwork. It is an effect observed, for example, on the Sutton Hoo belt buckle where it emphasises the zoomorphic animals carved in the gold belt's surface.<sup>341</sup> As Echternach's only border displaying any such interlace, its usage at once designates the high status of this particular page.

While this border displays patterns and techniques familiar to insular metalwork, its direct identification as a purely insular stylistic product or artistic tendency is problematic. As Hiberno-Saxon metalworkers readily absorbed Roman and Merovingian metalwork styles into their stock, attribution to a single cultural source is tricky. Equally significant in identifying its origins is the fact that jewel-encrusted metalwork objects and intricate

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<sup>340</sup> For the Matthew page's similarity to metalwork and its possible symbolic significance, see Werckmeister, 1967: 7-52

<sup>341</sup> For more information on the metalwork techniques of the Sutton Hoo collection, see Care Evans, 1986

jewelled frames were recurring motifs featured in the arts of the early Christian, Roman world, and as such, it is equally feasible that the desire to reproduce jewelled, metal objects in insular manuscripts reflects a desire to replicate this facet of Late Antique works. Pearl-encrusted diadems, books studded with gemstones, golden thrones strewn with semiprecious stones, bronzed liturgical objects and crosses bedecked with fine gemstones are a few examples of treasured objects depicted in mosaics and paintings of the Late Antique period. The jewelled throne upon which Christ sits in majesty in the apse mosaic of S. Pudenziana in Rome, and the paten, chalice, cross and book carried by a courtly procession of Byzantine dignitaries in the mosaic panels of S. Vitale show the range of precious objects depicted in Christian works of art of the Late Antique period.

A further artistic parallel to Echternach's metalwork border may have been the richly adorned jewelled frames, which designated the high status of particular scenes in Late Antique mosaics (Fig. 82). These frames, often depicted as alternating chains of cabochon-cut gemstones and pearls, demarcate the scenes they frame as 'precious'. The demarcation of imagery with luxurious metal and gems in this way reminds the viewer of the magnanimity of the benefactors of such works; the material prosperity displayed being a powerful demonstration of dynastic power and cultural cachet as well as a metaphorical symbol of spiritual richness.

In the Echternach Gospels, by transposing styles deriving from local metalwork traditions into their manuscripts in this way, insular artists, rather than passively working in an artistic mode handed through generations by native custom, or being limited to skills honed in metalwork, may rather, have been keen to re-visualise this aspect of antique art in their own products. In this regard, their graphic renditions of metalwork perhaps represented localised reflections of Christian arts seen on the Continent. In this hypothesis, the emulation of jewelled metalwork can be viewed as both a stylistic translation of

Christian models into a local artistic vernacular, and also a sign that their insular makers were not only aware of continental proto-types, but were also ardently demonstrating their wealth, status and largess through the artistic display of prized materials – all the while equating themselves visually with the wider Christian world. More notably, however, is the possibility that such re-imaginings of metalwork forms in insular art, like those deriving from the Continent, were crucial for the conferral of important Christian messages.

Thus, the jewelled frame of the Matthew page, perhaps alluding to biblical understandings of precious materials and conferring preciousness in a manner akin to the artistic traditions of jewellery seen in continental mosaic images, also intimates the form of the cross in its arrangement. Through the elicitation of metalwork in the Matthew page, an image of the ‘*crux gemmata*’ (jewelled cross) is brought to mind. This motif operates iconographically on a number of levels. As such, it recalls the large jewelled cross, erected by the Emperor Theodosius II (408-45) on the site of Christ’s crucifixion at Golgotha, which was enshrined in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre complex in Jerusalem. After the discovery of the True Cross by Emperor Constantine’s mother, Helena, in the early fourth century, there was a resurgence of interest in the True cross.<sup>342</sup> Accounts of this jewelled cross were recorded by Adomnán and Bede in the eighth century, and it was also described in the Old English verse ‘The Dream of the Rood’, a rendition of which is carved on the Ruthwell monument.<sup>343</sup> A further verse, ‘*Elene*’ written by Cynewulf in the ninth century

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<sup>342</sup> For the legacy of Constantine and the cult of the True cross in Anglo-Saxon England see Hawkes, 2006: 104-112; Bailey, 1996: 42-57

<sup>343</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 1:6 (Bieler, 1965: 175-234); Bede, *De Locis Sanctis* 2:1 (Fraipont, 1965: 244-80); for transmission of text see O’Loughlin, 2000: 93-106. The text of the *Dream of the Rood* is contained in the Vercelli Manuscript, which is dated *c.* mid-tenth to mid-eleventh century; Ruthwell’s inscribed rendition predates that contained in the manuscript. See Swanton, 1970: 89-91; trans. Bradley, 1982: 158-63; for Ruthwell’s runic text and its analysis, see Raw, 1970: 244-45; Okasha, 1971: 108-12; Ó Carragáin, 2005



bears witness to the continued interest in the jewelled cross throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.<sup>344</sup>

Knowledge of this motif may have been further fuelled by the many images of the *crux gemmata* surviving in major Christian foundations in the Roman world encountered by Anglo-Saxon pilgrims abroad. Crosses like those rendered in metalwork such as the sixth-century cross of Justin II now housed in the Vatican Museum show how the *crux gemmata* was visualised as a metallic cross inlaid with precious gems with splayed cross-arms. This is a form detectable in a number of Late Antique mosaic images where the jewelled cross, with splayed arms plays, an integral role in complex iconographic programmes. It is portrayed for example, in the apse mosaic of S. Pudenziana in Rome, where it forms part of the iconography of Christ in Majesty. Its image is also central to the iconography of the Transfiguration depicted in the apse of Sant'Appolinare in Classe, Ravenna.<sup>345</sup> It appears in the domes of Ravenna's Arian and Orthodox baptisteries where it is placed, *in majesty* upon jewelled thrones and signifies the re-birth of the newly baptised Christian in emulation of Christ and represents Christ in anticipation of the return of the judge at the second coming – until which time the 'throne' remains empty,<sup>346</sup> and in the domes of the mausolea of Galla Placidia and Theodoric where its image is associated with the theme of resurrection (Figs 83a-d).<sup>347</sup>

In these images, the symbolic function of the *crux gemmata* alters according to its iconographic and architectural setting. Whether as part of the imagery of the *Majestas*, or visualised as a feature of apocalyptic visual narratives, its image operates on a number of symbolic levels. It could signify not only the instrument of Christ's sacrifice, but also the

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<sup>344</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 1: 32 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 113); Cynewulf, 'Elene' (trans. Bradley, 1982: 164-97); *Dream of the Rood* in the Vercelli Book (Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare CXVII, fols 121a-133b), trans. Bradley, 1982: 164- 97); also further below, Chapter III: 209

<sup>345</sup> For the iconographic significance of this mosaic, see e.g. Milner, 1997: 207-17; Lane Fox, 1995: 247-51

<sup>346</sup> For exegetical significance of enthronement, crucifixion and baptismal rites, see e.g. O'Reilly, 2007: 301-16

<sup>347</sup> For the iconographic significance of these mosaics, see e.g. Gough, 1973: 93-99

tree of life, from which flowed the four sacred rivers of paradise, which were in turn understood to signify the out-pouring of the four Gospels from the centre of the Earth to the four corners of the world, all the while, symbolising Christ's second coming, the shining golden cross being the cosmological sign rising in the heavens on the day of judgement. Within such image programmes, the cross is frequently depicted in association with the four symbols of the evangelists. This configuration of motifs is seen at Sta Pudenziana and in Galla Placidia's mausoleum, where the cross is placed in the sky and is flanked by the winged symbols. Such images make the symbolic connection between the *crux gemmata* as the fount of the Gospels and the four Gospel writers explicit, but also bring to mind the description of the four creatures in Revelation who proclaim Christ's divinity on the day of judgement.

A comparable mosaic image discovered in the fifth-century catacombs of San Genarro in Naples in 1971 demonstrates how the iconographic association between jewelled cross and Gospel writers' symbols were also used to visually refer to ideas about Christ as *logos*: the Word incarnate (Fig. 84). In this mosaic, a priest (probably St Genarro as the mosaic is placed above his tomb) is depicted holding a Gospel book adorned with the *crux gemmata* flanked by four evangelist symbols.<sup>348</sup> The combination of book, jewelled cross and four creature symbols in this mosaic presents an amplified iconography of the relationship between Christ as law- (Gospel) giver and redeeming Word made flesh (signified in the form of the book), and the four living creatures that pronounce his glory on the day of judgement: the shining cross being a heavenly analogue of the instrument of Christ's human death and the cosmic sign of his second coming.

A similar type of iconographic bricolage may also be evident in the construction of the Matthew page. Looking once more at the four square terminals extruding from its

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<sup>348</sup> This mosaic was identified by Nees (1978: 3-8) as a potential model for the insular 'naked', 'terrestrial' symbols featured in the Book of Durrow's four-symbol/cross page, although Werner preferred a Coptic model for the same Durrow page (Werner, 1969: 3-17; 1981: 23-33).

frame, it is possible that their form deviates from the more conventional spayed-arm cross terminals commonly associated with images of the *crux gemmata* in order to bring to mind the shape and form of a Gospel book such as that carried by the priest in the aforementioned mosaic.

Insular examples such as the stone cross-slab from Jarrow bearing the inscription ‘in this unique sign life is given back to the world’,<sup>349</sup> displays a cross with squared terminals, as does the eighth-century Rupert Cross, probably made by an English artist working on the Continent. Acca’s Cross, housed in Hexham Abbey, while missing its cross-head, preserves enough of its lowermost transom to suggest that this stone cross, carved to replicate repoussé metalwork and glass-beading, may also have had squared cross-arms (Figs 85a-c). These examples, while perhaps not representing libriforms, do however demonstrate that the use of this squared-arm type in the Matthew page, rather than the more common splayed-arm type is not an isolated occurrence of the jewelled cross being depicted this way in insular art. This form, therefore, may have been selected because it could be exploited to visualise both the *crux gemmata* and the form of four books in its layout.

Returning to the Echternach image (Fig. 86), each square ‘book’ is marked with the sign of the cross in its metalwork-inspired interlace. These ‘books’ are located at the frame’s cardinal points, dividing the composition into four. This configuration may have had particular symbolic significance. Indeed, as Jennifer O’Reilly explains, such quadriform arrangements may have reflected insular notions about the various quaternities such as time, space and matter (each being composed of four distinct but related aspects).<sup>350</sup> The four winds, the four seasons and the four bodily humours are examples of

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<sup>349</sup> In hoc singulari signo, vita redditur mundo’ (Cramp, 1984a: 112-13; Hawkes, 1996: 108)

<sup>350</sup> O’Reilly, 2003: 174

such four-fold cosmic ordering. O'Reilly goes on to demonstrate that the late eighth-century *Irish Reference Bible* explains that:

the Gospels have a single source but each was composed in one of the four parts of the world; in turn, the Gospel, whose characteristics are figured in scriptural and cosmic quaternities, is taken to the four corners of the world.<sup>351</sup>

Given this, it may well be that Echternach's Matthew frame may echo, spatially and iconographically such ideas about the ordering of the Christian universe and the evangelist's part in spreading the word of Christ.

Overall, therefore, the Matthew frame, with its implied iconography of the *crux gemmata* and four jewelled gospel books, invoked through the graphic implementation of metalwork tropes, can be understood to present a comprehensive Christological image, pregnant with theological meaning. Developing these ideas further, by looking at the symbols through a similarly focused lens, the active harnessing of metalwork styles in this way becomes all the more evident.

#### The 'Man' Symbol of Matthew

In the Matthew page, the figure of a man is flanked on all four sides by the 'book' terminals. Behind the figure is a depiction of a three-rung ladder-back throne. The figure is ambiguously situated so that it is unclear whether he sits upon the throne, or stands before it. In his slender hands, the figure holds open a book displaying a bifolium with the words 'liber generationis ihs xpi' (the book of the generations of Jesus Christ) clearly legible on its pages. The long fingers of each hand rest directly below the words *jesu* and *xpi*. The book has square clasps arranged around its pages. Open-eyed, the figure stares down towards the book. The figure's yellow hair is delineated with tiny dots of red that follow the shape of his hairline and trace the outline of a Roman monastic tonsure recognised in

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<sup>351</sup> O'Reilly, 2003: 174

the shape of a small arc on the top of the head. A neat beard and tidy eyebrows are drawn with a thin, faint black line and shading behind the eyes emphasises the eye sockets. From beneath the red and yellow-trimmed under garment, the figure's feet rest on the lowermost rung of the throne.

In contrast to these closely observed figural details, the figure's body has been portrayed as an abstracted pattern of three pairs of symmetrically opposed loop-shaped segments. The uppermost pair of loops is conjoined to form an inverted heart-shape. This is painted in an orangey-red tone inset with a darker, dirtier red line that follows the shape of the cardioid and wraps around the figure's wrists in a manner that suggests arms. The next two segments are tear-shaped with their outermost edges filled with a thick band of yellow, which has a continuous spiral key pattern interspaced with triangles, drawn in black, super-imposed on its surface. A thin channel of vellum demarcates the centres that are filled with a gradation of the two hues of red. Whereas the upper and middle pairs of segments are arranged so that the widest part of their tear-shape points downwards, the third pair of segments are inverted. More wing-shaped, the lowermost segments terminate in volutes. These have their outermost edge rendered in orangey-red with a darker red channel inset in the middle. Yellow pigment decorated with clusters of three red dots arranged in the form of triangles fills the centres of the segments. A lozenge-shape is formed in the negative space that contains a red circle, which in turn contains a flower with nine petals.

From these observations, it appears that two discrete representative approaches have been used to visualise the man symbol: the figural and the abstractive. Here, it is worth mentioning that the tendency to reduce metalwork can be only be detected as part of the abstract features of the design. In the figure, the carefully drawn figural elements such as the head, hands and feet are in stark contrast to the abstract mass of colours and shapes

occupying the place of the figure's body. Recognition of this juxtaposition of naturalistic, figurative elements and metalwork-derived abstracted forms may be vital for resolving the symbolic function of the image.

Most notable in this regard, is the teardrop-shaped segments representing the figure's body. These paired motifs recall hip joints symptomatic of Germanic Style II zoomorphic animals found in Anglo-Saxon metalwork. Such tear-shaped limb joints are commonly embellished with millefiori, chip-carving or granulations. The entwined boars adorning the Sutton Hoo shoulder clasps provide an example of this feature of Anglo-Saxon metalwork (Fig. 87a). Here, a chequer-board pattern of blue and white millefiori glass fills the boars' limb joints. Similar hip joints can be observed on the Sutton Hoo belt buckle, only these are outlined with rows of granules augmented by niello (Fig. 87b). Such hip joints are also a feature of three-dimensional animals such as the boar surmounting the crest of the Benty Grange helmet, where the joints have been highly burnished to provide a smooth, reflective finish to contrast with the granulated surface of the body (Fig. 87c).

Drawing from the inventory of metalwork animals in this way may indicate that in the process of constructing the symbol, forms associated with Germanic animal art were included because they had the facility to bring to mind the bestial aspect of the man symbol as it is described in the biblical accounts. So for example, the living creatures appearing in Ezekiel's vision are described as each having 'four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings,'<sup>352</sup> while the account of the beasts in Revelation says that, 'the four beasts had each of them six wings about him and they were full of eyes'.<sup>353</sup> Although, as Romilly Allen observed, there is little consistency in the number of wings depicted in early depictions of the evangelist symbols in early Christian art, with depictions

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<sup>352</sup> Ezekiel: 11: 21: quorum cor post offiendicula et abominations suas ambulat horum viam in capite suo ponam dicit Dominus Deus.

<sup>353</sup> Revelation: 4: 8: et quattuor animalia singular eorum habebant alas senas et in circuitu et intus plena sunt oculis.

of two, four and six wings being equally acceptable.<sup>354</sup> Potentially therefore, this image could be understood as employing a strategy to envisage both the four wings mentioned in Ezekiel's account and the six wings described in Revelation. This may explain the grouping of the four 'wings' that are cohesively placed at the top of the body, situated in the opposite direction to the two lower 'wings'. Arranged in this way, the abstracted body, reminiscent of animal metalwork ornament provides a harmonised view of the four and six-winged creatures in a single form, unified by its structure and layout.

In tandem with this, the visualisation of the man symbol's body using hip-shaped forms characteristic of luxury animal objects may be indicative of a longstanding artistic tradition of anthropomorphic representation originating in Anglo-Saxon pagan mythology, here, being called into the service of Christian art. As the work of Kelley Wickham-Crowley demonstrates, Germanic Style II hip joints may have originally been symbolic of the shape-shifting characteristics of pagan gods such as Odin.<sup>355</sup> Discussing the birds of the Sutton Hoo instrument, Wickham-Crowley suggests that hip joints may have expressed Odin's ability to transform into various animal forms, and that such examples as the eagle and raven fibulas from Anderlingen in Lower Saxony and the bird of the Sutton Hoo shield, which has a human face embedded in the centre of its hip joint (Figs 88a-b), may have signified such metamorphoses. The Sutton Hoo whetstone may also draw upon this tradition of human/animal mutation as it displays human faces contained within this tear-shaped form and is surmounted by a three-dimensionally modelled stag. From this perspective, in the context of the Echternach man symbol, the use of this animalistic tear-shape to represent a human body may reflect an inversion of much older associations of animal/human transformation, co-opted to communicate newer Christian ideas about the human evangelists and their identification with the visionary creatures described in

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<sup>354</sup> Romilly Allen, 1990: 264-69

<sup>355</sup> Wickham-Crowley, 1992: 43-62

scripture. In this regard, the winged-shapes making up the body not only provide a literal representation of the wings associated with the creatures recounted in the biblical theophanies, but also adapt earlier indigenous notions of anthropomorphism to signify the therianthropic, shape shifting association of Matthew as terrestrial human and visionary creature.

A further point to consider concerning these wing-shapes is that their shape is also present in some of the other symbols. The eagle's wing for example, is executed in this hip-shaped form and, as Nancy Edwards suggests, may have been drawn with the aid of a compass or template.<sup>356</sup> This in turn may indicate that the preservation and repetition of this shape was significant. Indeed, rather than illustrating the eagle flying (as it is described in Revelation),<sup>357</sup> or with its wings outstretched, it is shown in a resting position. Earlier examples of John's eagle, such as that at S. Vitale, show the bird with its wings outstretched. This open-winged attitude is also favoured in the image of the eagle in the Book of Durrow (Figs 89a-d). The closest parallel to the closed-winged Echternach eagle is that depicted in the Cambridge-London Gospels, although this bird has a curved trapezoidal form representing its wing, rather than the same hip-shape. George Henderson likened this wing-shape to that of the Pictish eagle incised on the slab of Knowe of Burrian, Harray, and suggested that Echternach's more 'pigeon-like' eagle may have been a deliberate variation of this type (Fig. 89e).<sup>358</sup> Although, the wing-shaped form seen in Echternach might be expected to be recognised in a depiction of a bird, it is all the more conspicuous when it is also detected in Echternach's lion image, in which the curvilinear pattern of the beast's tail produces the same wing-shape in its negative space. The reiteration of this shape may have functioned as a leitmotif, a device linking the discrete images to one another. Identification of another repeated motif strengthens this idea, as the

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<sup>356</sup> Edwards, 1996: 152

<sup>357</sup> Revelation: 4: 7: et quartum animal simile aquilae volanti.

<sup>358</sup> Henderson, 1987: 76



square 'book' terminals may be echoed in the forms of the purple, empty squares occupying the corners of the Mark/lion page and in the square terminals of the crosses that emanate from the border of the Luke/calf page. These repeated forms then, have the effect of signalling that the four creatures depicted evolve and derive from a common source and substance.

What that source may have been, may perhaps be recognised in the man symbol in the form of the lozenge and rosette located at the intersection of the 'wings' rendered in the negative space (Fig. 90).<sup>359</sup> This is because these forms have been recognised by others to have held important Christian significance and specifically allude to Christ. Indeed, the lozenge (or rhomboid) provides a significant example of a motif with strong Christological significance. This is because the four-sided diamond-shape is understood to carry specific Christian meaning as it is seen to contain the Cross in its shape; that is, if the terminals of the cross arms are joined by lines, a rhomboid is formed. On the iconography of this visual emblem, Hilary Richardson argued that the lozenge represents Christ as the *Logos Incarnate*, the Word made flesh.<sup>360</sup> Developing and expanding on this theme, O'Reilly explained, that the lozenge-shape can be read as a cosmological symbol of Christ as the Creator Logos, 'without whom nothing was made' (John:1:1-3), the lozenge representing the universe and its creator in microcosm.<sup>361</sup> In the Man symbol page, this identification of the lozenge-shape as a symbol of the Christian universe with Christ at its centre is made clear by the inclusion of the rosette situated within the lozenge, as the sign of the Cross may also be subtly invoked in this floral motif.

As Hawkes demonstrated, this floral form was a recurrent feature in the art of Anglo-Saxon England and appears in a number of artistic media where it is frequently used

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<sup>359</sup> c.f. Shapiro, 2005: 111-27

<sup>360</sup> Richardson, 1984: 45; 1996: 24-25

<sup>361</sup> O'Reilly, 2003: 141-89

as a central boss of a cross.<sup>362</sup> Examples such as the crossheads from Whitby and Lastingham and that embedded into the western end of the exterior of the church at Middleton, North Yorkshire; illustrate the widespread use of this motif in cruciform contexts (Figs 91a-c). In Echternach's image, when coupled together in this way, the lozenge and the floral motif present an abbreviated iconography of Christ as the Creator Logos, the Word incarnate, whose redemptive death on the cross inaugurated the new covenant with God and man; brought about by his sacrificial death and expressed through his inspiring Word contained within his four Gospels. These are appropriate themes to be advanced at the opening Matthew's Gospel as this book begins with a genealogy of Christ's human lineage and which as Henderson elucidates, contains the 'little apocalypse' in which Christ tells of his future sacrifice and resurrection.<sup>363</sup> As such, the combined forms of wings, rosette, and lozenge distil a number of Christian messages within the abstract style of the figure's body. These messages can be seen to be further advanced in the design's more figural details.

However, before the non-abstract elements of the design are examined, it is worth recapping. It appears that the man symbol's design draws from the visual language of metalwork to articulate characteristics of Matthew and the visionary creature that came to be associated with him. This is achieved through the symbolic use of the hip-joint forms representing his body that could signify his identification with the winged creature recounted in scripture. At the same time, these shapes may have alluded to the Gospel writer's metaphysical transformation from human male into visionary winged creature so serving to signify his role as both Gospel writer and witnessing creature of God's glory on the day of judgement. Viewed in this way, once more, it seems that the Matthew page provides visual clues to understand the symbolism of the other images. The repetition of

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<sup>362</sup> Hawkes, 2003: 263-86

<sup>363</sup> Henderson, 1987: 80 citing Matthew: 24 -25

the wing motif across some of the other images (as well as the square book form) seems to stress the interconnectivity of the symbols depicted in the manuscript. Moreover, through the intrinsic value of the materials reproduced in the image, the high and precious status of these symbols is attested. Returning now to look at some of the more figural aspects of the man symbol's design, other indicators of how the Matthew page explicates ideas about the role of the evangelists and their associated symbols is explored (Fig. 92).<sup>364</sup>

Whereas the abstracted body of the symbol draws from the artistic vocabulary of metalwork to render its form, the head, hands and feet are represented through detailed line drawings. In contrast to the abstracted shapes and solid colours of the body, these features of the design are precise in their representation of human body parts. The application of an alternative artistic visual language, or representational style in this manner, may point towards a calculated tactic to emphasise the 'human' as opposed to the 'heavenly' elements of the design. This may be because these are the parts of Christ's body that were assaulted during his crucifixion; the hands and feet nailed to the cross, and the head adorned with the crown of thorns, here represented by the form of the Roman monastic tonsure understood to replicate the crown of Christ's humiliation.<sup>365</sup> In this respect, the man symbol, with its repeated visual references to the cross, brings to mind Christ's crucifixion although it is not explicitly represented in a traditional iconographic guise, although encoded in this way, the image can at once signify the man symbol associated with Matthew, and present a series of visual allusions to Christ. Indeed, the open book held out towards the viewer helps make these associations more apparent.

The figure's long, slender fingers direct the viewer to the text displayed in the open book that displays the opening words of Matthew's Gospel. The fingers of each hand point directly towards the names 'Ihs' and 'XPI'. The significance of this action may be

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<sup>364</sup> On figure style of evangelist images, see Henderson, 2008: 33-37

<sup>365</sup> Werckmeister, 1967: 7-52

revealed by probing the meanings behind these individual names. Jesus (Ihs) is the name given to Mary by the angel Gabriel for her soon to be born child as recounted in Luke: 1: 31.<sup>366</sup> It is also the name also told to Joseph recorded in Matthew 1:21 in which, the angel says, ‘she will bear a son, and you shall call him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins’.<sup>367</sup> XP is Christ’s monogram that derives from the first two letters of his name in Greek, ‘*Kristos*’. This was the cosmic sign witnessed by the Emperor Constantine on the eve of the Battle for the Milvian Bridge in 312 that he had emblazoned on the labrum, or banner that his troops carried into battle. This emblem, combined with the ‘i’, the Latin ending of Christ’s name, became a common motif in early Christian art where the monogram came to signify the *Nomen Sacrum* or Christ’s sacred name.<sup>368</sup> Christ, transliterated from the Greek, has the meaning ‘the anointed one’, and from the Hebrew, ‘the messiah’, which served as a title for the one designated to fulfil the Old Testament messianic prophecies. The presence of two variants of Christ’s names in the Matthew image could allude to specific qualities of Christ and his nature, as ‘Jesu’, is the name given to Christ by the Angel Gabriel at the annunciation, it represents his human nature, whereas, ‘XP’ is his name as the Chosen one, his prophesised name, and that which represents his Godliness.

In the image, then, the directing of the viewer’s gaze by the pointing fingers of the man figure to Christ’s distinct names could be a gauge of the makers’ Christian orthodoxy. This is because Matthew’s text, announcing Christ’s human genealogy, also alludes to Christ’s nature as the son of God. Therefore, the open book proclaiming the actual, physical beginning of Matthew’s Gospel also tacitly refers to Christ’s human sacrifice and second coming by the presence of his two names. Adding weight to these associations are the square clasps that surround the open pages of the book, as these have been interpreted

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<sup>366</sup> Luke: 1: 31: Ecce concipes in utero et paries filium et vocabis nomen eius Iesum

<sup>367</sup> Matthew: 1:21: Pariet autem filium et vocabis nomen eius Iesum

<sup>368</sup> Eusebius, *V.Con.*, 2:6-10 (Cameron & Hall, 1999: 97-99)

as the seven seals adorning the book of life as described in the book of Revelation. In this iconographic form, the eschatological significance of the image is further educed by the book (of life) being held open in the image as the apocalyptic narrative explains that only the ‘lamb of God’ is ‘worthy’ to open the book of Life.

The concurrent use of figural and abstract styles in the figure’s design thus can be understood to bolster meaning and to differentiate particular aspects of the natures of the holy figure represented. Indeed, the symbolism outlined above, if accepted, could equally be a sign that the image was codified in this way as it sought to present an orthodox Christian view of Christ, the Gospels, and their writers. This is because, in orthodox Christian tradition, Christ is understood as both human and divine; he is co-eternal with the Father. Such ideas about Christ’s two-fold nature may be expressed in the image through the use of various visual devices such as the pairing of abstract and figural style and perhaps also through the use of symmetry. Therefore, in the Matthew page, belief in Christ’s nature, as both man and God, may be visually rehearsed through the application of reflected/vertical symmetry. Indeed, the image’s style, rather than representing a local preference for linear, geometric, abstracted and patterned forms, could instead reflect an intentional harnessing of stylistic tropes best suited to communicating Christian tenets such as the human and divine natures of Christ’s being.<sup>369</sup>

In this respect, the echoed dispersal of pictorial elements such as the figure’s eyes, garments, hands and feet has the effect of creating a symmetrical or binary image, where one ‘whole’ is made-up of two distinct but connected parts. This is further emphasised by the combination of representational and abstracted forms, the ‘real’ and the ‘unreal’ combine in the image by yoking-together recognisable human characteristics such as the face, hands and feet and the amorphous mass of swirling colour and pattern representing

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<sup>369</sup> c.f. Schapiro, 2005: 55-97

the body. Here, the abstracted body's synthetic form throws the figure's human features into stark relief; the head, hands and feet are comprehensible, the non-figurative, patterned body is not, just as Christ's human and divine natures are earthly and heavenly, human and divine, recognisable and inconceivable.

This may also be determined in the style of the interlace employed in the border, whose metamorphosis from a two strand into three-strand pattern could be viewed, not only as a display of the maker's skill in producing a variety of patterns, but also a means of providing visual reference to important Christological tenets. So, for instance, the application of two distinct forms of interlace used in the border (two- and three-strand) may have been constructed to evoke the numbers two and three. The viewer, unpicking the complex knotted forms and identifying their two and three strand composition, may have recognised that their formation in this manner could (aniconically) signify Christ's two-fold nature (human and divine), signalled by the two-strand interlace, fulfilled in the three-persons of the Trinity, revealed in its transformation into three-strand interlace.

It appears therefore that the geometric, symmetrical, figurative and abstracted styles used to portray Matthew's symbol may have contributed to the image's overall symbolic meaning. Furthermore, from this background, it seems that the makers of the image may have been conscious of the potential of their traditional artistic languages as useful modes of visual communication. That, in the service of Christianity, their local artistic styles could play a central role in the transmission of Christian ideas and could inspire religious piety from their viewers. Examination of the inscriptions that accompany the images corroborates this view.

#### The Echternach Gospels' *Imago* Inscriptions

Each of Echternach's four evangelist symbol pages contains the word 'imago' in its inscription accompanied by the various evangelist symbol names.<sup>370</sup> Its place in these pages has received very little attention. In part, the lack of scholarly engagement with the full meanings of 'imago' is understandable, despite the insight it can provide into the evangelist pages' artistic status as the word *imago* has several possible definitions, which make a precise meaning of the word hard to pin down.<sup>371</sup> However, its place and form in these images may be particularly relevant, as it could give insight into the admix of symbol, word and style presented in the evangelist pages, and into how these creative elements converge to reveal a multifarious series of interconnecting visceral, cultural, religious and creative exchanges at play.

Comparison with other surviving evangelist pages demonstrates how distinct the Echternach pages are in this respect. For instance, while some manuscripts' evangelist pages, like Lindisfarne's, contain the names of the evangelists and include subsidiary inscriptions identifying the evangelists' associated symbol,<sup>372</sup> others, such as those in the Book of Durrow, have no text (Figs 93-94). Compared with these miniatures, the Echternach and Cambridge-London MS197B pages stand out as they contain texts apparently declaring that the symbols are 'images of' the figures associated with the evangelists through the inclusion of the word 'imago'. Furthermore, the (later) evangelist pages contained in the Lindisfarne Gospels displays '*imago hominis*' inscriptions that are subsidiary to the larger display text containing the evangelist's name, while in Echternach the *imago* inscriptions are centrally placed, prominent and adorned. Moreover, unlike the inscriptions accompanying the evangelist pages in the Book of Cerne (Fig. 95), which clearly attest to the images content by fully articulating their images' content, Echternach's seem much more opaque in their elucidation of the images they accompany, particularly if

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<sup>370</sup> For analysis of the 'imago' inscriptions, see Krasnodebska-D'Aughton, 1998, unpublished thesis

<sup>371</sup> See Appendix 1

<sup>372</sup> For discussion of Lindisfarne Evangelist pages, see e.g. Brown, 2003: 346-70

they are considered literally. Moreover, as the word *imago* has such an important place in the pages' design, and as the word itself may be crucial to understanding the complex symbolism of the evangelist pages, closer investigation of its meaning and significance is required. Furthermore, the implications of the choice of the word *imago* may provide insight into the stylistic character of the pages and may unveil some of the underlying ideologies underpinning the pages' form and content.

### The Imago Inscriptions: Word and Image

Echternach's four symbol pages present inscriptions, which, when understood literally, are conceptually awkward. However, if understood symbolically, they appear to contain crucial visual information encoded within their visual form, information that helps shed light on the complex visual agendas perhaps informing the images' creation.

The methodological approach taken here, that of Semiotics, derives from the work of the Linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, whose semiological method has influenced theorists and art historians such as Umberto Eco and Didi Huberman who have considered the role of 'signs' and 'messages' encoded in visual forms, and have based their interpretations on connotations perceived in various creative works.<sup>373</sup> A rudimentary example illustrates the basic premise of semiotics: words are signs constructed from letters. The arrangement of the letters 'a', 'p', 'p', 'l' and 'e', combine to form the sign 'apple', the verbal utterance of the concept of a round-ish, crisp, green or red fruit. Although this utterance of the word or sign may change to 'pomme' in French or 'apfel' in German, the concept or idea of the round-ish, crisp, green or red fruit remains constant. Thus, variations in how that sign is rendered artistically in various periods of time can be interpreted accordingly: the sign may be arbitrary, but the concept is constant (Fig. 96).

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<sup>373</sup> De Saussure, 1983; Eco, 1979; 1984; 1989, 1990; Didi-Huberman, 1989; for criticism, see Elkins, 1995



However, a much older, albeit not usually recognised Semiotician, Augustine of Hippo, influences the mode of semiotics drawn upon in this analysis. He explains in his treatise, *On Christian Teaching*, that:

Things are signs and *vice versa*... All teaching is teaching of either things or signs, but things are learnt through signs.... There are other signs whose whole function consists in signifying. Words for example: nobody uses words except in order to signify something. For a sign is a thing which of itself makes some other thing come to mind, besides the impression that it presents to the senses.<sup>374</sup>

As others have observed, this ‘bringing to mind of other things’ is a phenomenon often encountered when confronted with insular artworks. Their polyvalent character is something that has been widely acknowledged by numerous scholars, particularly iconographers who have done much to increase our knowledge of texts informing such images, and who have broadened our understanding of the social, religious, political and moral attitudes of their makers.<sup>375</sup> However, iconography and iconology are not all encapsulating methodologies and do not fully explain everything seen in images, so for example, style is seldom considered as an iconographic signifier.<sup>376</sup> Although, by taking a complimentary approach, one that looks for ‘signs’ as well as textual referents, it may be possible to add to what is already known of these images. Indeed, taking the inscriptions displayed in each of Echternach’s evangelist symbol pages as a point of focus, some of the images’ deeper symbolic meanings may be disclosed.

Turning to Echternach’s evangelist pages with this in mind, each contains an inscription explaining that they display ‘an image of a man, a lion, a calf and an eagle’

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<sup>374</sup> Augustine, *De Doc. Chr.* 1:2 (Martin, 1962: 33; trans. Green, 1997: 8-9): omnis doctrina uel rerum est uel signorum, sed res per signa discuntur... hae namque ita res sunt, ut aliarum etiam signa sint rerum. sunt autem alia signa, quorum omnis usus in significando est, sicuti sunt uerba. nemo enim utitur uerbis, nisi aliquid significandi gratia. ex quo intellegitur, quid appellem signa, res eas uidelicet, quae ad significandum aliquid adhibentur. quam ob rem omne signum etiam res aliqua est; quod enim nulla res est, omnino nihil est; non autem omnis res etiam signum est.

<sup>375</sup> Saxl. 1943: 1-19; Henderson, 1999: 1-18; Hawkes, 1995; 1996; 1989; 2003

<sup>376</sup> Carol Farr’s work in this area has begun to change this situation, see, e.g. Farr, 2003: 115-30

respectively. Conceptually, their meaning seems clear: each page displays an image of something assumed to exist. However, this in itself raises fundamental questions about insular notions of representation and indicates, at the very least, that the makers were trying in some way, to convey something about the pictorial elements displayed on the pages that was regarded as fundamental to their understanding: namely, that they contained ‘an image of something’ not the thing itself. This distinction between ‘object’ and ‘depicted object’, requires scrutiny.

When translated literally, the ‘*imago*’ texts insist that the figures are mimetic images of a man, lion, calf and eagle; that is, they are pictorial representations of things existing in reality. However, translating *imago* as ‘image of’ is problematic as this assumes an affinity between the proto-type and its pictorial likeness; yet in these examples the figures do not represent a man, lion, calf and eagle in general, but a specific man, lion, calf and eagle. Put another way, the images are not just *any* man, lion, calf and eagle, but are representations of *the* visionary beasts identified with the Evangelists: after all not all images of men, lions, calves and eagles signify evangelists: these are, after all, not images of things, but are images of symbols. Understood in this way, the inclusion of the *imago* texts do not provide secure anchorage to the images’ content, but rather serve to create conceptual obscurity through their semantic ambiguity, thus masking their precise significance. This ambiguity of mimetic representation versus symbolic entity is further compounded by the stylistic character of the figures, where forms are abstracted by graphic pattern and outline, which creates a visual distance that separates the artistic copy from its natural archetype.

The conceptual uncertainty of the *imago* inscriptions was avoided by the producer of the Book of Durrow, who omitted inscriptions all together; by Lindisfarne’s scribal artist, who included an image of the author along with his name; and as Nancy Netzer

observed, by Thomas, the scribe responsible for the Trier Gospels, who appears to have taken Echternach as his direct model, but who included Matthew's name to clarify that the Trier image was an author portrait and not the 'man' symbol of Matthew (Fig. 97). Thus, Echternach's *imago* texts, when understood literally, are not as clear and informative as they first appear. What is more, when understood against their biblical framework, the term itself appears loaded with significance.

As is commonly held, the four prophetic creatures that came to signify the four Gospel writers were largely inspired by two scriptural theophanies: Ezekiel's vision, and John's Revelation. However, neither account describes the four creatures as images (*imago*) of things they represent. In Ezekiel's account, their likeness to the face of a man, lion, calf and eagle is described.<sup>377</sup> Likewise, in John's revelation it is the creatures' similarity to the known forms of a man, lion, calf and eagle explained.<sup>378</sup> It is notable therefore, that Echternach's makers did not adopt the biblical nomenclature of Ezekiel or Revelation to describe their four creatures. Indeed, the choice of the word *imago* appears to represent not only the conscious choice of an alternative, but also a bold choice on behalf of the maker, as the creation of images is strictly forbidden in the Bible. The Old Testament in particular contains several mandates specifically forbidding the creation of images, the strongest protestation being the commandment that, 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or likeness'.<sup>379</sup> Other accounts provide equally severe denunciations of images and their makers, and describe God's retribution levied at those who have

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<sup>377</sup> Ezekiel 1: 10: as for their *likeness* of their faces they had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle; *Similitudo* autem vultus eorum facies hominis et facies leonis a dextris ipsorum quattuor facies autem bovis a sinistris ipsorum quattuor et facies aquilae

<sup>378</sup> Revelation 4: 6: and around the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first was *like* a lion, and the second was *like* a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was *like* a flying eagle; Et in medio sedis et in circuito sedis quattuor animalia plena oculis ante et retro et animal primum *similie* lleoni et secundum animal *simili* vitulo et tertium animal habens faciem quasi hominis et quarttuor animalia *similie* aquilae volanti

<sup>379</sup> Exodus 20:4: non facies tibi sculptile neque omnem similitudinem quae est in caelo desuper et quae in terra deorsum nec eorum quae sunt in aquis sub terra

worshipped false gods.<sup>380</sup> Such biblical castigations of images would have been familiar to Anglo-Saxon religious through their daily recitation of the psalms which include the pronouncement that, ‘all who worship images are put to shame’,<sup>381</sup> and that, ‘they exchanged their glory for an image of a bull, which eats grass’.<sup>382</sup>

Although Gregory the Great’s letters of c. 600 to the Bishop of Marseille provided a defensive line of reasoning for a powerful justification for the uses of images in religious contexts,<sup>383</sup> Echternach’s overt use of ‘imago’ in its inscriptions, written around ninety years after Gregory’s defence, seems a rather extreme, or at least provocative act, especially in lieu of a direct biblical source explaining its usage. In trying to detect a definitive source for *imago*, the patristic writers also provide little information, as specific references to *imago* are rare. Indeed, most commentators use alternative descriptors to elucidate the evangelist/creature relationship. For example, Augustine, in his Gospel Harmony uses terms such as ‘apt figures’ and ‘significant animals’.<sup>384</sup> Similar terms are also found in the commentaries and homilies on Ezekiel by Jerome and Gregory, which include the biblical formulae of ‘similar to’ and ‘likeness of’.<sup>385</sup> Bede too is unhelpful in this respect, opting for ‘figures of’, ‘likeness to’ and ‘signifying’ rather than ‘images of’.<sup>386</sup> The only immediate source for *imago* appears to come from Irenaeus’ *Against Heresies*, in which he states that: ‘the cherubim too, were four-faced and their faces were the images of the dispensation of the son of God’, and explains that:

The first living creature was like a lion symbolizing His effectual working, his leadership, and royal power, the second was like a calf signifying his

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<sup>380</sup> E.g. Leviticus 26:1; Numbers 33:52: ego Dominus Deus vester non facietis vobis idolum et sculptile nec titulos erigetis nec insignem lapidem ponetis in terra vestra ut adoretis eum; disperdit cunctos habitatores regionis illius confringite titulos et statuas comminuite atque omnia excelsa vastate

<sup>381</sup> Psalm 96: 7: confundantur universi qui serviunt sculptili qui gloriatur in idolis adorate eum omnes dii

<sup>382</sup> Psalm 106: 20: et mutaverunt gloriam suam in similitudine bovis comedentis faenum.

<sup>383</sup> Gregory, *Ep.*, XI: XIII (Norberg, 1982: 874)

<sup>384</sup> Augustine, *De Cons. Ev.* 1:6 (Wehrich, 1904: 9): animalibus significatus; Quattuor animalis ex Apocalypsi de quattuor Evangelistis alii aliis aptius intellexerunt

<sup>385</sup> E.g. Jerome, *Com. Heiz.* (Glorie, 1964: 47): simile; similitudo; Gregory, *Hom. Heiz.* IV (Adriaen, 1971): significatur; specie simul; significari

<sup>386</sup> E.g. Bede, *Ex. Ap.* 4,7 (Gryson, 2001: 281): simili

sacrificial and sacerdotal order, but the third had, as it were, the face of a man, - an evident description of His advent as a human being; the fourth was like a flying eagle, pointing out the gift of the spirit hovering with His wings over the church.<sup>387</sup>

Here, it is notable that *imago* is used in connection with the four-fold cherubim's symbolic role in defining Christ's personal qualities, rather than the physical image of the beasts themselves. Despite the infrequency of *imago* in the patristic sources, it is probably safe to suggest that in sentiment, at least, it existed as an idea explaining, not just the symbolic relationship between creatures and evangelists, but also the specific connection to Christ himself. Moreover, it seems that by the time Echternach's makers employ *imago* in their inscriptions, it had transcended its literal meaning to become a term of elevation which served as a kind of shibboleth, or catchphrase for a concept describing the four creatures as images of Christ, each relating to one of the evangelists and the opening passages of each gospel to make known a particular aspect of Christ's nature and role as the Creator-Logos.

Thus, by shifting the concept of 'imago' away from 'an image, picture or representation of', and understanding it instead as a verbal picture, a sign, or logo, of an idea directly referring to the symbiotic relationship between creature, evangelist and Christ, it is possible to begin to deconstruct its symbolic lexicon. Indeed, comparison of Echternach's *imago* inscriptions with those appearing in other manuscripts reveals just how distinctive they are. For example, in the Corpus Christi Gospel fragment and the Lindisfarne Gospels the *imago* inscriptions are rendered in a small half-uncial script placed unobtrusively at the top of each page, and are written in a uniform script throughout. However, Echternach's are written in a large, elaborate display script incorporating varied letterforms, are adorned with sporadic, yellow in-filled counter-spaces, and in the case of

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<sup>387</sup> Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 3: 11: 8 (Wigan Harvey, 1857: 47-48): Primam enim animal, inquit, simile leoni, efficabile eius et principale et regale significans: Secundum vero simile vitulo, sacrificalem et sacerdotalem ordinationem significans: Tertium vero animal habens faciem quasi humanam, qui est secundum hominem adventum eius manifeste describens: Quartum vero simile aquilae volantis, Spiritus in Ecclesiam advolantis gratiam manifestans.

the *imago hominis* text, the background is stippled with red dots. In these regards, the inscriptions' written-style is elevated to a graphic status that accords with the scripts used in the opening words of each Gospel: the *imago* inscriptions are suffused with the same calligraphic standing as the biblical text, by being rendered in the same artistic mode as the 'Word of God' (Figs 98a-b).

Thus, linking the *imago* inscriptions with the Gospel openings stylistically, has the effect of guiding the viewer to recognise the symbolic relationship between the creatures depicted and the texts written by their human counterparts. At the same time, it also connects them, symbolically, to Christ and his life, as the gospel openings are related to both the creatures themselves, and to Christ's natures and the events associated with his life.

The inscriptions' apparent allusion to Christ is further revealed if the way the texts are formulated is considered, thus different forms of the same letters make-up the word 'imago' in each of evangelist image. While flexible letter selection is a common feature of insular display scripts, in this example it may form a vital clue to understanding how the texts function, as amidst the chaos of different letters, it becomes clear that some internal agreements exist in the arrangements and distribution of the letters. For example, the configuration of the Matthew and John imago is identical: each display the same letter 'A' with an over bar and 'V'-shaped cross-bar, and each have an 'O' formed as a rhomboid (Fig. 99). By contrast, the Mark and Luke letter dispersal is different from these, and from each other.

Indeed, in both the Matthew and John 'Imago', the A & the O have yellow in-filled counter-spaces highlighting these particular letters. This may be a deliberate visual device intended to draw the eye to their similarity to the Greek letters Alpha and Omega ( $\Lambda$  &  $\Omega$  /  $\alpha$  &  $\omega$ ). Carved 'name' or 'pillow' stones found in Billingham, Hartlepool and Lindisfarne

appear to testify to the common currency of this motif in Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian art (Fig. 100).<sup>388</sup> Thus, by exploiting the presence of these two letters as they occur in the word *imago*, the scribe is able to invoke the *nomen sacrum*, or sacred name of Christ, by allusion to Alpha and Omega, and so through John's revelation in which Christ describes himself as: 'Alpha and the Omega, the first and last and what is yet to come.'<sup>389</sup> Allusion to this passage serves to connect the 'first' and 'last' Gospels, the two revelatory accounts of Christ's life, and also presents a type of pictorial exegesis on the harmony of the Gospels, which combines the cosmic, scriptural and apocalyptic symbolism of beast/writer and Christ relationship. This is re-enforced by the forms of the 'A' and 'O', which contain the shape of a lozenge in their internal space that strongly suggests that a Christological sign is embedded in *imago's* layout (Figs 101). O'Reilly in her insightful work on the lozenge and its symbolic significance in Hiberno-Saxon art explains its symbolic role best: the form of the lozenge can be seen to contain the shape of the cross. Its fourfold shape is a representation of the Creator-Logos from whom the four gospels proceed to the four corners of the earth. Thus, the inclusion of the lozenge-shape and the Alpha and Omega in *imago's* design, transforms the word from a verbal sign into an iconic representation of Christ and his creation.

The Christological significance of the *imago* inscriptions may be further detected in the tri-form pattern of red dots occupying the background of the *imago hominis* text as it is possible that their three-fold arrangement recalls the Trinity and by extension the triple sanctus, or "holy, holy, holy" chant of the four creatures which surround Christ's heavenly throne in John's apocalyptic vision. As O'Reilly has noted:

Jerome interpreted the triple sanctus eternally chanted by the four heavenly beasts in the apocalyptic vision "holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, who

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<sup>388</sup>Madden, 2008; forthcoming, 2012

<sup>389</sup> Revelation 1: 8; 1: 11; 21: 6; 22: 13

was and who is and who is yet to come” (Rev 4:8), as an image of the four gospels acclaiming the whole Trinity.<sup>390</sup>

From these observations it seems that the *imago* inscriptions displayed in the Echternach Gospels, rather than serving as redundant labels attesting to a picture’s content, can be viewed as carefully constructed meaningful signs, imbued with Christological significance. Together they may have played a vital role in expressing important ideas about the harmony of the four Gospels, while also providing thought-provoking visual aide memoirs to the biblical texts they introduce. Nevertheless, beyond this, they may also point towards certain ideas referring to Christ’s humanity and to the creation of humankind by God.

Although a direct biblical source for Echternach’s employment of ‘*imago*’ appears elusive, a positive connotation found in scripture exists and seems to offer a tangible explanation for the prominence of *imago* in Echternach’s evangelist pages’ configuration. The passage in question is found in Book of Genesis, at the time of the creation of the first man:

God said, let us make man in our own image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over the earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth  
So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.<sup>391</sup>

This reveals (in its most basic reading) that man is an image, a likeness of God, and because of this, has dominion over all living creatures. Early Christian exegetes understood this passage to signify the creative power of God and his creation. Augustine, for example, explained: ‘a human being is a major kind of thing, being made in the image of God not by virtue of having a mortal body but by virtue of having a rational soul and thus a higher

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<sup>390</sup> O’Reilly, 1998: 74-75

<sup>391</sup> Genesis 1: 26-27: faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostrum et praesit piscibus maris et volatilibus caeli et bestiis univeraeque terrae omnique reptile quod movetur in terra et creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam ad imaginem Dei creavit eos.



status than animals'.<sup>392</sup> For Augustine, it was the presence of *anima* (the soul) that allowed humanity to know God, and it was this that elevated humankind's place in the hierarchy of the living: placing them above animals.<sup>393</sup>

The widespread influence of this association is clearly detectable in the works of a number of Early Christian writers, Bede, for example, was able to cite various patristic sources for the *imago Dei* passage in his Commentary on Genesis, quoting Gregory the Great,<sup>394</sup> Bede explains:

Before he was made, it is said, 'let us make man', so that it would truly seem that he was formed as a rational creature, as though made with deliberation. He is formed from the earth as if by study, and he is raised up by the breath of the Creator through the power of the vital Spirit, evidently so that he who was made in the image of the Creator would exist not by word of command but by the dignity of an action [...] and when it is said, 'Let us make man in our own image and likeness', the unity of the holy trinity is clearly proclaimed [...] For how would image and likeness be one, if the Son were less than the father, if the holy spirit were less than the son, or if the glory of the Trinity were not of the same consubstantial power?<sup>395</sup>

Bede's use of Gregory's narrative shows his awareness of the complex symbolism of the *imago Dei* passage and its role in defining humanity's rationality: then, quoting Augustine's *De Genesi as litteram*<sup>396</sup> to explain humankind's upright posture, he says:

Therefore his body is suited to a rational soul, not in accordance with the features and shapes of his limbs, but rather in accordance with that which was lifted up into the sky for the sake of contemplating the celestial objects which are in the body of the world itself, just as the rational soul ought to be lifted up to those things which

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<sup>392</sup> Augustine, *De Civ.* (Martin, 1962: 16): magna enim quaedam res est homo, factus ad imaginem et similitudinem dei, non in quantum mortali corpore includitur, sed in quantum bestias rationalis animae honore praecedat.

<sup>393</sup> For a fuller explanation of the significance of *Imago Dei*, see Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12 (Schaff, 1887: 155-65)

<sup>394</sup> Gregory, *Mor. in J.*, 9.49.75 (Adriaen, 1979: 509)

<sup>395</sup> Bede, *In Gen.* 1: 24 (ed. Jones, 1967: 25; tran. Kendall, 2008:89): Et dixit Deus, Fiat ... Et fecit Deus... Et vidit Deus uod esset bonum, nunc autem manifestus haec upsa insinuator cum dicitur, Facimus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostrum. Et recte, quia donec is qui doceretur non erat, in profundo fuit abdita praedicato deitas; ubi vero coepit hominis expectari creation, reuelata est fides et euidenter dogma ueritatis emicuit, in eo enim quod dicitur faciamus, una ostenditur trium operatio personarum; in eo uero quod sequitur, as imaginem et similitudinem nostrum, una et aequilis substantia eiusdem sanctae Trinitatis indicator. Quomodo enim una esset 'imago ac similitudo' si minor patre filius, si minor esset filio Spiritus Sanctus, si non consubstantialis eiusdem potestatis esset Gloria totius Trinitatis?

<sup>396</sup> Augustine, *De Gen.* 6.12 (Zycha, 1894: 187)

especially excel by their nature in spiritual qualities, in order that it may mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth.<sup>397</sup>

Understandings of the word *imago* as it appears in Genesis and how it was interpreted later in Christian exegesis may offer insight into the prominent display of the word in the Echternach Gospel's evangelist pages. Indeed, as the writings of Gregory, Augustine and Bede appear to testify, the *imago Dei* passage carried deep Trinitarian significance; perhaps, being aware of such connotations, Echternach's image-makers exploited the word *imago* in their Evangelist images as a means of bringing to mind the relationship between God and humankind made in his own image. Thus, if *imago* is understood not as a 'image of' but as a verbal picture of the *imago Dei* then the symbolic creatures rendered in Echternach's evangelist pages can in turn be understood as representing more than just depictions of the visionary creatures in a literal sense, but as their human, author counterparts rendered in the image of God.

### Conclusion

This study has considered the part played by style in the images contained in the Echternach Gospels. By questioning its place in these images and by thinking about the ramifications of these stylistic choices, it has been possible to come to a number of viable conclusions about these images. Therefore, for example, it has been suggested that style could be used to express technical prowess, to meet viewer aesthetic expectations for artisanship and manual dexterity and to display knowledge of sacred geometry within its form. It has also been proposed that style could be employed to engage the viewer, to guide their gaze and to facilitate visual interaction.

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<sup>397</sup> Bede, *In Gen.* 1: 26 (tran. Kendall, 2008: 91): congruit ergo et corpus eius animae rationabili, non secundum liniamenta figurasque membrorum, sed potius secundum id quod in corpore ipsius mundi superna sunt, sicuti anima rationalis in ea, debet erigi, quae in spiritabilis natura maxime excellent ut quae sursum sunt sapiat non quae super terram. Bene autem additur.

Moreover, consideration of the figure of Matthew seemed to indicate that the act of representing local metalwork and the styles associated with it in calligraphic form implies that such usages may be indicative of a number of social agendas. These may have included the desire to emulate jewel-encrusted images seen on the Continent, or to show personal status through graphic suggestion of high quality metalwork, and to glorify God by insinuating luxury materials. Beyond this, it is also feasible that the reduplication of Anglo-Saxon metalwork, which perhaps already carried its own deeply entrenched symbolic language encoded in its styles, could be reconfigured, or reassigned to carry Christian messages.

Finally, by considering the concept of the word *imago* and by examining its potential significance as a potent sign of the *imago Dei* doctrine, a conjecture as to how this word may have carried reference to the Trinity and to the human authors informing the animal symbols has been made. The variant stylistic renderings of this word appear to point to a strategic use of graphic styles being used to promote meaning and so allude to its importance as a meaningful message bearer. Working from the standpoint that the scribal artists responsible for these images were fully aware of style's symbolic capacity, and by questioning why the images look the way they do it has been possible to disclose a number of allusions to Christ and his nature and to reveal some of the encoded Christian signs embedded within the images. Such observations make it tenable to put forward that the makers of these works were opting for styles that they considered most suitable for communicating their ideal image of the evangelists.

**CHAPTER III**  
**QUOTING ROME**  
**IN THE ARTS AND STYLES OF EARLY MEDIEVAL NORTHUMBRIA**

Part I: Rome: ‘Supplying an Abundance of all Things Necessary’<sup>398</sup>

As it has already been established that it is reasonable to consider the use of style in Anglo-Saxon art as an active component in the construction of significant meaning, it is now possible to turn to re-examine the impact of Rome and its art and architecture on the art and material culture of early Anglo-Saxon Northumbria in more detail. For this discussion, it is necessary to establish why those working in the region in the seventh and eighth centuries might have looked towards the Continent, and in particular, towards Rome and its late antique inheritance for artistic inspiration, and to determine how art makers might have harnessed and manipulated these Roman forms and styles and used them as bearers of significant symbolic meaning. By doing this, it will be possible to consider what messages their choices might have been intended to convey to their prospective audiences and perhaps elucidate some of those intentions, desires or concerns lying behind their selections. As part of this process, it may also be possible to identify some of the socio-political issues that underlie the prevalence of certain Roman forms and styles evident in the artistic productions of the area.

This subject has already generated a considerable body of work and it is through this that the current investigation is made possible.<sup>399</sup> With very few exceptions, most of the scholarship on the history, economy, art, and the Church of early medieval Northumbria

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<sup>398</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 5: 19 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 521)

<sup>399</sup> See e.g., Taylor & Taylor, 1965-78; Cramp, 1976: 5-18; 1994: 279-94; Bailey, 1996: 9-18

agrees that the influence of Rome and more broadly, the ‘Mediterranean’,<sup>400</sup> on the region’s cultural and artistic identity is highly significant. Indeed, the concept of ‘*Romanitas*’ alone has received a great deal of scholarly attention.<sup>401</sup> Many of these accounts have focused on the written material surviving from the period as evidence of Northumbrian desire to emulate Rome, while others have considered the role of leading Northumbrian individuals in the process of acquiring Roman products and procuring elements of Roman culture.<sup>402</sup> In a similar way, other scholars have studied the impact of Roman liturgies and canonical practices on the newly established Anglo-Saxon Church with a view to explaining some of the complex iconographies present in artworks produced in the period.<sup>403</sup> In examining the artistic output of Northumbria, such scholars have scrutinised the presence of Roman forms and patterns surviving in works deriving from the area and have sought to identify and explain this phenomenon by tracing the original models of inspiration.<sup>404</sup> Alternatively, others, using iconographical approaches, have sought to disclose the narratives informing the imagery through the analysis of the cultural milieu of their production.<sup>405</sup>

The purpose of this investigation is to examine the role of Continental sources used as inspiration for artworks deriving from Northumbria in the Anglo-Saxon period and to consider the intellectual environment surrounding some of these Roman-inspired objects.

Through an examination of Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards the use of Continental models,

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<sup>400</sup> For the purposes of this paper, the terms ‘Mediterranean’, the ‘Continent’ and ‘Abroad’ refer to those areas that once formed part of the ‘Roman world’ and more specifically, those that modelled their societies’ social, political, artistic and religious outlook on Rome. Use of such nomenclature is given authority by Bede who frequently applied such non-differentiated terms in his writing. For example, in his *Homily on Matthew 19:27-29 on the Feast of St Benedict Biscop*, Bede explains that Biscop went on pilgrimage to Rome and was ‘tensored in that *region*’, whereas, in his *Life of the Abbots* he makes it clear that Benedict was tensored at the monastery of Lérins on the Island of Cannes in Gaul. For Bede’s *Homily*, see Martin & Hurst, 1991:129; for his *Life*, see Farmer & Webb, 1998: 188.

<sup>401</sup> See e.g. Ó Carragáin, 1999a; Hawkes, 2003a; 2007; O’Reilly, 2003:143-48.

<sup>402</sup> For Wilfrid, see e.g. Cubitt 1989; Farmer, 1974; for Bede, see Meyvaert, 1976; Bonner, 1976; DeGregorio, 2006; for Ceolfrid, see Wood, 1995.

<sup>403</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1987: 118-28; 1987b: 15-42; 1988: 1-71; 1999: 119-203; 2003:131-87. For the most comprehensive account see, Ó Carragáin, 2005

<sup>404</sup> Cramp, 1984; Bailey & Cramp, 1988; Lang, 1991; 2002; Evison & Stocker, 1999;

<sup>405</sup> Hawkes, 2003; 2007

it may be possible to understand more fully the imitative processes employed by the artists. As illustrations of how this might have been translated into visual form, the ‘Christ recognised by the Beasts’ panel of the Ruthwell and Bewcastle monuments, and the back panel of the Franks Casket will be examined as examples of a works that call upon late antique sources to express historical veracity, visual authority and symbolic meaning.

### The Scholarly Pursuit of ‘*Romanitas*’

When discussing the earliest examples of Anglo-Saxon Christian art, most scholars agree that the works represent the coming together of three distinct visual cultures and artistic styles.<sup>406</sup> These are exemplified by the abstracted linear designs of the indigenous Celtic peoples of Britain and Ireland; the interlaced and zoomorphic patterns of the fifth-century Germanic settlers; and the naturalistic, figural images of the art of late antiquity.<sup>407</sup> It is the third of these artistic influences that forms the basis of this enquiry, even though separating one source of influence from the others may not provide the complete analysis of the art traditionally provided in the scholarship. However, given the amount of critical attention that this feature of Northumbrian art has attracted, further investigation may be warranted, particularly as the consideration of the social and psychological implications of the expropriation and assimilation of classical artistic forms has generally been neglected. For this reason, it is worth re-examining some of the reasons why the earliest Anglo-Saxon Christian artists looked towards Rome and in particular late antiquity as a source of cultural and artistic inspiration.

One of the key pieces of textual evidence that is deemed to explain the apparent Anglo-Saxon predilection for classical art forms is Bede’s often cited account of the building of St Peter’s church at Wearmouth in 674. He explains that:

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<sup>406</sup> E.g. Karkov & Orton, 2003; Neuman de Vegvar, 1981

<sup>407</sup> For the most recent discussion, see Hawkes, 2007: 1-19

Benedictus oceano transmisso Gallias petens, cementarios qui lapidem sibi aecclesiam iuxta Romanorum quem semper amabat morem facerent, postulauit, accepit, adtulit.<sup>408</sup>

This is translated in the most recent translation of Bede's account of the *Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* as:

Benedict crossed the sea to France to look for masons to build him a stone church in the Roman style he had loved so much.<sup>409</sup>

As such, the passage has been, rightly, considered to provide important insight into the aesthetic desires of Benedict Biscop, Wearmouth's founding abbot, and has led to a number of investigations into what constitutes 'Roman style', and what it was about the 'Roman manner' that Benedict and his contemporaries found so appealing.<sup>410</sup> However, such interpretations rest on understandings of Bede's Latin, which in this passage can be considered endemically opaque. Thus, the word, *morem*, from the noun *mos*, can be variously translated as "mode", "manner" or "custom", or indeed, "fashion" or "style".<sup>411</sup> While the intention behind the claim may remain clear: that, Benedict Biscop had a notion of what the Roman way of doing things was, and that he had admired it for some time, it remains most unclear what aspect of the '*morem Romanorum*' Benedict Biscop was trying to invoke at Wearmouth. The phrase does not distinguish between the various Roman styles/manners now identified by art historians as existing within the classical tradition.

Indeed, the phrase seems to indicate that Benedict's conception of the 'Roman manner' is of a singular, non-differentiated universal type, not the multi-faceted stylistic entity that it is currently considered to be. Moreover, it is also unclear as to whether the 'Roman manner' described by Biscop alludes only to the architectural style of the church's exterior or whether it also extended to the ornamental stonework of the interior and to the

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<sup>408</sup> *Hist. Abb.* 1: 5 (Plummer, 1896: 368)

<sup>409</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.* 5 (Plummer, 1896: 368; trans. Farmer & Webb, 1998: 191)

<sup>410</sup> See e.g. Hawkes, 2003; 2006; 2007; O'Reilly, 2003

<sup>411</sup> See Appendix 2

church's painted decoration.<sup>412</sup> By examining some of the material, archaeological and historical evidence, scholars have suggested that what constitutes 'the Roman manner' for Benedict and his fellow Northumbrians, was the general 'manner' of the Late Antique.<sup>413</sup>

### The Anglo-Saxon Pursuit of 'Romanitas'

Indeed, within the field of Anglo-Saxon studies, it has long been recognised that the art and architecture of Northumbria, borrows extensively from the artistic repertoire of Rome, specifically that of the 'late antique period'.<sup>414</sup> In her archaeological excavations of the monastic sites of Wearmouth and Jarrow, Cramp demonstrates the '*imitatio*' of Roman forms and styles implicit in the designs, materials, construction and decoration of the twin monasteries.<sup>415</sup> Her research shows, for example, the similarities evident in the churches of St Peter's at Wearmouth (c.673) and S. Maria in Cosmedin (c.600) on the Piazza Bocca della Verita in Rome.<sup>416</sup> She identifies such shared characteristics as the close-mirroring of the proportions of the basilica at Wearmouth to those of S. Maria in Cosmedin in the long, narrow nave and high walls; the use of porticus (or covered walkways); and the employment of *opus signinum* in the marble flooring – all characteristics of the Late Antique period (Figs 102-103).

Building on Cramp's analysis, scholars such as Éammon Ó Carragáin and Jane Hawkes have added to this enquiry and have brought to light further correspondences existing between Anglo-Saxon churches and those in Rome. They have identified such

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<sup>412</sup> See below pp.174-75 for discussion of the medium of stone and its significance to Benedict's notion of the 'Roman manner'.

<sup>413</sup> For the purpose of this discussion, 'Late Antique' refers to the period of the first to fifth century AD.

<sup>414</sup> See e.g., Kendrick, 1938; Campbell, 1982

<sup>415</sup> For the full account of the excavations and its findings see Cramp, 2005

<sup>416</sup> Cramp, 1976; 1994; For more information on S. Maria in Cosmedin, see Krautheimer, 1980: 77-78; Hawkes, 2006: 106



shared phenomena as the funerary function of the porticus, the use of images in the nave, the manipulation of the natural landscape, and the dedications to Roman saints.<sup>417</sup>

Here, Hawkes' analysis reveals the role of stone as the medium designated by Anglo-Saxon church builders to convey the 'Roman-ness' of their new foundations,<sup>418</sup> indicating the various strategies employed in the construction of new churches 'built in the Roman manner' and demonstrating the potential of stone as a signifier of specific symbolic meaning. For example, she has demonstrated how the early Anglo-Saxon church builders re-appropriated Roman stone, salvaging whatever they could find from Romano-British settlements, not as a 'simple' logistical process, but as part of a deliberate act of appropriation and re-articulation that also frequently involved the re-use of sites once occupied by the Romans in Britain. The re-use of Roman stone and the repatriation of Roman centres strongly indicates that the Anglo-Saxons were consciously invoking Rome through the materials and sites that they selected and were, moreover, working in a manner that accorded with the builders of late antiquity through their re-employment of Roman *spolia*.<sup>419</sup>

Studies such as this have demonstrated that, for the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria, it was the general forms and styles of the early Christian late antiquity that provided the ideal models of inspiration. In considering why this might have been so, various explanations have been put forward, but most agree that the fundamental reason for the early Anglo-Saxon Christian church builders' emulation of the Roman manner was the desire to express themselves visually as part of the wider Christian world: that they were deliberately creating a visual environment that presented an 'ideal' visual approximation of the model Christian landscape – namely – early Christian Rome.

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<sup>417</sup> Hawkes, 2003; Ó Carragáin, 1999b

<sup>418</sup> Hawkes, 2003

<sup>419</sup> For a general summary of Late Antique use of imperial Roman *spolia*, see Fabricius Hansen, 2001; for examples of how Anglo-Saxons reinterpreted Romano-British remains, see Mitchell, 2001

## Why Rome?

If this is indeed the case, it is necessary to explore some of the reasons why the art of late antiquity and, in particular, the city of Rome held such fascination for the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria. By examining some of the underlying traditions that advanced Rome's reputation as the most important destination for Northumbrian pilgrims, it may be possible to reveal why Rome served as the ultimate model of Christian perfection for the recently converted Anglo-Saxons. Through this, it becomes clear that 'Rome', more than any other centre of Christianity (such as Jerusalem) represented the apogee of Christian civilisation,<sup>420</sup> as it embodied the acme of the Christian Church both physically and symbolically.<sup>421</sup> Here, the singularly most decisive aspect of Rome's appeal was probably the commonly held belief that Rome was the final resting place of the apostles Peter and Paul.<sup>422</sup> Indeed, Bede makes this clear. He states that Rome was 'where through the chief of the apostles of Christ, the whole Church had its special centre'.<sup>423</sup>

According to Christian tradition, Peter and Paul suffered their martyrdoms in Rome as part of Nero's purges of the Christians, some time between July 64, when the Neronian persecutions began, and 9<sup>th</sup> July 68 when Nero fled Rome. The important roles that these two saints, would have in the future Church is clarified in Gospel texts compiled during the

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<sup>420</sup> O'Reilly (2003: 143-48) has demonstrated this in her account of the Romani, art and building in the Roman manner.

<sup>421</sup> The sack of Jerusalem by Islamic invaders in 640 and the Islamic incursions into Damascus and Egypt had made the Holy Land increasingly remote and dangerous.

<sup>422</sup> Various accounts detailing the saints' persecutions and martyrdoms written from the end of the first to the end of the second century AD attest to their presence in Rome. One such account was written by Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp (St John's disciple), who spent considerable time in Rome before becoming the bishop of Lyons in 177. Irenaeus described Peter and Paul's foundation of the church in Rome and how they went to Rome to spread the word of the Gospels. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* III:i (Wigan Harvey, 1857: 3-4): cum Petrus et Paulus Romae evangelizarent et fundarent Ecclesiam. For other early writers, such as Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, on the role of Peter and Paul in Rome, see Eusebius, *H.E.* (Mommsen, 1903-1908). These early writers laid the foundations for later writers such as Jerome, Augustine and Gregory to whom Anglo-Saxon writers, such as Bede, seemed to have turned for information regarding the lives of the apostles (for surviving texts by these authors available in England at Bede's time of writing see Gneuss, 2001).

<sup>423</sup> Bede, *Hom.* 1.13 (Martin & Hurst, 1991: 129): Ubi per summos Christi apostolos totius ecclesiae caput eminet eximium.

course of the first century. For example they establish that, Peter, originally known as Simon, was intended to hold a ‘key-role’ in the future Church: Christ said to him, ‘Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone.’<sup>424</sup> ‘Cephas’, meaning ‘stone’ or ‘rock’ in Greek, translates into Latin as Petrus or Petros, thus Peter in English. The significance of Simon’s name-change is clarified in the Gospel of Matthew which states that, on the occasion of Peter’s confession of faith, Christ said to him:

And I say to thee, thou art Peter; and upon this rock, I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whosoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.<sup>425</sup>

From this, it was assumed that Christ had always intended Peter to be the head of the Church on Earth. Thus, with the crucified body of Peter, Rome’s evangelist, being buried in the city,<sup>426</sup> Rome’s position as the head of the Christian Church was understood as having been secured through divine sanction.<sup>427</sup>

Indeed, this biblical foundation formed the basis of the claim of the early Bishops of Rome to the Apostolic Primacy of Peter. Thus, the papacy, headed by the Bishop of Rome,<sup>428</sup> by Petrine inheritance, held legitimate claim as the head of the Church – each

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<sup>424</sup> John: 1: 42: Et adduxit eum ad Iusum intuitus autem Iusus dixit tu es Simon fillius Iohanna tu vocaberis Cephas quod interpretatur Petrus.

<sup>425</sup> Matthew: 16: 17-20: Respondem autem Iusus dixit ei beatus es Simon bar Iona quia caro et sanguis non revelavit tibi sed Pater meus qui in caelis est et ego dico tibi quia tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam et portae inferi non praevallebunt adversum eam et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum et quodcumque ligaveris super terra merit ligatum in caelis et quodcumque solveris super terram erit solutum in caelis (see also Mark 8: 27-30; Luke 9: 18-21).

<sup>426</sup> Writing in the second century, Tertulian and Origen testify that Peter was crucified upside-down, see e.g. Eusebius, *H. E.* 2:25:5 (Mommsen, 1903-1908: 117): Igitur Nero, ut apertum se hostem divinitatis pietatis que professus est, ipsorum prius apostolorum, quippe qui duces et signiferi erant in populo dei, expetit neces.

et Paulum quidem capite in ipsa urbe Roma, Petrum vero crucis patibulo condemnat. Text cited from <http://clt.brepolis.net.ezproxy.york.ac.uk/llta/pages/Toc.aspx?ctx=432324>, accessed: 12/4/2012

<sup>427</sup> See e.g., Krautheimer, 1980: 3-31; 33-58.

<sup>428</sup> For the establishment of the Papal state from 680-825, see Noble: 1984; see also, Eric, 1964; Kelly, 1986.

successive pope becoming the inheritor of Christ's earthly ministry.<sup>429</sup> Therefore, by the time Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid left Britain in 653 to visit Rome in order to venerate the tombs of the martyrs, Rome had been, for centuries, the seat of the Papacy and the head of the Church.<sup>430</sup>

Like Peter, Paul suffered his martyrdom in Rome. In his *Greater Chronicle*,<sup>431</sup> Bede provides information about the apostles' deaths and the shrines that were erected to preserve their memory. He explains that Paul was sent to Rome by Felix the procurator of Judea where he had been held for two years under house arrest. At the height of Nero's purges in Rome, Paul was beheaded with a sword.<sup>432</sup> Bede, quoting the *Liber Pontificalis*, goes on to explain that, at the urging of a lady called Lucina, Cornelius the bishop of Rome moved the Apostles' bodies from the catacombs at night. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, he reburied the body of Paul on the road to Ostia where he had been beheaded, and buried Peter in the place where he had been crucified, among the bodies of the holy bishops in the temple of Apollo on Monte Aurelio in the Vatican palace of Nero.<sup>433</sup> Later in his *Chronicle* Bede lists the churches built by Constantine; amongst them, he lists the basilicas built on the sites of the apostles' graves, 'whose bodies he surrounded with copper five feet thick'.<sup>434</sup> From this, it is clear that by the time Bede was writing his *Chronicle* in 725, the apostles' relationship with Rome had become Christian fact, rather than historical tradition.

Rome, then, could offer the Northumbrian visitor the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Christ's disciples, saints and martyrs, and the experience of partaking in the day-to-day life of an orthodox Christian polity. Indeed, it is apparent that Rome could

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<sup>429</sup> Noble, 1984

<sup>430</sup> See also the dedication page of the Codex Amiatinus and the account of its inscription in *Hist.Abb.* (Plummer, 1955: 388-404); see p. 56

<sup>431</sup> Bede, *Chron.M.* (Jones, 1977; trans. Wallis, 2004: 157-249)

<sup>432</sup> Bede, *Chron.M.* (trans. Wallis, 2004: 208)

<sup>433</sup> Bede, *Chron.M.* (Jones, 1977: 509; trans. Wallis, 2004: 208)

<sup>434</sup> Bede, *Chron.M.* (Jones, 1977: 509; trans. Wallis, 2004: 212): Item basilicam beato Petro in Templo Apollinis, necnon et beato Paulo, corpus utriusque aere cypro circumdans quinque pedes grosso.

supply much of the spiritual, experiential and practical demands of the burgeoning Anglo-Saxon Church.

### Pilgrimage, Spiritual Contact and Experiential Phenomena

Northumbrian encounters with Rome, however, could take many forms: diplomatic visits, ecclesiastical business, trade, pilgrimage, or personal or political exile, not all of which were exclusive from one another. Thus, diplomatic visits like those carried out by Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrith who, in turn, journeyed to Rome to secure Papal privilege to protect their monasteries from outside interference, also provided them with the opportunity to collect books, relics and paintings.<sup>435</sup> Likewise, those sent to Rome to conduct ecclesiastical business such as the collection of *pallia* or for consecration, or to clarify points of canon law could also visit the city's many tombs and shrines. However, for those visitors wishing to undertake a journey for more personal, spiritual reasons, Rome, with its sacred history, served as the ideal destination.

Self-imposed exile from one's own community formed one of the monastic ideals favoured by the early Church. Unlike the banished exiles of Anglo-Saxon society who are portrayed in the literature as either usurped nobles, exiled to preserve their health from the attacks of dynastic rivals,<sup>436</sup> or as a dark underclass of criminals, shunned from civilised society and forced to live in the wilderness,<sup>437</sup> self-elected exile for Christ was an honourable state.<sup>438</sup> Indeed, the process of *peregrinatio*, that is, the self-sacrificing act of leaving behind one's kith and kin to wander alone in a 'foreign land', not only mirrored Christ's own exile in the desert wilderness, but also, as Peter Brown explains, allowed the

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<sup>435</sup> For an account of Biscop's acquisition of papal privilege for Wearmouth during his fourth visit to Rome and Ceolfrith's acquisition of papal privilege for Jarrow, see Bede, *Hist. Abb.* 6 (Plummer, 1896: 369); Anon., *Hist. Abb.* 20 (Plummer, 1896: 395).

<sup>436</sup> For an example of Anglo-Saxon aristocratic exiles see Bede, *H.E.* 2: 20 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 205)

<sup>437</sup> See *Laws of Ine* (Whitelock, 1979: 366)

<sup>438</sup> See e.g. Adomnán's *Life of St Columba*, Columba (d. 597) left Ireland as a penitential exile and established a monastery at Iona in 565 (Sharpe, 1995).

individual, away from their own country and kinsmen and so empty of human meaning, ‘to be filled with the vast, invisible presence of God’.<sup>439</sup> Although the Anglo-Saxon Church seemingly advocated a cloistered, coenobitic life,<sup>440</sup> the sources reveal that those who desired to leave their communities were doing so to fulfil a spiritual ambition.<sup>441</sup> As a result, Anglo-Saxon pilgrims are usually portrayed in the sources as selfless, pious individuals willing to give up the relative security of their everyday lives in order to live as exiles for Christ. Describing Ceolfrith’s final journey to Rome, the anonymous author of the *Life of Ceolfrith* explains that:

He would leave the rule of the monasteries to younger men and himself go on pilgrimage to the thresholds of the apostles. Once there and free from earthly cares, he could await the day of his death amidst unhindered application to prayer. Thus would follow the example of his brother Cynfrith, who [...] left the care of his monastery to pursue the contemplative life, and by voluntary exile for God’s sake exchanged one fatherland for another.<sup>442</sup>

He also makes clear that Ceolfrith left his monastery ‘to be a stranger in foreign lands so that he might with greater freedom and purity of heart, devote himself to contemplation with the legions of angels in heaven’.<sup>443</sup> It is from within this framework of piety that certain Anglo-Saxon pilgrims sought out foreign lands such as Rome.

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<sup>439</sup> Brown, 1997: 205

<sup>440</sup> The canons of the first Council of Hertford held on the 24<sup>th</sup> September, 673, presided over by Archbishop Theodore, are listed by Bede. Chapter IV of the Council decrees that ‘monks shall not wander from place to place, that is from monastery to monastery, unless they have letters dismissory from their own abbot; but they are to remain under that obedience which they promised at the time of their profession’. Chapter V decrees that ‘no clergy shall leave their own bishop nor wander about at will; nor shall one be received anywhere without letters commendatory from his own bishop. If he has once been received and is unwilling to return when summoned, both the receiver and the received shall be excommunicated’. Chapter VI decrees that ‘both bishops and clergy when travelling shall be content with the hospitality afforded them [...]’. Bede, *H.E.* 4: 5 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969:351-53); for information on Anglo-Saxon monastic practices see, Blair, 2005; Thacker, 1992; Sharpe, 1992. For Council of Hertford, see Cubitt, 1992.

<sup>441</sup> E.g., Alcuin, *V. Will.* (Talbot, 1954).

<sup>442</sup> Anon., *H. Abb.* 21 (Plummer, 1896: 395): invenit utile consilium ut, relicto iuvenioribus regimine monasteriali, ipse apostolorum limina peregrinaturus adiret; ibique terrenis absolutus curis inter libera orationum studia diem spectaret ultimum, imitatus exemplum fratris sui Cynefridi, qui, sicut supra commemoravimus, studio vitae contemplativae monasterii curam reliquit, et patriam propter Dominum spontaneo mutavit exsilio.

<sup>443</sup> Anon., *Hist. Abb.* 27 (Plummer, 1896: 398): peregrinari in terris quo liberior puriorque animo ad contemplanda angelorum consortia redderetur in celis.

Along with the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul, Rome housed the relics and shrines of numerous other saints and martyrs and so served as the ideal destination for those undertaking the act of self-initiated exile.<sup>444</sup> In the city, visitors could encounter the lives, deaths and burials of saints mentioned in the Gospels, as well as those mentioned in hagiographical or patristic texts available to them at home, those saints and martyrs remembered in their own liturgy<sup>445</sup> or those whose relics had been sent to England or brought back by other travellers.<sup>446</sup> Rome, then, offered the Anglo-Saxon visitor the opportunity to gain personal knowledge and experience of the divine through the act of venerating their corporal remains.<sup>447</sup> What is more, the pilgrim could participate in the feasts and masses associated with these local saints, and thus enter into a spiritual union with them through the act of communion.<sup>448</sup> In addition, the Northumbrian visitor could also share the personal knowledge and experiences gained in Rome with those in England.<sup>449</sup> So for example, when Bede describes Benedict Biscop's first visit to Rome in 653, he explains that:

...he made sure he visited the tombs of the apostles and venerated their remains. Directly he returned home, he devoted himself wholeheartedly and unceasingly to making known as widely as possible the forms of church

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<sup>444</sup> See, e.g. the shrines to Cosmas and Damian, Agnese, Stephano, Chrisogono, Clement, Lawrence, Prassede among many others. For a comprehensive survey of Rome's shrines and local martyrs, see Thacker, 2002; 2007

<sup>445</sup> Ó Carragáin (1994: 4-5), notes that it is probable that some of the relics brought back to Northumbria by pilgrims such as Benedict Biscop may have corresponded to the names of saints recited in the *Communicantes* prayer featured in the Anglo-Saxon liturgy. This includes the names of Roman saints such as Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, Cosmas and Damian and others.

<sup>446</sup> For example, Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus and Rufinianus were sent by Gregory to assist Augustine's mission to the English. They brought with them a pallium, sacred vessels and also relics, Bede, *H.E.* 1: 29 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 105); Oswiu sent Wigheard to Rome to be consecrated as bishop, where he died; Pope Vitalian wrote to Oswiu thanking him for his letter and gifts to the Apostles. In his letter he says that with the bearer of the letter he has sent the king relics of 'the blessed apostles saints Peter and Paul and of the holy martyrs Lawrence, John, and Paul, Gregory and Pancras'. The letter also says that he has sent the queen 'a cross made from the fetters of saints Peter and Paul with a golden key', Bede, *H.E.* 3: 29 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 319-23)

<sup>447</sup> For summary, see Brown, 1981

<sup>448</sup> For information on the Roman Mass and Holy Communion, see Ó Carragáin, 1994: 4-5.

<sup>449</sup> Thacker, 2000: 247-77

life, which he had seen in Rome and had come to love and cherish.<sup>450</sup>

This implies that along with his experiences as a pilgrim venerating the shrines of the saints and martyrs, Benedict also saw Rome as the place to acquire knowledge of daily practices, organisation and modes of conduct carried out in the Church in Rome, this Church serving as the repository of information for safeguarding orthodoxy.<sup>451</sup>

Thus, for the early Anglo-Saxon Church, Rome was the place to seek spiritual and theological guidance.<sup>452</sup> In the well-documented story of Wilfrid's tribulations over his York diocese, it is to Rome and the papacy that he appealed, calling upon Pope Agatho to mediate in his dispute with Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury (d.690) and King Egfrith of Northumbria (d.685), and again to Pope John to settle his argument with King Aldfrith. From this account, it is clear that Rome was considered the authority, able to pronounce officially on matters of Church law, and so served as the legislator in all matters of orthodoxy.<sup>453</sup> Given Britain's<sup>454</sup> long-standing reputation as a land of 'heretics and schismatists',<sup>455</sup> it is perhaps no wonder that Northumbrian ecclesiastics looked towards Rome for theological and doctrinal assurance.<sup>456</sup>

At another level, the visitor to Rome (whether on pilgrimage or diplomatic, ecclesiastical business) could also gain familiarity with the orthodox practices of the Roman Church through personal involvement in the daily ecclesiastical activities and

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<sup>450</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.* 2 (Plummer, 1896: 365): *Dismissa ergo patria Romam adiit, beatorum apostorum, quorum desiderio semper ardere consuerat, etiam loca corporum corporaliter visere atque adorare curavit; ac patriam mox reverses, studiosius ea quae vidit ecclesiasticae vitae institute, diligere, venerari, et quibus potuit praedicare non desiit.*

<sup>451</sup> It is also possible that Benedict Biscop left Northumbria as a political exile, see Wood, 1995; see also Izzi, 2010

<sup>452</sup> See e.g., Blair, 2006

<sup>453</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* (Colgrave, 1927)

<sup>454</sup> The word 'Britain' is used here to include the indigenous pagan Britons and to describe the period before the Anglo-Saxon settlement of the country. This distinction is important, as material and archaeological evidence has revealed the presence of early Romano-British Christians in Britain in the second century. Of these earliest British Christians, Bede describes the work of St Germanus who came to the country from Gaul to correct the Pelagian Heresy that had emerged in Britain in the fifth century, Bede, *H.E.* 1: 21 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 66-67).

<sup>455</sup> Aldhelm, *Ep.4.* (Ehwald, 1914: 481-82; 485-86)

<sup>456</sup> For an excellent overview, see Stancliffe, 2003.



rituals conducted in the city. For example, Roman masses, variously performed throughout the city in its many churches, provided one means by which the Anglo-Saxon visitor could experience the contemporary workings of the Church; the individual could garner first-hand knowledge of the most up-to-date liturgical practices in Rome, and so measure their own practices against those of Rome.<sup>457</sup> If found wanting, Rome could furnish the visitor with the practical advice and assistance needed to emend their erroneous ways. As such, Rome could supply the resources required for an ecclesiastical education such as teachers, preachers, books, historical resources, access to canon law, exemplary models of Christian conduct, inspirational religious imagery, and correct liturgical practices.<sup>458</sup> On a more social level, the Anglo-Saxon visitor could worship alongside Christians of other nationalities and races and could therefore be part of the 'Universal Church', in a way that was not as ethnically limited as it perhaps was in England.<sup>459</sup> Conversely, through their presence in Rome, the Anglo-Saxon visitor, by communing with Christians of different nationalities, could advance understanding of their part in this wider Christian community.

Moreover, by establishing filial bonds with other informed Christians and by forging contacts with influential figures in the Church, the Northumbrian visitor could extend their own social and religious network and so elevate their own personal reputation. One example of this phenomenon, made clear in Eddius Stephanus' *Life of Wilfrid*,<sup>460</sup> describes the relationship fostered by Wilfrid with the archdeacon, Boniface, while he was in Rome. Stephen tells us that it was from Boniface that Wilfrid 'learned perfectly the Four Gospels and the Easter rule, of which the British and Irish schismatics were ignorant, and many other rules of ecclesiastical discipline. These things the archdeacon Boniface taught

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<sup>457</sup> For the various Liturgies performed in Rome, see Lapidge, 1994; Gordon, 1991.

<sup>458</sup> For useful bibliography on this subject, see Ó Carragáin, 1995.

<sup>459</sup> For the concept of the 'Universal Church', see O'Reilly, 1996: introduction

<sup>460</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* (Colgrave, 1927)

him diligently as though he were his own son'.<sup>461</sup> He goes on to say that, 'later he [Boniface] presented him [Wilfrid] to the pope [...] and explained to him with singular clearness the whole reason for the journey of the young servant of God'.<sup>462</sup> From this, it is clear that Rome could supply the means by which the visitor could gain tutelage from more experienced mentors and, in so doing, could elevate their own position in the Church, both at home and abroad, through the filial connections made and the knowledge acquired whilst in the city.

What is more, the act of pilgrimage to Rome allowed the visitor to live the life of a Roman Christian, albeit for a relatively limited amount of time. Partaking in the daily rituals of the city and immersing themselves in the local ecclesiastical culture, the individual was no longer in '*imitatio Romanorum*', but was acquiring '*Romanitas*' on a real and personal level: thus, no longer 'acting' in a Roman manner, but actually going some way towards being 'Roman' Christians. This may be important for understanding the places held in the historical record of churchmen like Biscop, Ceolfrith, Wilfrid and Acca, as those best qualified to mediate upon the new visual identity of the Northumbrian Church. That, in effect, through these informed individuals, in modern parlance, an artistic 'movement' is initiated in England.

It is against this complex background of sanctity, liturgy, orthodoxy, ecclesiastical community or personal encounter that the Anglo-Saxon visitor to Rome could also acquire the material resources requisite for the everyday running of a church or monastery. Indeed, as the documentary accounts show, books, saints' relics, altar furnishings, church vestments and images are listed amongst the materials and objects collected in Rome for

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<sup>461</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* 5 (Colgrave, 1927: 11-13): a quo quattuor euangelia Christi perfecte didicit et paschalem rationem, quam scismatici Britanniae et Hiberniae non cognoverunt et alias multas ecclesiasticae disciplinae regulas Bonifacius archidiaconus quasi proprio filio suo diligenter dicavit.

<sup>462</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* 5 (Colgrave, 1927: 11-13): Nam postremo praesentavit eum papae beatae memoriae et omnem causam itineris adolescentuli servi Dei mirabiliter ostendit.

transportation back to Anglo-Saxon England.<sup>463</sup> Along with these physical objects gathered abroad, the visitor could also see for themselves the architectural contexts within which the artworks and material artefacts existed and could thus bring back a visual knowledge of the appearance of Christian Rome. As David Parsons has demonstrated, written accounts describing topological and architectural details recorded by pilgrim travellers provided an insight into the building strategies employed elsewhere in the Christian world.<sup>464</sup>

It is even possible that visitors to Rome could have made drawings of what they had seen whilst in the city. This is a practice that is not without historical precedent. In Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*,<sup>465</sup> we learn that Arculf, a bishop from Gaul whose boat was apparently blown off its course and onto the shores of Iona in the 680s, made drawings on wax tablets of the buildings he had visited in the Holy Land, which Adomnán subsequently copied for his readers.<sup>466</sup> In turn, Bede then reproduced these drawings in his treatise on Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* (Fig. 104a.).<sup>467</sup> As wax tablets and styli were regularly used in monastic scriptoria, and indeed were the common means of recording information throughout the middle ages, it is probable that those travelling abroad used them to make sketches. Indeed, styli and tablets, like those associated with the monastery at Whitby found in the 1920s (Fig. 104b), now housed in the British Museum, and styli found at Jarrow, provide evidence of their availability in the area during this period. Thus, it is possible that audiences in Northumbria experienced Rome vicariously through the oral, written and illustrated accounts of those who had encountered the city at first-hand. This inherited knowledge, would have brought Rome closer to those unable or unwilling to

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<sup>463</sup> See, e.g. the accounts of objects brought from Rome by Biscop and Ceolfrid: Bede, *H. Abb.* 4; 5; 6; 9; 11; 15 (Plummer, 1896: 190; 191; 192; 196; 198; 203).

<sup>464</sup> Parsons, 1987: 3-34

<sup>465</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* (Meehan, 1958)

<sup>466</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* 1 (Meehan, 1958: 2): interrogauimus Arculfum, praecipuae de sepulchre Domini et ecclesia super illud constructa, cuius mihi formulam in tabula cerata Arculfus ipse depinxit. Adomnán.

<sup>467</sup> Bede, *De Locis Sanctis* (Fraipont, 1965). These drawings survive in a manuscript dating from the fourteenth century (London: British Library, Additional MS.22635, f.44r). For account see, Harvey, 2006: 13-16.

travel. Here, a notable case-in-point is Bede who did not visit Rome himself, but was able to rely on the descriptions provided by others for his *History*.<sup>468</sup> Nevertheless, for those Northumbrians who did visit the city, its enduring memory and the objects they brought back with them would have had a profound and lasting influence upon their immediate surroundings.

So, for example, the painted panels brought back from Rome to adorn the nave of St Peter's at Wearmouth by Benedict Biscop have been identified as the probable sources informing the carved, painted figural scenes depicted on the monuments at Bewcastle, Ruthwell, and Rothbury.<sup>469</sup> Examining this, Hawkes has argued that the images were not transported into an 'intellectual vacuum', explaining that:

It would appear that the transmission of early Christian art into England was part of a continuum of events involving members of the secular and ecclesiastical ruling elites that sought continually to associate Anglo-Saxon England with Rome and the papacy – intellectually and culturally, through its literature, music, liturgy and rituals, but also through its art and architecture.<sup>470</sup>

Recognising that the process of copying from Roman models had very specific ramifications for the cultural identity of Northumbria in this particular instance, Hawkes goes on to suggest that, through the extant stone carvings:

it is possible not just to glimpse reflections of material lost both to Anglo-Saxon England and the corpus of Christian art generally, but also gain some idea of how rich a source of inspiration continued contact with the Roman world was, how the material was constantly re-used and re-presented, in the public art of stone sculpture, to display those contacts in highly visible form.<sup>471</sup>

Hawkes' proposal that through replicating Roman sources the Anglo-Saxons were consciously displaying their contact and knowledge of Rome and its artistic languages to

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<sup>468</sup> In Bede's preface to his *H.E.*, he states that his principle advisors were Abbot Albinus and Nothelm. He explains that 'Nothelm himself later visited Rome, and obtained permission from the present Pope Gregory II to examine the archives of the holy Roman Church. He found there letters of Pope Gregory I and other Popes, and when he returned, the reverend father Albinus advised him to bring them to me for inclusion in this history' (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 3-7).

<sup>469</sup> Cassidy, 1992; Bailey & Cramp 1988; Ó Carragáin, 2005; Hawkes, 2007b

<sup>470</sup> Hawkes, 2007b: 27

<sup>471</sup> Hawkes, 2007b: 36

their intended audiences, presents an interesting paradigm: one that tacitly implies that the act of copying was a conscious and reasoned act, deliberately employed as a means to elevate the community's prestige. Within this scheme, Roman products, or products inspired by Roman models, may be understood to have had an elevated or higher status than local, indigenous forms of artistic display and could be exploited as a means to promote and advance the reputation of the Northumbrian Church and its community.

Exploring this further, it is possible that rather than merely utilising a 'Roman' image that was readily available to exploit as a model for copying or for re-application in a different medium and as a means to display the communities' knowledge and contact with Rome, it could be that the copying process itself was part of a wider intellectual pursuit. Indeed, it is not unlikely that the artists responsible for their production were consciously making artistic choices that extolled their personal, intellectual, sensibilities through the very act of re-appropriation.

### Imitation, Appropriation and Visual Quotation

To demonstrate this, some of the features of Anglo-Saxon literature can be considered, as they form a comparative context for current purposes. Within literary studies, it has long been recognised that writers of the period often relied upon the work of other authors to give authority to their works. Indeed, Bede described his work as, 'following in the footsteps of the fathers.'<sup>472</sup> Some scholars have understood this as an indication of Bede's traditionalist outlook, arguing that it indicates his reliance on the work of others and that as a result his work suffers from a lack of originality.<sup>473</sup> Others, however, have demonstrated that Bede's statement reflects contemporary attitudes towards earlier literary tradition,

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<sup>472</sup> 'Patrum uestigia sequens'. Bede uses this phrase on a number of occasions, e.g.: Preface, *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* (Laistner, 1983: 3-10); Prologue, *XXX Quaes.* (Hurst, 1962: 293); *Hom. 2.11* (Hurst, 1955: 258)

<sup>473</sup> For summary of scholarship, see Martin, 2006: 189-202. For Bede's scholarly approaches, see Meyvaert, 1976: 62.

arguing that the originality of Bede's work lies in his creative synthesis of past works to create a new 'concordance exegesis'.<sup>474</sup> Indeed, Joyce Hill has described Bede's use of marginalia as an indicator of his reliance upon the works of the Church Fathers to add scholarly weight to his writing. She notes that:

One's first impression might be that this is an anticipation of the modern footnote – a technique, amongst other things, for avoiding an accusation of plagiarism. But this is not part of the medieval mindset. It is, in fact, [...] precisely the opposite: it is a means of identifying the authoritativeness of what is said by identifying the authority: a commitment to derivation rather than originality, to intertextuality rather than independence.<sup>475</sup>

The onus placed on derivation in this literary example perhaps sheds significant light on the way that Roman images (specifically religious or figural images) were utilised within the canon of Northumbrian art. For, it seems likely that products deriving from Rome or the Roman world would have provided what were considered *authoritative* sources from which the artists could 'visually quote'. In this hypothesis, it is reasonable to suggest that this kind of visual citation safeguarded against claims of iconoclasm while at the same time visually expressing the communities' contact and affiliation with the orthodox Church.<sup>476</sup>

Another related example of this phenomenon, also occurring in a contemporary textual context, is the literary formula known as *Geminus Stilus*, which according to the Carolingian writer Hrabanus Maurus, can be defined as writing on one subject in both prose and verse: verse being the learned form intended for personal contemplation and prose being the accessible, public form.<sup>477</sup> In an Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian context, Bede's re-workings of the *Life of St Cuthbert* provide a clear example of this literary

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<sup>474</sup> Leclercq, 1962: 82 cited from Martin, 2006: 191

<sup>475</sup> Hill, 1998: 2

<sup>476</sup> For the use of images in the Anglo-Saxon Church, see Hawkes, 2007: 1-19. For Gregory the Great's view of images in church see Gregory, *Ep.*, XI: XIII (Norberg, 1982: 874)

<sup>477</sup> Hrabanus Maurus, *De Laud.* (Perrin, 1977: 265)

tradition.<sup>478</sup> Initially based on a prose *Life* by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne,<sup>479</sup> he also produced an account written in metrical verse. Addressed to Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne, his preface to his prose *Life* explains:

You may be aware, holy father, that I have already produced, at the request of some of the brothers here, a life of this same father of ours, in heroic verse, somewhat shorter than this prose life but following the same pattern. You may, if you wish, have a copy. In the preface to the verse life, I promised that I would write a fuller account of the life and miracles, a promise which, as far as God permits, I am now striving to fulfil.<sup>480</sup>

As Colgrave noted, ‘the models for this twofold treatment of the subject were Sedulius’ *Carmen* and *Opus Paschale*, both of which were very familiar to Bede’.<sup>481</sup> Thus, the practice of writing two or more versions of the same themed work itself originates in the classical tradition, and as such may have appealed to an Anglo-Saxon desire to appropriate Roman forms. Other Anglo-Saxon writers such as Aldhelm in his prose and verse treatises *De Virginitate*,<sup>482</sup> and later, Alcuin in his *Life of St Willibrord*<sup>483</sup> and his *York Poem*,<sup>484</sup> the latter of which was based upon Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica*, provide further examples of this literary device. In considering this feature of Anglo-Saxon literature, Gemot Wieland has explained that ‘in order to understand God the text had to be simple and therefore written in prose’, and that, ‘in order to praise God the text had to be sophisticated and therefore written in verse’.<sup>485</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> Bede, *V. Cuth* (Colgrave, 1940: 142-307; trans. Farmer & Webb, 1998: 43-104)

<sup>479</sup> Anon., *V. Cuth* (Colgrave, 1940: 60-139)

<sup>480</sup> Bede, Preface, *V. Cuth*. (Colgrave, 1940: 146): Sciatautem sanctitas uestra quai uitam eiusdem Deo dilecti patris nostril quam uobis prosa editam dedi, aliquanto quidem breuius, sed eodem tamen ordine rogantibus quibusdam e nostris fratribus heroicis dudum uersibus edidi. Quos si uos habere delectate, a nobis exemplar accipere potestis. In cuius operas praefactione promise me alias de uita et miraculis eius latius esse scripturum. Quam uidelicet promissionem in praesenti opusculo, prout Dominus dederit adimplere satago.

<sup>481</sup> Colgrave, 1940: 3. An illustrated Carolingian copy of Sedulius’ *Carmen* apparently based on a seventh-century model has survived, see Sedulius *Carmen Paschale* Antwerp: Museum Plantin-Moretus MS M.17.4 (Alexander, 1978: 83, cat. 65)

<sup>482</sup> Aldhelm, *De Virg.* (Ehwald, 1919: prose: 228-323; verse: 350-471)

<sup>483</sup> Alcuin, *V. Will.* (Dümmler, 1881: verse: 208-20; Levison, 1920: prose: 81-141; trans. Talbot, 1954: 3-22)

<sup>484</sup> Alcuin, *Ver. Pat. Reg.* (Dümmler, 1881: 169-206; trans. Godman, 1982)

<sup>485</sup> Wieland, 1981: 113-33. For more on ‘*Opus Geminatum*’, see Godman, 1981: 225-29; Bullough, 1981: 339-59

This process, of twinning works, perhaps goes some way to explaining, in a visual context, the apparent similarities discernable in works of art, most notably in the constructions of the Ruthwell and Bewcastle sculptural monuments (Figs 105-106). Where one (at Bewcastle) perhaps displays a form of visual ‘prose’ scheme intended for mass consumption – public in character and commemorative in form; the other (at Ruthwell) displays a form of visual ‘verse’ – requiring close contemplation and personal interaction. Thus, the two works may be understood as visually ‘twinned’ but distinct in their function, yet still part of the same general pictorial ‘narrative’.

Considered in this way, the apparent ‘similarities’ and ‘differences’ recognised in the visual construction of these monuments can be reconciled,<sup>486</sup> not as binary opposites, but as deliberate manifestations of their makers’ didactic agenda. Indeed, if these monuments are considered as two parts of a single scheme – as twinned works – intentionally created to appeal to different audiences by using variations on an established theme, this may go some way to explain the apparent visual relationship existing between these diverse monuments.

As early as 1920, the apparent filial relationship shared by these monuments was recognised. Noting the difference, but also observing the resemblances of style and aesthetic quality, Baldwin Brown considered the monuments as ‘siblings’, describing Bewcastle as the sister of Ruthwell.<sup>487</sup> Later, Fritz Saxl, while noting a number of differences between the two monuments, conceded that they were ‘obviously related’ but explained, that the differences existed due to different phases of development of one style; that, Bewcastle was less developed than Ruthwell.<sup>488</sup> In both approaches, the validity of the arguments relies upon a secure dating framework for the monuments as both assume that one monument is based upon the other.

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<sup>486</sup> For discussion of issues relating to ‘similarities’ and ‘differences’, see Chapter I: 35-40

<sup>487</sup> Baldwin Brown, 1920: appendix, 219-86; cited from Orton, 2003: 57 (footnote 1)

<sup>488</sup> Saxl, 1943: 1-19



Unfortunately, as far as dating is concerned, these monuments have offered considerable resistance to the conventional methods of identifying date and provenance. Initially the long runic inscriptions at Bewcastle seemed to offer some insight into the question, as the west face of the Bewcastle monument appeared to carry the name ‘Alcfrith’ and the north side, the name ‘kynibu\*g’ (Fig. 107). Early scholars reasonably associated these names with the Deiran sub-king Alcfrith, son of Oswui, who was married to a Mercian princess called Cyneburgh whose son Ecgfrith, patron of the monastery of Jarrow, also seemingly mentioned on the monument, was killed at the battle of Nechtansmere in 685.<sup>489</sup> As Alcfrith disappears from the historical record in around 670 and the monument was apparently erected to the memory of Ecgfrith, it was credible to suggest that Bewcastle was erected some time after 685. However, in 1960 the runeologist Ray Page unravelled a series of well-intentioned falsifications, demonstrating that the names had been ‘clarified’ by over-zealous cleaning carried out in the nineteenth century by enthusiastic clerics.<sup>490</sup> Page’s piercing analysis freed the monument from earlier assumptions about its date and left the way clear for further enquiry.<sup>491</sup>

Here, the (stone) material of the monuments has provided some insight. As Hawkes noted, it is not until the Anglo-Saxons come into contact with the Christian West that they adopt stone as a creative medium.<sup>492</sup> Indeed, as Bailey notes, ‘pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon art is not expressed through stone carving; it is an art of metalwork, of wood, of textiles, and of pottery’.<sup>493</sup> Moreover, as Cramp rightly argued the importation of Gaulish masons by Benedict Biscop for the construction of his monastery at Wearmouth in 674 and the construction of stone churches in the east of Northumbria in the period of 670-675

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<sup>489</sup> For summary, see Orton & Wood, 2007.

<sup>490</sup> Page, 1960: 36-57

<sup>491</sup> For a detailed summary of the scholarship on dating the Bewcastle monument, see Bailey, 1996: 42-57. For the monument’s historiography and later life, see Cassidy, 1992: 3-19

<sup>492</sup> For the ‘equation between stone and Rome’, see Hawkes, 2003: 69-99

<sup>493</sup> Bailey, 1996: 23-41

introduced the knowledge, skills and technologies to the region required for the construction of these carved, free-standing monuments.<sup>494</sup> This, then, provides a notional starting date for their production.

In attempts to provide a closer date, Cramp has argued that the elaborate plant-scroll of Bewcastle with its sheathed flower buds corresponds to a type seen in the manuscript now known as the Leningrad Bede, dated to *c.*746;<sup>495</sup> and, as the plain-interlace on the south face of the monument is regarded as similar to a type seen in the Lindisfarne Gospels, dated to the late seventh century, and by Michelle Brown to the early eighth century,<sup>496</sup> she has further suggested that the monument shares a similar date. Gwenda Adcock regarded the Durham Cassiodorus, as providing a closer example of the intricate six-strand plain interlace seen at Bewcastle, indicating a date in the second quarter of the eighth century.<sup>497</sup>

While these studies have apparently confirmed a date within the first half of the eighth century for Bewcastle, related studies of both Ruthwell and Bewcastle have suggested more 'refined' dates quite early in the century. David Howlett's study of the so-called 'Mary Magdalene' panel on the Ruthwell monument, for instance, noted that the images reflected ideas put forward by Bede in his *Commentary on St Luke's Gospel*, a work dated to 709-15.<sup>498</sup> Likewise, through an investigation of the iconography of Ruthwell and by extension, Bewcastle, Éammon Ó Carragáin has argued that the John the Baptist panel displays themes that corresponded to the *Agnus Dei* prayer, introduced into the liturgy by Pope Sergius I (686-701).<sup>499</sup> Moreover, Ó Carragáin's analysis suggests that the Marian iconography evident at Ruthwell was perhaps also inspired by the introduction

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<sup>494</sup> Cramp, 1984a: 20

<sup>495</sup> Leningrad Bede, St Petersburg: Russian National Library, MS Q.v.I.18, dated mid-eighth century, Wearmouth-Jarrow (Alexander, 1978: 47-48, cat.19)

<sup>496</sup> Cramp 1984: 20; Brown, 1991: 2003

<sup>497</sup> Adcock, 1974: 158-65

<sup>498</sup> Howlett, 1974: 333-36

<sup>499</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1999: 191-203

into the canon of four Marian festivals by Pope Sergius I.<sup>500</sup> Not unrelated to this, Richard Bailey has pointed to the monuments' seeming reflection of contemporary interest in the cult of the True Cross that developed in Rome in the early-eighth century, after Sergius rediscovered a relic of the True Cross in 701, and introduced its veneration into the mass of the 'Exaltation of the Cross'.<sup>501</sup>

Such studies seem, from iconographic, ecclesiastical, liturgical, and stylistic points of view to point to a date within the first half of the eighth century for both monuments, and indeed, arising out of a close formal analysis of the carved decoration of the monuments, such conclusions seem to offer more verification than earlier studies. Nevertheless, they do not help determine which monument may have been produced first. For previous scholars, this question posed less of a problem. Thus, for Baldwin Brown and Saxl Bewcastle was located earlier because it was regarded as less technically advanced than Ruthwell.<sup>502</sup>

Such 'arguments' are clearly founded on the perceptions of the beholder and do not really establish primacy of production. However, they do indicate the close relationship between the two monuments while raising the possibility that the two styles evident on the monuments coincided chronologically. If this is the case, it is possible that the different styles were appropriated to convey different messages to their intended audiences. Certainly, this seems to be a phenomenon evident in the manuscript production of the area during this period: the Matthew page of the Lindisfarne Gospels, for example, with its flat, linear, more 'insular' style and its contemporary; or the Ezra page of the Codex Amiatinus, with its naturalistic, modelled, 'classical' style (Figs 108-109). To explore the possibility that such concerns were relevant to those responsible for the Bewcastle and Ruthwell

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<sup>500</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1999: 191-203

<sup>501</sup> Bailey, 1996: 23-41

<sup>502</sup> Baldwin Brown 1920: 219; Saxl, 1943: 14

monuments, it is worth re-examining one of the panels that they have in common,<sup>503</sup> that of ‘Christ on the Beasts’, as a means of illustrating the idea that the works are visually twinned (Figs 110 & 111).

#### The Carved Images of ‘Christ Recognised by the Beasts’ at Bewcastle and Ruthwell

Despite numerous attempts to show that the ‘Christ on the Beasts’ panels of Bewcastle and Ruthwell are different, Fred Orton resists acknowledging the possibility that both images, on a ‘pre-iconographic’ level are identical.<sup>504</sup> Indeed, this type of initial visual interaction, based upon Erwin Panofsky’s three-stage iconographic method of interpretation, reveals that both monuments display the same scene by using a shared iconographic assemblage.

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<sup>503</sup> The monuments of Bewcastle and Ruthwell have two figural scenes in common with one another; these are generally identified as the images of ‘Christ Recognised Between Two Beasts’ and the image of ‘John the Baptist Holding the *Agnus Dei* or Lamb of God’. Another feature that the monuments are deemed to share is the inhabited vine-scrolls located at Bewcastle, on the east face and at Ruthwell on both of its narrow sides. The identification of the figures on these monuments has received much critical attention. For the purposes of this investigation, the iconographic identifications defined in CASSS will be used as these largely concur with others such as Ó Carragáin. For more information on the various iconographic interpretations of the monuments’ image programmes, see the individual *Corpus* entry for Bewcastle (Bailey & Cramp, 1988: Bewcastle: 61-72)

<sup>504</sup> The pre-iconographic level represents the initial descriptive phase of Panofsky’s three-stage iconographic/iconological analysis, see Panofsky, 1955: 51-81

**Table 2: Pre-iconographic description**

<b>Ruthwell: Pre-iconographic level</b>	<b>Bewcastle: Pre-iconographic level</b>
Figure arranged frontally in hieratic pose	Figure arranged frontally in hieratic pose
Figure dressed in Roman robes	Figure dressed in Roman robes
Dish-shaped circular motif placed behind head	Dish-shaped circular motif placed behind head
Holding tube-shaped object in left hand	Holding tube-shaped object in left hand
Right arm bent at elbow with upraised forearm	Right arm bent at elbow with upraised forearm
Right hand palm forward with two fingers side-by-side	Right hand palm forward with two fingers side-by-side
Figure has each foot placed on the head of an animal	Figure has each foot placed on the head of an animal
Animals face each other	Animals face each other
Both animals have rounded muzzles and small, pinned back ears	Both animals have rounded muzzles and small, pinned back ears
Both animals have their outside paw outstretched	Both animals have their outside paw outstretched
Both animals' inner outstretched paws are crossed	Both animals' inner outstretched paws are crossed

Moreover, in considering the panels' iconographic significance, again it is clear that the carved panels were intended to represent the same scene.

**Table 3: Pre-iconographic identification**

<b>Bewcastle motif</b>	<b>Bewcastle Identification</b>	<b>Ruthwell motif</b>	<b>Ruthwell Identification</b>
Figure arranged frontally in hieratic pose	Monumental figure=person of status	Figure arranged frontally in hieratic pose	Monumental figure= person of status
Face	Damaged	Face	Moustachioed= Man
Hair	Long, straight hair	Hair	Long straight hair
Figure dressed in Roman garb	Wears men's clothing = Man	Figure dressed in Roman garb	Wears men's clothing = Man
Dish-shaped circular motif placed behind head	Halo	Dish-shaped circular motif placed behind head	Halo
Holding tube-shaped object in left hand	Scroll	Holding tube-shaped object in left hand	Scroll
Right arm bent at elbow with upraised forearm	Hand raised in a blessing or to indicate speech	Right arm bent at elbow with upraised forearm	Hand raised in a blessing or to indicate speech
2 Animals	Animals are same species	2 Animals	Animals are same species
Animals face each other, muzzles touching	Placid, docile beasts	Animals face each other, muzzles touching	Placid, docile beasts
Figure has each foot placed on the head of an animal	Man standing on animals	Figure has each foot placed on the head of an animal	Man standing on animals
Both animals' inner outstretched paws are crossed	Animals make the sign of the Cross	Both animals' inner outstretched paws are crossed	Animals make the sign of the Cross

Not only do the two panels display such close visual correspondences, both are accompanied by inscriptions identifying the figure. At Ruthwell, this takes the form of a Latin *titulus*, arranged around the panel, which, starting at the top, reads:

[top] +IhS XPS / [right side:] IVDEX :AEQVITATIS· / [left side:]  
BESTIAE · ET · DRACONES · COGNOUERVNT · INDE / [right side  
again:] SERTO · SALVA?OREM · MVNDI ·

This has been translated as ‘Jesus Christ, Judge of fairness (justice). Beasts and dragons recognised in the desert the Saviour of the world’.<sup>505</sup> Here, however, it is not simply that both panels are framed by an identifying inscription. At Ruthwell Christ’s right hand, raised in blessing or indicating speech, also serves to guide the viewer to the beginning of the inscription that identifies the figure as Christ (IhS XPS).<sup>506</sup> Similarly, the Bewcastle figure’s upraised right arm directs the viewer to the inscription identifying him as Jesus Christ ([+]g[e]ssus kristtus) (Figs 112 & 113).

These identifications are further confirmed by the imagery, which, at Ruthwell (in its current state) preserves more iconographic details than Bewcastle. At Ruthwell, the figure is distinguished by a triple-cruciform halo, manifested by the three sets of three incised lines arranged around the nimbus. This type of halo, in early Christian art, is reserved for images of Christ. More specifically, in an eighth-century Anglo-Saxon context, the triple-cruciform nimbus has been shown to identify Christ in Majesty.<sup>507</sup>

In seeking to explain the Ruthwell image, it was early suggested that the text of Psalm 90:13 seemed to offer an explanation as it says that Christ would trample down the asp and the basilisk, the lion and the serpent (*Super apsidem et basilisk ambulabis, et*

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<sup>505</sup> For text and translation see, Ó Carragáin, 2005: xxii-xxix

<sup>506</sup> For discussion on *nomen sacra* see Ó Carragáin, 2005: 201-207

<sup>507</sup> Hawkes, 1996: 80. This is confirmed by comparison with another image of Christ on the Ruthwell monument depicting Christ healing the blind man where Christ’s halo is marked with two incised lines rather than the triple-type that denotes both Christ as the three persons of the trinity and signifying His triumph over death on the Cross (see Fig 106). At Bewcastle, the triple cruciform halo is apparently absent. Instead, the figure’s halo is unadorned. Its seeming absence of a cruciform embellishment however, may be due to the severe weathering that the monument has suffered, thus rendering the three incised lines invisible. It is equally possible that the three lines that identify the halo as Christ’s were painted onto the sculpture or applied in metalwork.

*conculcabis leonem et draconem*).<sup>508</sup> Images apparently illustrating this Psalm have survived from antiquity, such as the sixth-century mosaic of Christ from the Archiepiscopal Chapel in Ravenna (Fig. 114).<sup>509</sup> Here, Christ with a jewelled cruciform halo is depicted in warrior-like guise replete with Roman armour, carrying a staff-cross over his right shoulder; in his left, veiled, hand, he holds an open book which reads: *Ego sum via veritas et vita*: ‘I am the way, the truth and the life’.<sup>510</sup> The animals beneath his feet are clearly identifiable as a lion (under his right foot) and a serpent (under his left). Another Late Antique example of this iconographic rendering of the psalm verse is found in the stucco panelling of the nearby Orthodox (Neonian) Baptistery in Ravenna completed in the late fifth century. Like the mosaic image, it depicts Christ in the guise of a warrior, dressed in a short-skirted gown and carrying a staff-cross over his right shoulder. Here too, Christ’s right foot treads on the lion and his left foot on the serpent (Fig. 115).

It appears that the iconographic rendering of this Psalm, originating in the late antique period, continued to circulate in Northumbria in the eighth century and beyond. Indeed, a number of examples of the image of Christ trampling the beasts have survived from the period relatively unchanged from their late antique proto-types. A notable example of this is the late eighth-century ivory panel known as the Genoels-Elderen diptych (Fig. 116).<sup>511</sup> This includes an inscription identified as being executed in an eighth-century Northumbrian script that recalls the text of Psalm 90.13.<sup>512</sup> Like the image from the Archiepiscopal Chapel, it depicts Christ holding a jewelled book in his left hand and carrying a long-staff cross over his right shoulder, and standing on the heads of a lion (under his right foot) and a large serpent (under his left); these, in turn, are positioned

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<sup>508</sup> Saxl, 1943: 1-19

<sup>509</sup> For a general overview of the art of Ravenna, see Mauskopf Deliyannis, 2010.

<sup>510</sup> John 14:6: *Ego sum via et vita nemo venit ad Patrem nisi per me*

<sup>511</sup> Genoels-Elderen Diptych, Brussels, Musée Royaux d’Art et d’Histoire, dated to late-eighth century on philological grounds. For account of its possible origin, see Neuman De Vegvar, 1990: 8-24

<sup>512</sup> *UBI DNS AMBULAVIT SUPER ASPIDEM ET BASILCU(?) ET CONCUL[L]ABIT LEONE AT DRACONEM*. See Bischoff, 1967: 296-97



above another serpent and a bird-like reptile representing a basilisk.<sup>513</sup> As James Campbell notes, the subject matter accords with the text of Psalm 90:13 and the diptych's other panel, displaying an Annunciation and a Visitation scene, recalls the iconography of the Ruthwell monument.<sup>514</sup> A further, Carolingian, example of the cross-and book-carrying Christ trampling the beasts survives on the ivory book cover from the Palace School at Aachen, dated by Beckwith to the late-eighth/early-ninth century (Fig. 117).<sup>515</sup> From these examples, it is apparent that the iconography of Psalm 90:13, deriving from early Christian art, remained in existence in this form into and beyond the Carolingian period with only minor changes.<sup>516</sup> These images, with their recognisable animals, strongly invoke the text of the Psalm. Yet, despite the common currency of the iconographic scheme, the creatures do not satisfactorily explain those at Ruthwell, which can be identified as neither lion nor serpent. Furthermore, at Ruthwell, Christ does not carry a cross or a book; instead, he holds a scroll and raises his other hand in either blessing or speech. The omission of certain iconographic elements in favour of others is peculiar, particularly as those omitted are exactly the motifs designed to identify the scheme as illustrating the text of Psalm 90:13. If an iconographic model for the Psalm already existed, and was apparently circulating in eighth-century Northumbria, why did the Ruthwell makers choose not to render it more clearly in their image? As the carved image did not accord with the pre-existing iconographic modes of representing Psalm 90:13, other explanations were sought.

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<sup>513</sup> The Basilisk, also known as the 'Regulus' or 'Little King' (i.e. king of the serpents) was believed to be a creature that was reared from a snake's egg that had been hatched by a cockerel. Knowledge of this fantastical animal may have come to Northumbria through the writings of Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History*, VIII, available in the area in the period. See Pliny's *Natural History*, Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek MS Vos Lat. F4, dated on palaeographic grounds to first half of the eighth century, Northumbria (Alexander, 1978: 46-47, cat. 18)

<sup>514</sup> Campbell, 1982: 117, pl.113

<sup>515</sup> Ivory upper book cover, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 176, Palace School, Aachen (Beckwith, 1969: 35)

<sup>516</sup> The iconographic rendition of Christ on the (recognisable) beasts, carrying a staff cross and a book has survived in a number of tenth- and eleventh-century manuscripts, such as that from the canon tables of the Arenburg Gospels dated by Temple to c.990-1000 deriving from Canterbury; the miniature situated on fol.40<sup>v</sup>. of London, BL: MS Douce 296(S.C.21870), a Psalter dated to the second quarter of the eleventh century (Temple, 1976: 96-97, cat. 79)

In his important analysis of this panel, Ó Carragáin demonstrated that a text that seemed to offer a more satisfactory explanation of the Ruthwell image was the Old Latin Canticle of Habakkuk that included the words: ‘You will be recognised between two animals’. Ó Carragáin suggested that as both Psalm 90:13 and the Canticle verse would have been sung at Lauds and as a responsory on the ninth hour of Good Friday, the iconography of the scene was constructed to invoke both these well-known texts and the liturgies of which they formed a significant part.<sup>517</sup>

This is an attractive suggestion, particularly, as Ó Carragáin notes, the resulting design refers to the iconography of Psalm 90:13 but has been adapted through the omission of the lion and serpent to allow visual reference to the Canticle of Habakkuk.<sup>518</sup> In considering the panel’s animals, it is clear that they have been consciously stripped of any attributive features; no particular living thing can be recognised in their form. They are merely ‘animals’. Given the extensive repertoire of creatures existing in the canon of Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian animal art, these ambiguous, unspecified beasts seem to represent a deliberate construction, purposefully created to encompass both the pre-existing symbolic allusions to Psalm 90:13 and the Canticle of Habakkuk. Moreover, as Ó Carragáin suggests, the way that the animals’ paws overlap to form the shape of a cross serve to give the impression that the animals recognise the figure of Christ and so conform more closely to both the monument’s accompanying inscription and the Canticle text.<sup>519</sup>

From this, it seems that the image of ‘Christ’s recognition by the beasts’ represents a completely new Northumbrian iconographic formulation, one that takes its inspiration from an early Christian image of Christ in Majesty and perhaps also an image representing the text of Psalm 90:13, but one that has been adapted and altered to accommodate deliberate allusions to the Canticle of Habakkuk. The construction of newly created Anglo-

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<sup>517</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1999: 192

<sup>518</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1999: 194

<sup>519</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1999: 194

Saxon Christian iconographies is not a new phenomenon. This process of iconographic ‘bricolage’ has been identified by Hawkes in her analysis of the Rothbury cross-shaft, another monument that may have been inspired by the painted panels brought back from Rome by Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrith.<sup>520</sup> Thus, it is possible that both images required accompanying texts to explain to their prospective audiences precisely what was being symbolised by the new iconography of Christ’s recognition ‘amidst’ the beasts precisely because it was a new creation. Moreover, the accompanying inscriptions identifying the figure as Christ found at Ruthwell and Bewcastle serve to differentiate this image of a man standing between two animals from other extant images of men between or upon two beasts (Fig. 118). As the iconography of Christ standing upon undefined animals displayed at Ruthwell and Bewcastle does not exist elsewhere in the canon of early Christian art, it can be assumed that it may have been newly constructed for a specific purpose and to be seen by a particular audience. Indeed, if the images of Christ on the beasts are considered within the iconographic programmes of their respective monuments, it may be possible to establish whether the monuments that they adorn are ‘prose’ and ‘verse’ versions of each other. However, before doing so it is worth considering how the images are constructed.

Examining the images of Christ on the beasts more closely, it is apparent that a number of different visual strategies have been employed by their makers to communicate this new iconographic formulation. Fred Orton has pointed to a number of differences perceptible in the images’ stylistic and iconographic appearance.<sup>521</sup> These include the difference in facture evident in the images’ carved surfaces and the apparent downward thrust of the Bewcastle image compared to the floating, ascending image of Christ at Ruthwell.<sup>522</sup> For example, Orton notes that the carving of Christ on the beasts at Bewcastle is rendered through a relief that is cut at 90° from the external surface and that the planar

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<sup>520</sup> Hawkes, 1996: 77-94

<sup>521</sup> Orton, 1999: 216-226; 2003: 31-67; 2007: 81-104

<sup>522</sup> Orton, 2007: 81-104

distribution of the image's attributes is determined by the approximately 1.25-inch depth of the carving. Thus, at Bewcastle, the image's field of vision facilitates a relatively unimpeded visual experience for the viewer; the eye can wander across the surface of the monument, from panel to panel, without excessive disturbance from the monument's carvings. Whereas at Ruthwell, again applying the example of Christ on the beasts, the relief is carved at around 45° from the monument's external surface to a depth of around 2.5-inch and as a result, the figures seem to be enshrined *within* the monument itself. Orton describes this effect as niche-like: that, the figural images appear as statues placed in niches rather than as surface decoration, they are in the monument, not on it.<sup>523</sup> As a result, according to Orton, the contoured effect rendered by the carving slows the viewer's experience.<sup>524</sup> That is, the facture of the relief with its almost perspectival effect allows the viewer to penetrate the surface of the monument and so encourages the spectator to linger within each panel. He goes on to suggest that this difference in facture could offer some insight into how these monuments may have functioned and what type of people they were made and seen by, although he does not offer any explanation as to what this function may have been or who might have appreciated this particular form. This, therefore, merits closer attention.

The illusionistic space created by the 45° angled carving of the Ruthwell monument's panels is strongly reminiscent of that seen in some icon paintings deriving from the sixth century, in particular those that have survived from St Catherine's monastery at Sinai (Fig. 119). Indeed, three of the Sinai icons have their figures arranged in niche-like architectural settings. In the Sinai icons, the niche creates a hieratic background, which focuses the viewer's gaze on the cult image, its perspective used as a focusing agent that at once isolates and elevates the sacred figures contained within. These

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<sup>523</sup> Orton, 2007: 87

<sup>524</sup> Orton, 2007: 90-91

icons were images of the divine created as foci of prayer, the figures of Christ or saints serving as intercessors between the worshipper and God. They functioned as both the hub of veneration and as portals or gateways to the divine, as intermediaries working on behalf of the worshipper. It seems possible that the image-makers at Ruthwell had this in mind when they produced their monument, for it seems that its series of niche-contained scenes replicate the visual language of icons by directing the attention of the viewer on the figures contained within in a similar way.

It is possible that the painted images brought back from Rome by Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrith displayed similar focusing devices as the architectural niches seen in the Sinai icons and, as a result, may have inspired the carvers at Ruthwell to employ a style of relief carving that emulated this illusionistic device. It is also likely that this type of visual tactic, associated with icons, was employed because it encouraged the viewer to engage with the images contained within the carved niches for a prolonged period. Indeed, just as the viewer was required to contemplate and ruminate on the image of the divine that was the object of veneration in an icon, at Ruthwell, the framed niches facilitated a personal interaction with each of the religious scenes depicted in the monument's panels. Thus, the carved images, contained in their individual niches facilitate an episodic viewing encounter, where the relationships between image and image, and image and text are only revealed through a series of discrete visual experiences. Indeed, as John Mitchell has noted, the images are arranged something like a vertical iconostasis.<sup>525</sup>

On the other hand, at Bewcastle, as Orton notes, the facture of the monument permits the viewer to apprehend the images instantly, noting that the carvings are almost on the surface of the monument; the viewing plane is uninterrupted by recessed shadows or

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<sup>525</sup> Mitchell, 2001: 88-114

visual voids.<sup>526</sup> As a result, the monument's undulating, modulated surface allows each panel, be it figural, knot work or plant scroll, to flow unimpeded into the next without arresting the viewer's gaze for too long. Moreover, the roll moulding that borders each of the panels and the edges of each face enhances this sense of visual drift. The smooth, rounded mouldings delineate each of the panels on the monument but do not prevent the viewer from sliding their gaze over the surface. Indeed, the roll mouldings placed at the edges of each of the monument's faces serve to soften the boundaries and so actively encourage the viewer around the monument (Fig. 120).

However, at Ruthwell a flat, plain moulding inscribed with runic and Latin texts frames each of the monument's panels and faces. This inscribed border is on the monument's surface whereas the carved images are recessed into the monument itself. This gives the effect of the inscribed borders being closer to the viewer and, therefore, occupying a different spatial plane to the carved images. While Bewcastle allows the viewer to apprehend the monument as a unified whole, Ruthwell denies this. Instead, it is visually constructed as a composite, whose elements are made separate and discrete from one another by the thick flat band that isolates each panel and each of the monument's faces.<sup>527</sup> The sharp corners created by the flat moulding where the faces meet at each edge detain the viewer's progress around the monument. Likewise, the inscriptions on the borders require reading and so delay the viewing experience. In turn, the viewer's gaze is delimited by the self-contained space created by each of the niche-like voids that penetrate the surface of the monument. Because of these visual stalling devices, the viewer is required to piece together all of the monument's individual components in order to reveal the monument's overall programme.

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<sup>526</sup> Orton, 2007: 85

<sup>527</sup> Orton, 2007: 93

While these visual effects, created by the different styles of carving employed at Bewcastle and Ruthwell, may merely reflect the replication of different styles evident in their models of inspiration (perhaps deriving from Continental sources such as the panel paintings brought back from Rome by Biscop and Ceolfrith), it is equally possible that they were employed precisely because they suited the makers' creative agenda. Indeed, as it has been demonstrated that the monuments were created at about the same time and within the boundaries of the kingdom of Northumbria, it is possible that the contrasting styles of carvings used and the different viewing encounters these stylistic choices generated were purposefully employed to show the relationship between these monuments, while at the same time, communicating their different functions. Moreover, by adopting a visual methodology that perhaps corresponded to the popular literary convention, *Geminus Stilus*, it is likely that Ruthwell, with its niche-like articulation and composite construction, and with its erudite programme of texts and images, represents a kind of visual verse, made up of individual pictorial stanzas, whereas Bewcastle, with its immediately accessible programme and unified scheme, represents a kind of visual prose.

Indeed, if these sculpted works are considered as two parts of a single creative endeavour, as sculpted *Opus Geminatum*, the distinct stylistic character of these monuments may serve to indicate their makers' desire to articulate and re-articulate the same central message in different places, and for different ends. In order to demonstrate this assertion, it is necessary to examine the iconographic programmes of the monuments to discover if a tenable thematic link can be established between them.

#### Related Themes at Ruthwell and Bewcastle

The carefully constructed carved image programmes displayed on the Ruthwell and Bewcastle monuments have already been subject to a number of iconographic studies and

interpretations.<sup>528</sup> Amongst these, some have recognised the symbolic invocation of monastic themes evident in both monuments' decorative schemes. For example, Meyer Schapiro observed that the images of John the Baptist, Paul the hermit and Anthony the abbot, the penitent sinner (Mary Magdalene?), and the Flight from Egypt displayed at Ruthwell, could all be symbolically connected through the theme of the desert implicit in their iconographic construction. Shapiro argued that the desert themes displayed in the imagery celebrate those in monastic orders and those who have chosen an eremitic life, while at the same time, serving as powerful signs of an organised Church and community.<sup>529</sup> Ó Carragáin developed this further by demonstrating that both Ruthwell and Bewcastle's images consistently display themes associated with the various liturgies performed in the Anglo-Saxon Church and those associated with the day-to-day liturgical practices carried out by those in monastic orders. He further suggested that the theme of Christ's recognition was implicit in both monuments through the juxtaposition of the images of 'Christ on the beasts' and 'John the Baptist', explaining that Christ's recognition was a central theme of the Eucharist.<sup>530</sup> Earlier, Collingwood had recognised the Eucharistic significance of the inhabited vine scroll depicted on both monuments, interpreting it as the 'Tree of Life' and as a sign of Christ as the 'true vine'.<sup>531</sup> While one or all of these themes could provide sufficient evidence that the monuments were part of an intentionally rationalised act of artistic twinning, it is likely that a more specific source or theme underpins their creation.

To establish what this may have been and to determine whether the monuments of Bewcastle and Ruthwell represent two separate re-workings of a single thematically

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<sup>528</sup> See for example, Saxl, 1943: 1-19; Schapiro, 1944: 232-45; 1963: 351-55; Kantorowicz, 1960: 57-59; Henderson, 1985: 3-12; Howlett, 1974: 333-36; Ó Carragáin, 1978: 131-47; 1986: 377-403; 1999: 191-203; Hawkes & Ó Carragáin, 2001: 131-53

<sup>529</sup> Shapiro, 1944: 232-45

<sup>530</sup> Ó Carragáin, 2005: 280-82

<sup>531</sup> Collingwood, 1927: 19-26



unified scheme, some scrutiny of their figural iconography is necessary, and, as part of this process, Bewcastle's non-figural iconography needs to be considered. More usually described in the scholarship as 'decorative', it is possible that these 'ornamental' forms were also utilised as signifiers of symbolic meaning. Moreover, by exploring some of the potential meanings laying behind them it may be possible to identify further, how the monuments of Ruthwell and Bewcastle may have derived from a single, common, thematic source.

*Geminus Stilus: The Changing Seasons and the Passing of Time – Bewcastle and the Vulgate Translation of the Canticle of Habakkuk.*

Observing the Bewcastle monument on the 8<sup>th</sup> Kalends of July (June 24<sup>th</sup>), the day traditionally recognised as both the day of the Summer Solstice and the Feast of John the Baptist (whose image is depicted holding the *Agnus Dei* on the monument's west face), a number of interesting visual phenomena can be witnessed.<sup>532</sup> Indeed, following the sun's progress around the monument at the times associated with the canonical offices reveals some quite spectacular and unexpected results.

During the summer solstice, the sun, low in the morning sky at 5.00am, first illuminates the monument's east face, leaving the other faces shrouded in shadow and quite difficult to decipher (Fig. 121). The east face, by contrast, glows in the morning sun with the effect that the animals and birds inhabiting the vine scroll are 'woken' by the first light of day (Fig.122). Such an effect might recall biblical passages such as the parable of the mustard seed:

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<sup>532</sup> My observation of the monument occurred between 21<sup>st</sup> June and 24<sup>th</sup> June 2008, 2009, 2010. These dates were selected to include Bede's preferred date for the solstice based on the Dionysian (Alexandrian) paschal calendar (21<sup>st</sup> June) and the traditional date of the solstice based on the Victorian paschal table (24<sup>th</sup> June). These dates also allowed for the conversion from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar.

Unto what is the kingdom of God like? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which man took and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it,<sup>533</sup>

However, as Ó Carragáin has demonstrated, the theme of light replacing the dark (of night) forms a major part of the morning liturgy.<sup>534</sup> Relating to this, Ó Carragáin explains that in order to see the figural images carved on the west face, the spectator would have to face east, the direction of the rising sun, which was also the direction the congregation would face during Mass.<sup>535</sup> However, monitoring the monument between the canonical hours of Lauds, Prime and Terce, it is virtually impossible to decipher any of the images on the west face. Indeed, by 9.00am the sun is located directly behind the top of the monument, so that, if the viewer faces east they are unable to decipher any of the images on the west face as they are thrown into complete blackness, the sun casting the entire monument into a dark silhouette (Fig. 123). If, therefore, the sun's course dictates how the monument was (potentially) encountered, this could imply that the viewer should observe the east face at the beginning of the day, as this is the face illuminated by the morning's first light. However, it is equally possible that the dark, west face provided a contrasting, yet comparably meaningful spectacle.

If Bewcastle was originally surmounted by a crosshead, as seems likely,<sup>536</sup> it would have been positioned in the precise location occupied by the sun at 9.00am. The sun's rays would in effect, halo it. The spectator, facing east, almost blinded by the sun's brightness, would be confronted with the black profile of the cross radiating bright sunlight. This

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<sup>533</sup> Mark: 4: 30-32; Matthew: 13: 30; Luke: 13: 18-20: Et dicebat cui adsimilabimus regnum dei aut cui parabolae comparabimus illud sicut granum sinapis quod cum seminatum fuerit in terra minus est omnibus seminibus quae sunt in terra et cum seminatum fuerit ascendit et fit maius omnibus holeribus et facit ramos magnos ita ut possint sub umbra eius aves caeli habitare.

<sup>534</sup> Ó Carragáin establishes that the themes of light, dark, day, and night recur in the liturgy for Lauds and other morning praises. Through examination of the psalmody for the morning offices, he demonstrates that these themes also correspond to the figural iconography of Ruthwell and Bewcastle. In his forthcoming analysis of Bewcastle, he looks at the theme of light and dark and its relationship to the images of Christ on the beasts and John the Baptist and how these liturgical motifs accord with Bewcastle's other images and decorative forms and inscriptions (pers.com.). I am grateful to him for discussion on this subject.

<sup>535</sup> Ó Carragáin, 2005: 282

<sup>536</sup> For discussion of Bewcastle's 'lost' crosshead, see Bailey & Cramp, 1988: 72-73

experience may have brought to mind such biblical allusions as the shining cross of Christ's Second Coming that would rise in the East at the end of days.<sup>537</sup> Moreover, this is one of the few instances when the monument would have projected an accurate rendition of its cross in its shadow. Thus, the spectator observing the illuminated 'cross in the sky' would be 'marked' by the sign of the cross cast by the monument's shadow, therefore emulating, experientially, the apocalyptic account in *Revelation* describing the elect marked on their foreheads by the sign of God on the day of Judgement.<sup>538</sup> In this hypothesis, the phenomenological experiences of the viewer generated by the monument and its external conditions would have had a profound eschatological significance. This may also have been the case at Ruthwell, which was also likely to have been located outdoors and orientated in a similar direction.<sup>539</sup>

If the monuments were specifically orientated to be enhanced by the sun's daily passage through the sky and to benefit from the changing effects of light and shadow it creates, as seems to be the case, further levels of symbolic meaning may be revealed. Certainly, the inclusion of a vertical sundial on the south face of the Bewcastle monument strongly suggests that the passing of time played a significant role in the monument's image programme. This, therefore, deserves closer investigation.

Unlike other surviving pre-conquest dials, such as that roughly contemporary with Bewcastle at Escomb, Co. Durham, or the later eleventh-century dial located at St Gregory's Minster at Kirkdale, Yorkshire, which are divided into eight monastic *tides*, Bewcastle's dial is divided into twelve equally divided segments (Fig. 124). While this twelve-fold dial division may have served to mark the twelve daylight hours, Orton notes

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<sup>537</sup> Matthew: 24: 27-30

<sup>538</sup> Revelation: 7: 3; 9: 4; 14: 1

<sup>539</sup> Ruthwell's original location is, as yet, unidentified. See discussion in Ó Carragáin, 2005: 21-47; Cassidy, 1992; Orton, 2007: 32-61

that it could not have kept accurate time.<sup>540</sup> However, despite its apparent flaws as a device for measuring the precise hours of the day, as Bede asserts, a sundial was a useful tool to provide evidence of when the spring equinox would fall and was, therefore, one means of determining the accuracy of the Paschal calendar.<sup>541</sup> Whether or not the dial had any use as a timekeeping device, it is clear that it had important symbolic significance. Indeed, it is seems likely that it held more of an emblematic role in the monument's decorative programme than a horological function. Analysis of its place within the monument's overall scheme demonstrates this.

Two carved plant scroll panels adorn Bewcastle's southern face (Fig.125a), with the sundial situated in the uppermost panel, a location that benefits from the most sunlight. Floral in form, it appears to grow from the plant within the panel.<sup>542</sup> A number of flowers depicted in full bloom surround it and clusters of berries and large succulent leaves sprout from the main stem of the plant. As this plant, with its sundial, is depicted in the blossoming and fruiting phase of its life cycle it can be understood to invoke summer. To determine whether this is indeed the case, examination of the other plant panels is required.

Also situated on the south face, between two panels of interlace, is the second foliate panel. Here, plants grow from the lowermost corners giving the effect of two separate plants converging to form a knotted, organic shape. Here, the flowers are a different type to those depicted in the south face's uppermost foliate panel, but they too are

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<sup>540</sup> Orton, 2007: 131-43

<sup>541</sup> Bede, *De Temp.* 30 ( Jones, 1943: 237; trans. Wallis, 2004: 89): Unde nos necesse est, ob conservandam veritatis regulam, dicamus aperte et pascha ante aequinoctium tenebrasque devictas non immolandum et hoc aequinoctium duodecimo kl. Aprilium die veraciter adscribendum, sicut non solum auctoritate paterna sed et horologica consideratione docemur.

<sup>542</sup> This synthesis of celestial device and floral motif seems to have been a popular artistic conceit in Anglo-Saxon art of the period. Indeed, a similar variation on the theme is evident in the Franks Casket's front panel, where, in the scene depicting the Adoration of the Magi, the star leading the Magi to Bethlehem is depicted in the form of a flower. Further examples of celestial objects transformed into floral forms may also be discerned in crossheads deriving from Lastingham, Whitby and Hackness, which have floral bosses that have been interpreted as symbols of Christ as a sunburst (Hawkes, 2003: 268). Other similar motifs appear on the façades of churches such as Hovingham and Middleton that have carved stone floral sunbursts embedded into their external walls. See individual entries in Lang, 2002.

rendered in bloom and are accompanied by berries and leaves. However, the motif that helps to offer some insight into this panel's potential meaning is the small shoot located at the bottom, in-between the two plant forms (Fig. 125b). This motif has been described as a 'fleur de leys'.<sup>543</sup> However, its diminutive form and isolated position, suggests that it is probably best understood as a new sapling. This tiny plant is separate from the others depicted suggesting that it represents a new season's growth. It is possible therefore, that this panel represents the growth cycle of a plant in its springtime phase. If it is accepted that the foliate panels on Bewcastle's south face represent the various growing stages of a plant's life in the seasons of summer and spring, it is worth examining the two remaining foliate panels on the north face in order to establish whether a related series of cyclical/seasonal events can be discerned.

While the light south face of the monument seems to display the birth and maturity of plants, the darker north side of the monument may be seen to represent their decline and death (Figs 126a-b). In the lowermost panel, yet more species of flowers and leaves are depicted. Here, the stems of the larger plants are drawn-together by ties. As Rosemary Cramp observes, this motif recalls such tied plants as those seen in a number of consular diptychs (Fig. 127).<sup>544</sup> However, in this instance, it is also possible that Bewcastle's makers were deliberately invoking the art of the diptych as an act of creative plagiarism precisely because diptychs were objects specifically designed to contain chronological information. In antiquity, names of successive emperors were listed inside the leaves of the diptych. Later, Christianity adopted and developed the form and functions of the diptych to record lists of bishops and preserve the dates of various saints days. However, as the Anglo-Saxons are known to have a penchant for multivalent imagery, it is equally feasible that the makers of Bewcastle decided to gather-together the stems of this plant as a kind of

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<sup>543</sup> Bailey & Cramp, 1988: 61-72

<sup>544</sup> Cramp, 1984: 20

visual pun. As Autumn was the time for gathering in the harvest, these tied plants may represent the annually gathered crop. Bede, quoting Bishop Proterius says:

Spring [*ver*] is so called because everything is verdant then, it flourishes [*virescant*]. Summer [*aestas*] takes its name from the heat [*aestu*] which in summer is bestowed for the ripening of crops; Autumn, from the increasing [*autumnatione*] of the crops which are gathered then, while winter is translated by learned men as ‘cold’ and ‘sterility’.<sup>545</sup>

Certainly, the bulbous-headed plants with down-turned spiked leaves that flank the ‘gathered’ plants seem to confirm this panel’s symbolic evocation of autumn. Reminiscent of poppies in their seeding state, these plant forms may have held a key symbolic role in the panel’s scheme (Fig 128). Poppies (*papaver*), native to Britain before the Roman occupation, were, in the classical tradition, associated with agriculture as they were attributes of the Roman Goddess of agriculture Ceres (Demeter in Greek tradition) as their soporific effect soothed the goddess when her daughter Proserpina was abducted and taken to Hades.<sup>546</sup> Discovered in tombs in Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, poppies have long been associated with the remembrance of the dead and with resurrection.<sup>547</sup> It is possible that their symbolic significance was known to the makers of Bewcastle through classical sources such as Pliny’s *Natural History*,<sup>548</sup> which was available in the area in the period of the monument’s construction.<sup>549</sup> Certainly, poppies were sufficiently well known to be included in Ælfric’s glossary.<sup>550</sup> However, regardless of whether these plants can be identified as poppies or not, what is clear is that they represent plants in their post-flowering, seed-making phase. Indeed, these plants with their seedpods and down-turned

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<sup>545</sup> Bede, *De Temp.* 35 (Jones, 1943: 248; trans. Wallis, 2004:102): Vocatur autem ver quod in eo cuncta vernalia, hoc est virescant; aestas ab aestu, qui in ea maturandis fructibus datur; autumnus, de autumnatione fructuum qui in eo colliguntur; porro heims a doctoribus frigus interpretatur et sterilitas.

<sup>546</sup> For account see Ovid, *Metamorphosis* V: 450-563 (Graves, 1960: 89-96)

<sup>547</sup> Graves, 1960: 96

<sup>548</sup> Pliny, *Natural History* 19: 53; 20: 76-79 (Teubner & Mayhoff, 1892-1909) for text see: <http://clt.brepolis.net.ezproxy.york.ac.uk/llta/pages/Toc.aspx?ctx=253758> (accessed 11/4/2012).

<sup>549</sup> Gneus, 2001: 373e; 423e; 428e; 428.4e; 838e

<sup>550</sup> Cited from Rusche, 2003: 181-94

leaves may then be understood to signify the autumnal phase of a plant's growing cycle, when it finishes flowering and begins producing seed.

The remaining foliate panel, located at the top of the north face, seems to conclude the seasonal cycle of a plant's life (Fig.129). Here, the plant is leafless except for one remaining tiny leaf seemingly suggesting that it is entering its winter phase. The plant's coiled stem seem to collapse under its own weight giving the effect that it is dying. It is pulled-down by the mass of its remaining crop. Here, the fecundity of the other panels with their myriad of blossoms and leaves is replaced by a thicket-like tangle of woody stems. Most worthy of note here is the way that this plant springs from a three-stepped base. Although this motif is described in the scholarship as 'a ridged root',<sup>551</sup> it is very reminiscent of triple-step bases seen in images of the Cross of Golgotha.

Representations of the Golgotha Cross seen in apse mosaics deriving from Late Antique traditions, such as that at Sta Pudensiana in Rome, may have inspired this motif's form (Fig. 130). In an Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian context, representations of such stepped-base crosses have been preserved inside Cuthbert's reliquary coffin and on the obverse side of the Wilton cross necklace (Figs131). A further visual exemplar, this one found on fol.19v of the eighth-century Cuthbercht Gospels,<sup>552</sup> displays a plant emerging from a stepped-base rather than a cross (Fig. 132). Here, fantastical animals flank the plant that springs from a stepped base. This motif calls to mind such appellations of Christ as the 'root of Jesse'.<sup>553</sup> This is one of many botanical epithets attributed to Christ, indeed, the Bible provides several allusions to Christ as plants and flowers; for example, he is

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<sup>551</sup> Bailey & Cramp, 1988: 64

<sup>552</sup> Cuthbercht Gospels, Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1224, written at Salzburg by a scribe trained in Southumbria (Alexander, 1978: 62-63, cat. 37); see Throll, 1986: 318-19; Bruno, 2001: 179-90

<sup>553</sup> Isaiah: 11: 10

described as ‘the true vine’<sup>554</sup>, the ‘lily of the valley,’<sup>555</sup> and as ‘the plant of renown’.<sup>556</sup>

Bede, in his homily on Luke 2:1-14, quoting Jerome, explains such sobriquets thus:

*Nazereus* has the meaning of ‘flower’ or ‘clean’. The son of God made incarnate for us can properly be named by this term, both because he adopted the nature of a human being clean from all vices, and because in him the font and origin of spiritual fruits came forth for all believers, since to them he both pointed out examples, and granted gifts, of living properly and blessedly. Therefore, a branch came out of the root of Jesse, and a *nazereus* ascended from his root, because the inviolate Virgin Mary arose from the stock of David, and from her flesh, in the city of Nazareth.<sup>557</sup>

This symbolic equation between Christ and ‘flower’ may help to reveal the meanings behind Bewcastle’s four foliate panels.<sup>558</sup> Indeed, the inclusion of the stepped-base in the north face’s uppermost panel with its association with Christ’s crucifixion, seems to indicate that, when viewed together, the foliate panels form a type of resurrection cycle, in which, the continuous cycle of the four seasons and the perpetual phases of a plant’s life are yoked-together to symbolise the birth, death and resurrection of Christ in floral form. Indeed, if the viewer approaches the monument from the corner joining the west and north faces, Christ’s hand upraised in blessing or speech depicted in the west face appears to direct the viewer to the stepped-base of the foliate panel on the north face above (Fig. 133). Here, the accuracy of the positioning of these images can hardly be accidental. The image of Christ being recognised by the beasts guides the viewer to recognise the ‘cross’ of his crucifixion symbolically rendered in the foliate panel above him on the adjacent face.

It appears therefore, that Bewcastle’s foliate panels, rather than being merely decorative, serve to connote the themes of resurrection and the passing of time. A text possibly informing such imagery is the Cantic of Habakkuk. As this text is acknowledged

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<sup>554</sup> John: 15: 1-5

<sup>555</sup> Song of Solomon: 2: 1

<sup>556</sup> Ezekiel: 34:29

<sup>557</sup> Bede, *Hom. 1.6 on Luke 2: 1-14* (trans. Martin & Hurst, 1991: 88)

<sup>558</sup> For plants and their place in Anglo-Saxon art see Hawkes, 2003: 263-86.



as one of probable sources behind the imagery of ‘Christ on the beasts’ at both Bewcastle and Ruthwell, it warrants closer attention. Moreover, Bede’s commentary *On the Canticle of Habakkuk*,<sup>559</sup> written on the request of a ‘dearly beloved sister and virgin of God’,<sup>560</sup> appears to testify to a contemporary interest in this liturgical prayer and as a result may explain why the makers of Bewcastle and Ruthwell were keen to display their knowledge of it in their monuments’ images.

In his commentary, Bede makes the connection between the canticle and the theme of resurrection explicit. When asked to expound the meaning behind the canticle, he explains that it is ‘mainly a proclamation of the mysteries of the Lord’s passion’.<sup>561</sup> He then goes on to say that ‘it also gives an account of his incarnation, resurrection and ascension into heaven’.<sup>562</sup> This may go some way to explain why the makers of Bewcastle would choose to associate their image of ‘Christ on the Beasts’ with a resurrection cycle; however, it does not satisfactorily explain why the makers would select a resurrection cycle that could also signify the passing of natural time through the employment of foliate forms. However, here, again the canticle is useful.

For his commentary, Bede referred to the Old Latin translation of the Canticle of Habakkuk. This was also the version of the text recited in the liturgy. This translation of the text varies widely from the Vulgate.<sup>563</sup> One interesting discrepancy that occurs between the two translations perhaps explains why the image of ‘Christ on the Beasts’ at Bewcastle is flanked on either side of the monument by foliate panels signifying the passing of time. This is the precise line of the text informing the image of ‘Christ on the Beasts’.

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<sup>559</sup> Bede, *De Habb.* (Hudson, 1983; trans. Connolly, 1997). Although this text is not securely dated, it is listed amongst Bede’s works appended in his *H.E.*, which was completed in the early 730s.

<sup>560</sup> Bede, *De Habb.* 1 (Connolly, 1997: 65).

<sup>561</sup> Bede, *De Habb.* 1 (Hudson, 1983: ll.1; trans. Connolly, 1997: 65): Canticum prophetae Abacuc, quod tibi exponi petisti, dilectissima in Christo soror, sacramenta dominicae passionis maximo pronuntiat.

<sup>562</sup> Bede, *O.H.* 1 (Connolly, 1997: 65)

<sup>563</sup> For summary, see Connolly, 1997: 65: footnote 1

In the Old Latin version of the canticle text, verse 2 reads, *'In medio duorum animalium innotesceris'*. This has been translated as: 'Between two living things you will become known'.<sup>564</sup> However, Jerome's Vulgate version of this line reads, *'In medio annorum notum facies'*, which translates as, 'In the midst of the years thou shalt make it known'.<sup>565</sup> It is possible that Bewcastle's foliate panels, with their inherent symbolism of the passing of time, take their inspiration from the Vulgate version of the canticle in which the *'animalium'* of the Old Latin version of the text is substituted for *'annorum'* in the Vulgate. The theme of recognition through the passing of time continues in the canticle's following verse, which reads, 'When the years draw nigh you will become known; when the time comes you will be revealed'.<sup>566</sup> This may be reflected in the way that the foliate panels are arranged between panels of interlace. As others have noted, the knot work panels of interlace can be seen to contain a number of hidden crosses (Fig.134).<sup>567</sup> It is possible that the alternating arrangement of interlace and foliate panels displayed on the north and south faces of Bewcastle was purposefully designed to encourage the viewer to 'recognise' between the 'years' (signified by the foliate panels) the image of the Cross, the instrument of Christ's crucifixion (hidden within the interlace panels), just as Christ is 'recognised' as the saviour of the world by the animals depicted in the image of 'Christ on the beasts'.

Moreover, the iconographies of Bewcastle and Ruthwell seem to evoke the name 'Habakkuk' in the form of a visual pun. Bede, quoting Jerome's *Interpretation of Hebrew Names*,<sup>568</sup> explains that the name 'Habakkuk' means 'embrace'.<sup>569</sup> At Ruthwell, this

<sup>564</sup> For discussion and analysis see Ó Carragáin, 2005: 207, particularly note 132

<sup>565</sup> *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*

<sup>566</sup> Bede, *De Habb.* 3.2 (Hudson, 1983: ll. 78; trans. Connolly, 1997: 69): Dum adpopiaverint anni cognosceris, dum advenerit tempus ostenderis.

<sup>567</sup> Orton, 2007: 94; Hawkes, 2007: 328-34

<sup>568</sup> Jerome, *Hebraicorum in Nominum* 14: 21 (Lagarde, 1959: 124)

<sup>569</sup> Bede, *De Habb.* 3.19 (Hudson, 1983: ll. 766; trans. Connolly, 1997: 95): Notandum autem exposita oratione siue cantico Abacuc, quia nomen quoque eius quod interpretatur amplexans sensui eiusdem orationis congruit.

etymological symbolism may be discerned in a number of the monument's paired figures that seem to 'embrace' each other. These include; Mary embracing Christ in the 'Flight to Egypt' panel, the embrace of Mary and Elizabeth/Martha in the Visitation panel, and perhaps also the woman who was a sinner embracing Christ's feet in the 'Penitent Sinner' panel, manifested by her oversized arm and inordinately large hand. It is possible that these familiar iconographic forms have been deliberately arranged to include visual reference to the name 'Habakkuk' by emphasising the embracing postures of the figures. Bede perhaps provides an explanation why Ruthwell's makers would choose to do this. In a passage worth quoting at some length, addressing his female patron, he says:

It is to be noted [...] now that Habakkuk's prayer has been expounded, that his name too, which means 'embracing' is in keeping with the meaning of this prayer. For it is manifest that he, who bears witness that he glorified and rejoiced in him alone, embraced the Lord with the inward love of his heart and clung close to him. Now, dearly beloved sister and virgin of Christ, would that we too, by loving him, might become worthy of such a name. For if we strive to embrace him with our whole heart, our whole soul and our whole strength, he too will deign to clasp us in the arms of his love, mindful of his promise in which he says: The one who loves me will be loved by my Father and I will love him and will reveal myself to him; and so we shall merit to be reckoned among the members of the bride who, full of joy, is accustomed to sing to her creator, i.e. her heavenly bridegroom: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me.<sup>570</sup>

From this it seems feasible that the embracing postures of the figures displayed at Ruthwell would have inspired the viewer to 'strive to embrace' Christ. The clear allusions to Christ's death and resurrection seen in the monument's imagery and rehearsed in its poem would have reminded the viewer that it was through Christ's restorative death and

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<sup>570</sup> Bede, *De Habb.* 3.19 (Hudson, 1983: ll. 766-779; trans. Connolly, 1997: 95): Notandum autem exposita oratione siue cantico Abacuc, quia nomen quoque eius quod interpretatur amplexans sensui eiusdem orationis congruit. Pater enim quia interno amore cordis amplexabatur dominum, ei que adhaerebat, qui in illo se solum gloriari et gaudere testatur. Vtinam autem dilectissima soror et uirgo Christi, ut etiam nos ipsum diligentes tali nomine digni efficiamur. Si enim eum toto corde, tota anima, tota uirtute amplecti satagimus, dignabitur et ipse nos ulnis suae dilectionis amplecti, memor sui promissi quo ait: Qui autem diligit me, diligetur a patre meo, et ego diligam eum et manifestabo ei meipsum; sic que inter illius sponsae merebimur membra numerari, quae suo conditori, sponso uidelicet caelesti, solet laetabunda cantare: Leua eius sub capite meo, et dextera illius amplexabitur me. Text cited from: <http://clt.brepolis.net.ezproxy.york.ac.uk/lita/pages/Toc.aspx?ctx=1223027> (accessed 11/4/2012)

resurrection that they, as Christians who had proclaimed faith in his Passion, would be embraced by his love in heaven. As Ó Carragáin has noted, the canticle's recitation on the ninth hour of Good Friday, the hour of Christ's Passion would, no doubt, have had a particularly profound significance for Ruthwell's community who were reminded daily of this event by their monumental cross.<sup>571</sup>

Moreover, it is interesting that, in his book on the *Reckoning of Time*,<sup>572</sup> Bede employs the term 'embracing' to describe the changing but interconnectedness of the four seasons. Describing their cyclical nature, he says:

... winter is cold and wet, inasmuch as the Sun is quite far off; spring, when [the sun] comes back to the earth, is wet and warm; summer, when it waxes very hot, is warm and dry; autumn, when it falls to the lower region, dry and cold. And so it happens that with each one embracing what is on either side of it, through the moderating mean, the whole is linked up to itself like a sphere.<sup>573</sup>

On this subject, Faith Wallis notes that Bede seems to have in mind a circular diagram of the type called *syzygia elementorum*, showing the seasons 'holding hands' so to speak through their shared qualities.<sup>574</sup> If such diagrams were available to the makers of Bewcastle it is possible that they deliberately exploited their imagery for their monument by including reference to the 'embracing' seasons by arranging their seasonal/foliage cycle to wrap itself around the figural images depicted on the west face (Fig. 135). As Christ is frequently referred to as 'the light',<sup>575</sup> and as 'the morning star',<sup>576</sup> his Majestic image as

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<sup>571</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1999: 192

<sup>572</sup> Bede, *De Temp.* (Jones, 1943: 175-291; trans. Wallis, 2004)

<sup>573</sup> Bede, *De Temp.* 35 (Jones, 1943: 246; trans. Wallis, 2004: 100): vel certe quia quadam suae similitudine qualitatis ad invicem temperata volvuntur, tempora recte vocantur. Hiems enim, utpote longius sole remoto, frigidus est et humidus; ver, illo super terras redeunte, humidum at calidum; aestas, illo superfervente, calida et sicca; autumnus, illo ad inferiora decedente, siccus et frigidusque fit ut, amplexantibus singulis medio moderamine quae circa se sunt, orbis instar ad invicem cuncta concludantur; quibus aequae qualitibus disparibus quidem per se sed alterutra ad invicem societate connexis, ipsa quoque mundi elementa constat esse distincta.

<sup>574</sup> Wallis (2004: 100) explains that such diagrams were widely diffused. See her footnote 316 for a bibliography on this subject.

<sup>575</sup> John: 1.9: Erat lux vera quae inluminat omnem hominem in mundum; John: 8: 12: ego sum lux mundi;

<sup>576</sup> Revelation: 22: 16: Ego Iesus misi angelum meum testificari vobis haec in ecclesia ego sum radix et genus David, stella splendida et matutina.

the ‘moderating mean’ flanked by the ‘embracing seasons’ placed in the centre of the west face seems to add weight to this suggestion.

From this, it seems feasible that the two monuments may have been thematically linked through the trope of Christ’s recognition, and his incarnation, death and resurrection. Moreover, the invocation of themes addressed in the liturgical text of the Canticle of Habakkuk seemingly displayed on both monuments would suggest that they can be understood as two logical parts of a shared pictorial narrative – as sculptural *opus geminatum*. It is in this way that the insights provided by such literary models into the Anglo-Saxon attitude towards the treatment and subsequent re-workings of creative materials, may offer an analytical framework for understanding artworks apparently copied or developed from Continental (Roman) sources. Turning now to consider these ideas in more detail, and focusing this time more specifically on how Rome and its material culture influenced image makers, by considering the decorative scheme of the Franks Casket, it may be possible to detect some of the ways in which this type of visual quotation functioned and how this proposed occurrence shapes our understanding of Northumbrian art in general.

## PART 2

### ROME AND THE ART OF TRIUMPH

#### The Franks Casket: Visual and Stylistic Quotation

Given the vast amount of scholarly research that the enigmatic Franks (or Auzon) casket (Fig. 136) has generated over more than a century since its rediscovery by Augustus Franks in 1860, it is surprising that only a handful of these enquiries have considered its stylistic attributes. Despite the work of Dalton in 1909,<sup>577</sup> Baldwin Brown in 1930,<sup>578</sup> and Vandersall in 1972,<sup>579</sup> it was not until Leslie Webster's 1982 investigation that the significance of its stylistic character was given full consideration.<sup>580</sup> In her analysis, Webster, using a stylistic analysis of the birds, quadrupeds and architecture depicted on the casket, convincingly demonstrated that they were of a type commonly associated with Northumbrian products of the seventh and early-eighth century, an observation that concurs with the general consensus of most runeologists, philologists and iconographers considering the date of the piece. Along with others discussing the casket, she recognised that some of the scenes depicted on the casket, such as the Adoration of the Magi, the discovery of Romulus and Remus, and Titus' victory at the Temple of Jerusalem, may have derived from images contained in an illustrated world-chronicle, such as the *Scaliger Barbarus*, an eighth-century Latin translation of an Alexandrian original.<sup>581</sup> While the manuscript in question may provide a likely source for some of the images, it fails to explain the Germanic scenes included in the casket's iconographic scheme. Moreover, the unconventional iconographic depiction of Romulus and Remus on the casket and the

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<sup>577</sup> Dalton, 1909: 32-40, pl.19-21

<sup>578</sup> Brown, 1930: 18-51

<sup>579</sup> Vandersall, 1972: 9-26. Vandersall's analysis seeks to date the Franks casket to the late Anglian period. Unfortunately, as Webster notes, this ignores much of the visual and runological evidence and fails to engage with the linguistic evidence.

<sup>580</sup> Webster, 1982: 20-32

<sup>581</sup> Scaliger Barbarus, Paris: Biblioteque Nationale, MS. Latin 4884, contains an eighth-century Latin version of the fifth-century Greek Chronicle of Theophilus of Alexandria deriving from Corbie. See (Webster, 1982)

idiosyncratic inclusion of a bird in the Adoration of the Magi scene, suggests that additional sources may have been available.<sup>582</sup>

Nonetheless, what is clear is that the casket's form itself emulates a Roman model. As Webster notes, the form of the box closely parallels caskets produced in the Late Antique period such as the ivory Brescia Casket, dated to c.400 (Fig.137),<sup>583</sup> whose materials, proportions, decorative layout, and method of construction all broadly correspond to those of the Franks Casket.<sup>584</sup> Caskets like this may have found their way to England. Indeed, it is possible that a casket mentioned by Bede, 'containing relics' used by St Germanus (d.440) to cure a blind girl may have been brought with him from Gaul,<sup>585</sup> and as such, may have been of a type similar to its contemporary, the Brescia Casket. The apparent similarities perceptible in the design and construction of the Franks Casket and those caskets deriving from the Continent in the Late Antique period may indicate that the Northumbrian makers were replicating a type that best exemplified their notion of an *ideal* casket. Thus, in basing their new casket on an older, Continental model, it is possible that their selection is indicative of their desire to add authority and prestige to their product through the conscious invocation of a *perfect* model. In turn, this may be understood as a deliberate attempt by the makers to signal their knowledge of Continental proto-types through the conspicuous 'quotation' implicit in its form, material and construction: that from its conception, the Franks Casket's makers were wilfully invoking an antique type as a means to add visible authority and intellectual kudos to their already materially-prestigious product.

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<sup>582</sup> See Neuman de Vegvar, 1999: 256-67

<sup>583</sup> The 'Brescia Lipsanoteca', Italy (?), second half of the fourth century, Ivory Casket. Civici Musei d'Arte e Storia, Brescia. The form of the casket is also similar to the Pola Casket, the Capsella of Samagher c. mid-fifth century, Pola, Croatia, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Venezia, Venice, Italy, Inv. No. AV.279/52 (for Brescia Casket, see Volbach, 1952, cat. 119; for the Capsella of Samagher, see Aillagon, 2008: 488, cat. V.29)

<sup>584</sup> Webster, 1982: 22

<sup>585</sup> Bede, *H.E.* 1: 18 (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969: 59), '*capsulam*' is translated by Colgrave as 'a little bag', however, it can also be translated as 'a little chest' or, as Farmer translates it, 'reliquary'.

Thus, despite the inclusion of scenes deriving from Germanic myths and the depiction of interlaced birds and quadrupeds all characteristic of the Insular style, and also the runes that transliterate in places into Old English, the casket's very form proclaims its makers' commitment to invoke an antique antecedent and perhaps also declare publicly its antique sources. If it is also accepted that some of the images are derived from an illustrated world-chronicle, then a further continental model may have been consciously invoked. This means that, from the casket's form and the images selected, it is feasible to suggest that it almost certainly derived from a community who had access to, or knowledge of, high status continental products, not only manuscripts, but also material objects such as small chests or reliquaries. Moreover, further analysis of the casket strongly suggests that the makers, in the formulation of their decorative scheme, visually 'quoted' a number of diverse classical sources.

So for example, turning to consider the casket's back panel, the viewer is confronted with a scene that records an episode from Roman history: Titus' destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in AD70 (Fig. 138). The scene depicts 35 figures arranged in an architectural setting, identified by the text as the temple in Jerusalem at the moment before its ultimate destruction. Jerusalem's temple was Judaism's holiest shrine. Built on Mount Moriah, occupying the original site of Solomon's Temple that was destroyed by the Babylonians, the second temple was reconstructed by Jewish exiles who had returned to Jerusalem in around 600 BC. Herod the Great rebuilt this second temple (which had also been subsequently destroyed), and this third temple was demolished by Titus (here illustrated) in AD 70, shortly after its completion. The text accompanying the scene (beginning in Old English runes then morphing into Latin script) reads: 'Here Titus and a Jew fight / Here Jews flee Jerusalem'. Two further runic Old English inscriptions, each



located in the panel's lower corners, read '*Dom*' (judgement) and '*Gisl*' (hostage).<sup>586</sup> The image is constructed using a double-register divided by a central arch.

This articulation of the space facilitates five separate events to be rendered in one scene. This arrangement may itself indicate the makers' desire to express their knowledge and commitment to antique forms. For, the very specific spatial arrangement is highly reminiscent of visual tactics employed in the construction of Roman triumphal monuments, where scenes depicting episodes of Roman victories are arranged in a like manner.<sup>587</sup> One such monument displaying this particular layout is Trajan's Column (Fig. 139) erected beyond the Basilica Ulpia in Trajan's Forum in Rome (d.100-112AD). Individual scenes illustrating the emperor's battles and conquests are sequentially arranged (horizontally) in the form of a spiral that wraps itself around the column creating the visual effect of multiple registers. As a result of this lay-out, the monument's individual scenes are stacked on top of each other in discrete layers. This arrangement allows the viewer to conceive of the individual scenes (vertically arranged in separate registers) as part of a larger iconographic scheme. Thus, in a related manner, the casket's back panel, with its super-imposed layers, may be understood to display, not only a close visual approximation of a multi-storied building that displays individual scenes in a universal narrative, articulated by their separate zones, but also a complex iconographic assemblage, designed to be conceived of as a multivalent symbolic programme. In this example, the visual quotation of this type of image-layout, perhaps inspired by the layered images of a triumphal monument, informs the viewer that the casket's image requires an analogous method of visual interaction and contemplation.

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<sup>586</sup> See further below p. 223

<sup>587</sup> This arrangement has generally been noted in the literature as replicating the double-register layout seen in Late Antique sarcophagi such as the tomb of Junius Bassus now on display in the Vatican Museum, Rome (Webster, 1982: 20-32)

In a related manner, the way that the space is articulated in the casket's image, with its central arch and double-register, strongly invokes the form of another type of triumphal monument: the triumphal arch. While others have noted the apparent similarity between the pictorial form of the back panel and the form of a triumphal arch, they have failed to recognise its importance for understanding the panel's overall scheme.<sup>588</sup> It is thus worth examining this established visual connection in more detail.

Close examination of the casket's temple image reveals a number of visual correspondences to the form and decoration of a Roman triumphal arch (Figs. 140a-b). Along with the general similarities of its rectangular form and central arch, there is an inscription located in a position consistent with a superincumbent 'attic storey' of a triumphal arch; a ribbed archivolt surmounted by a decorative element situated in the position of a 'keystone'; and carved relief scenes arranged in separate registers. These features are exemplified by the three arches situated in the Roman Forum: the arch of Septimius Severus (203), the arch of Titus, and the arch of Constantine (312-15), as well as the arch of Trajan at Benevento (c.114-18). All of these display characteristics that may be construed as providing models for the casket's image. For example, Septimius Severus' and Trajan's arches have relief carvings arranged in double registers and have a ribbed archivolt like that seen in the casket's image. Likewise, the arch of Constantine has carved figures arranged around the arch (in the spandrels) that appear to follow the arch's profile. However, the clearest visual parallel is found in the form and layout of the arch of Titus that has a single, central arch like that depicted on the panel. Moreover, the monument's dedication to Titus, the same emperor cited in the casket's inscription, perhaps goes some way to explain why the casket's makers might have appropriated its form as an authoritative model for their new creation (Fig. 141).

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<sup>588</sup> See e.g. Webster, 1982: 21

The arch of Titus, erected in AD72 at one end of the Via Sacra in Rome to commemorate his victory over the Jews, provides a visual counter-point to the Franks Casket's back panel. Ignoring, for the moment, the fact that the arch displays images that recount the same episode in Titus' history as those depicted on the casket, the monument's form tacitly suggests that it may have provided the casket's maker with a possible source. The arch of Titus has a single, barrel-vaulted archway that cuts through its centre. It has a ribbed archivolt, a decorative keystone and has an inscription in its attic storey. The 'visual quotation' of a monument associated with Titus and his victory against the Jews at the Temple of Jerusalem proposed here, may thus point to some of the important symbolic connotations lying behind the programme of images displayed on the casket.

The apparent visual and thematic correspondences shared by the Franks Casket and the arch of Titus is not as surprising as it first sounds, as Northumbrian pilgrims visiting Rome were likely to have encountered such structures on their peregrinations around the city. Indeed, as Hawkes notes, the loggia of an earlier temple enclosed in the Church of S. Maria in Cosmedin served as 'diaconia', that provided for the needs of Northumbrian travellers (amongst others) disembarking from their ships at the adjacent port of Tiber Island, located only a stone's throw from such triumphal structures.<sup>589</sup> It is also highly significant that Titus's arch stands between Constantine's arch and the Mamertime prison at the other end of the Via Sacra where prisoners, taken by victorious emperors, were incarcerated after being paraded before the citizens of Rome, and where, in the first century Peter and Paul were imprisoned (Fig. 142). In between the imperial fora, and across the Via Sacra from the prison, was S. Adriano (originally the senate house) which formed one of the stational churches of the papal procession on feast days associated with

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<sup>589</sup> Hawkes, 2006: 106; Krautheimer, 1980: 77-78. See particularly the arch of Janus, still standing on the Forum Boarium between S. Maria in Cosmedin and S. Georgio al Velabro (a diaconia in 640 subsequently dedicated as a church by Pope Zaccariah *c.* 741-42).

saints, Lent and Christmas.<sup>590</sup> Thus, monuments like the arch of Titus may have commanded the attention of Northumbrian visitors who were keen to take back with them knowledge of all the attractions they had encountered in the city.

The invocation of a Roman imperial architectural form on the Franks Casket may, however, be indicative of more than Northumbrian awareness of such structures and settings; it is possible that the trope of the triumphal arch carried a more significant symbolic association. Triumphal arches were commonly erected as memorials to great emperors. They commemorated great battles, memorialised significant events in Roman history or marked the emperor's territory. As powerful symbols of Roman triumph, such arches appealed to Rome's earliest church builders.<sup>591</sup> The gateway into the atrium of St Peter's Basilica in Rome, built by the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century, is thought to have taken the form a triumphal arch; like Constantine's arch erected c.312-15 to commemorate his victory at the Milvian Bridge in 312 it had three entrances and an attic storey (Fig. 143).<sup>592</sup> The appropriation of a triumphal arch at Old St Peter's not only invoked the Emperor and his power but may also have signified Christ's own 'triumph' over death, or, commemorated St Peter's 'victory' in martyrdom.

In a related manner, a number of Rome's churches have triumphal arch-like architectural features placed at one end of their naves. These are usually decorated with mosaics depicting episodes from the life of Christ. One example is the seventh-century triumphal arch mosaics of S. Lorenzo *fuori le mura* (Fig. 144). This church formed part of the Roman church's Lenten celebrations that included liturgical processions around the city.<sup>593</sup> Ó Carragáin has suggested that Northumbrian dignitaries such as Wilfrid and

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<sup>590</sup> Ó Carragáin, 2005: 97; 238; 355

<sup>591</sup> For more information see: Elsner, 1998: 63-82; Krautheimer, 1965; 2000

<sup>592</sup> Krautheimer, 1965: 39-67; 2000: 29-31

<sup>593</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1994: 1-12

Benedict Biscop may have taken part in these stational liturgies.<sup>594</sup> Thus, knowledge of triumphal architecture and its place in Christian contexts may have filtered back to Northumbria through such visitors and so informed images like that depicted on Franks Casket's back panel.

On a more general level, the perceptible relationship between imperial triumphal monuments and architectural features of early Christian churches was scrutinised by Andre Grabar in his seminal work, *Christian Iconography: a Study of its Origins*.<sup>595</sup> Here, Grabar recognised that the art and architecture of late antiquity borrowed extensively and consciously from the official art and architecture of the imperial Roman state. Taking as an example the triumphal arch mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore commissioned soon after 430, during the pontificate of Sixtus III (432-40), Grabar demonstrated that the way that the images were disposed on the triumphal arch was reminiscent of the superimposed registers of a triumphal column, in this case, the triumphal column of Arcadius in Constantinople erected between AD402 and 421. Acknowledging that the mosaic images of the arch were arranged as an iconographic ensemble, rather than sequential episodes in a pictorial narrative, like those displayed in the church's nave, Grabar argued that the mosaics 'invite the audience to recognise in them inspiration by the most recent and most impressive imperial monuments' (Fig. 145).<sup>596</sup>

Thus, just as early Christian artists had looked to the art and architecture of imperial Rome for inspiration, it is possible that Anglo-Saxon Christian artists employed visual tactics that consciously mirrored this phenomenon albeit, in this case on the micro-scale of the personal art object, rather than the macro-scale of public architecture. Indeed, it is worth noting that the spatial division of the image on the triumphal arch of S. Maria Maggiore could equally have provided a model for the casket's back panel as, not only was

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<sup>594</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1994: 1-12

<sup>595</sup> Grabar, 1968

<sup>596</sup> Grabar, 1968: 47

the church part of the papal processional liturgy, it was also a focus for the four Marian festivals that had been introduced by Pope Sergius I.<sup>597</sup> On this subject, Ó Carragáin has demonstrated the lively interest in these festivals in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria, as demonstrated in the iconographic programme of the Ruthwell monument.<sup>598</sup>

Indeed, the impetus to create an image in the form of a triumphal arch on the casket may have been fuelled by a two-fold desire to express both the makers' knowledge of antique monuments associated with victory and triumph, and to show themselves to be working in a manner that accorded with the practices of the wider Christian world by reproducing an image that expounded their awareness of architectural forms associated with one of the early Christian Rome's most important and prestigious foundations.

Turning to consider S. Maria Maggiore's triumphal arch, the mosaic images are arranged in superimposed registers, which are interrupted by the centrally placed arch. Moreover, like the casket's temple/arch image, the church's arch has a mosaic medallion-like motif placed above the centre of the arch that recalls a triumphal arch's 'keystone' (Fig. 146). Moreover, the placement of the triumphal arch in the church over the nave, before the apse, demarcates the space where the altar is placed. The church's triumphal arch may, therefore, serve as the gateway or threshold into the church's 'Holy of Holies'. In the casket's temple image, a similar delineation of sacred space appears to be occurring. This serves to isolate the image of the temple's 'Holy of Holies' from the other images that depict episodes of earthly tribulation. This may indicate that the casket's makers were calling upon the visual language of Christian architectural forms as a means to construct an image of a biblical structure that no longer existed.

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<sup>597</sup> For information on Sergius see *Liber Pontificalis* 86.1 (Duchesne, 1886-92: 371; trans. Davis, 2000: 85-89); for the importance of Sergius in the Anglo-Saxon Church, see Ó Carragáin, 1978: 131-47; 1999c: 191-203

<sup>598</sup> Ó Carragáin, 1999: 191-203

Returning to the casket's temple image, it seems likely, from its spatial organisation and its triumphal arch-like form, that its makers were intentionally employing visual strategies that would press particular associative buttons for its intended audiences. Through the conscious display of the continental themes, cited from original sources, visual authority could be vested in the object. By analogy, the distribution of the figures displayed on the casket's back panel may offer further insight into this occurrence.

The casket's back panel is the only one on the casket that employs a double-registered layout and unlike its other panels; the back has a realistic, almost perspectival, figural distribution. While the other panels display irrational, but dynamic spatial arrangements, the back panel's figures occupy a logical, planar space (Fig. 147). Unlike the Romulus and Remus panel that appears to have human figures floating unimpeded by gravity, and a wolf caught-up in the branches of a tree, or likewise on the lid, where bodies are suspended in mid-air, the back panel is free of such pictorial idiosyncrasy. Moreover, whereas the other panels are littered with 'space filling devices',<sup>599</sup> such as pellets, scrolls, triquetra knots, and foliage, the back panel is not. This may indicate that while this image possibly imitated a different source to the others, the makers may also have consciously employed a different style from the others for its depiction. Considering the placement of the figures, it seems that they are arranged in a processional fashion that is not dissimilar to those found on arches such as Constantine's (Fig. 148).

The decision to render the Temple of Jerusalem on the casket in a way that visually cites triumphal monuments in Rome may indicate that the scene represents more than a visual account of a historical event. Thus, in utilising a form that symbolises 'triumphalism' a visual association can be made to Christianity's triumph over Judaism and of the replacement of the old covenant with God, with the new in the shape of Christ.

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<sup>599</sup> This term is commonly employed to explain the casket's aniconic motifs, e.g. Vandersall, 1972.

This certainly seems to be the case when turning to consider various elements of the image (as opposed to its overall arrangement), (Fig. 149). Within the central arch, there is a vaulted niche. This motif has usually been interpreted as the Ark of the Covenant.<sup>600</sup> As often noted, in this depiction, the Ark is empty. It is flanked by interlaced winged creatures understood to represent the two golden cherubim that surmount the ark.<sup>601</sup> Below the Ark are two quadrupeds that have been interpreted as the brazen oxen described in the Book of Kings.<sup>602</sup> The top left-hand scene depicts armed warriors apparently being led by the figure wearing a crested helmet, identified by the inscription as Titus; Titus was the governor who oversaw the destruction of the temple, and was then proclaimed emperor of Rome while still in Jerusalem. To the right of the arch, a group of cloaked figures crowd together: one holds a staff, one carries a flask and another has a rectangular plate around his neck and yet another seems to be carrying something on his shoulder. While these figures have commonly been explained as the Jews fleeing Jerusalem, cited in Latin in the inscription, no attention has been given to their specific identity. In fact, the objects held by the escaping Jews identified as a staff, a flask and a slab may represent the contents of the Ark of the Covenant.

They are probably best understood as Aaron's budding rod, the chalice filled with manna from heaven, and the stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments that are recorded in the Old Testament as having been contained in the Ark of the Covenant.<sup>603</sup> If this is indeed the case, as seems likely, the figure sporting the rectangular plate may be interpreted as a Jewish high priest wearing the rationale or breastplate associated with his rank. The lower-left hand scene depicts a figure seated on a Roman magistrate's throne. Various items are proffered towards him by five accompanying figures. The 'judgement'

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<sup>600</sup> C.f. Webster, 1999: 238

<sup>601</sup> Their bird-like form may be informed by Ezekiel's description of the angelic figures in his vision: *Ezekiel* 1: 10. See also Webster, 1999: 238

<sup>602</sup> 1 Kings 7: 24-26

<sup>603</sup> Numbers:17: 1-10; Hebrews: 9: 4



(*dom*) label appears to indicate that the seated figure is in the progress of assessing the treasures or the people brought before him. To the bottom right of the arch representing the temple's Holy of Holies (central arch) there are number of cloaked figures (one carrying a slab on his shoulder) being led out of the scene by three Roman guards; the label identifies them as hostages (*gisl*).

As proposed by Jim Lang, the source informing the back panel's imagery may well have been Josephus's eyewitness account of the destruction of the temple.<sup>604</sup> His writings formed one of the major sources for Bede's *Commentary on the Temple*,<sup>605</sup> and as such, it must have been available in Northumbria in the period of the casket's production.<sup>606</sup> Indeed, another of Josephus' works, *The Great Roman-Jewish War* describes the incidents that occurred during the Roman battle for control of Jerusalem, as well as the circumstances surrounding the eventual destruction of the Temple,<sup>607</sup> and so may explain the individual scenes depicted on the panel. Josephus informs us that a number of priests, protected by the thickness of the walls, barricaded themselves into the walls of the upper storey of the Temple.<sup>608</sup> Certainly, this account explains the group in the top-right hand of the panel as one figure seems to be wearing the breastplate of a priest. As Lang noted Josephus's text may also account for the image of the 'judgement' scene below for he describes how Fronto judged the fate of the Jewish prisoners by deciding whether they were suitable as slaves or whether they were to be put to death.<sup>609</sup> He also evaluated the spoils from the treasury, 'deciding what should be taken back to Rome'.<sup>610</sup>

Correspondingly, the scene on the lower right may be understood to represent the taking of

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<sup>604</sup> Lang, 1999: 247-55

<sup>605</sup> Bede, *De Temp.* (Conolly, 1996)

<sup>606</sup> Josephus's *DBJ* and *Antiquities* were both available in the period. See Gneuss, 2001: *D.B.J* see 225.5, 487.5, 507, 834; for *Antiquities*, see 485e.

<sup>607</sup> Josephus, *DBJ* (Farmer, 1960)

<sup>608</sup> Josephus, *DBJ* 4: 4 (Farmer, 1960: 240, 242)

<sup>609</sup> Lang, 1999: 247-55

<sup>610</sup> Josephus, *DBJ* 4: 8 (Farmer, 1960: 246-47)

Jewish hostages. Josephus tells us that: ‘He [Titus] kept them all in custody, but still bound the king’s sons and kinsmen, and led them with him afterwards to Rome, in order to make them hostages for their country’s fidelity to the Romans’.<sup>611</sup> Although the panel overall represents in detail, an actual moment in Jewish and Roman history, it symbolises a pivotal moment in the history of Christianity.

Building on Josephus’ interpretation of Titus’ actions, as Chadwick observed, ‘early Christian commentators thought that the Roman armies that destroyed Jerusalem were the instruments of divine judgement on a people that had rejected the Messiah and failed to discern the new dispensation, now inaugurated, in which the temple sacrifices were abrogated.’<sup>612</sup> The illustration on the casket may thus be seen, anachronistically, to reflect ‘imperial’ Rome’s ‘holy mission’ in the East by which Judaism was suppressed making way for the establishment of Christianity.<sup>613</sup> Indeed, Bede describes Titus in very positive terms, as ‘a man so admirable in all forms of virtue that he might have been dedicated to the love of humanity’.<sup>614</sup> Later, the Anglo-Saxon commentator and homilist Ælfric of Eynsham (d.1010-20) viewed Titus as the instrument of God: an evil man sent to punish the greater evil.<sup>615</sup> As Leslie Webster has argued, the destruction of the temple by Titus can be understood as a pre-figuration of the new order in which the Church is established in Rome.<sup>616</sup>

This is an attractive suggestion especially when considering the relationship between this and the Romulus and Remus panel on the casket’s left-hand side, a scene that expounds the foundation of the city of Rome itself. In this account, the triumphal-arch

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<sup>611</sup> Josephus, *DBJ* 4: 4 (Farmer, 1960: 245)

<sup>612</sup> Chadwick, 1993: 71

<sup>613</sup> C.f. Swanton, 1996: 17

<sup>614</sup> Bede, *Chron.M.* 1. 4033 (Jones, 1977: 498; trans., Wallis, 2004: 199): Hic apud Iudaeam imperator ab exercitu appellatus et bellum Tito filio commendans Romam per Alexandrian proficiscitur.

<sup>615</sup> Ælfric, *Hom.* 46 (Thorpe, 1844: 402-403)

<sup>616</sup> Webster, 1999: 238; see also Wallace-Hadrill, 1971: 76

form of the back panel reminds the viewer that it is through Christ's victory over death and the establishment of the Church, that salvation is found. Titus, God's envoy, prepares the way for the Roman Church: the empty ark then can be understood to serve as a symbol of the replacement of the old covenant with the new. Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, describes how the destruction of the temple happened 'as an example for us',<sup>617</sup> that, Titus's destruction of the temple may be as the fulfilment of Christ's own prophecy: 'See'st thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down'.<sup>618</sup> The Temple of Jerusalem's final destruction by Titus and his legions was commemorated in Rome on the Arch of Titus as a victorious military campaign, whereas on the Franks casket, its destruction may be memorialised as a symbol of the Roman church's role in ensuring the future of Christianity, whose spiritual centre was Rome.

In this case, the decision to render an actual historical event that happened in Jerusalem in a way that visually echoed the account of Josephus through the conspicuous quotation of architectural forms associated with Rome served to add historical veracity to the image and, at the same time, elevate its symbolic potential. Through the deliberate quotation of forms and styles associated with Roman triumphal monuments and monuments associated with Christian triumph, the image transcends its narrative function. This phenomenon may be tacitly echoed in the manner in which the panel's main text is rendered. In other words, although the panel illustrates Jerusalem, its image actually 'addresses' Rome.

Beginning in runes, the text gradually morphs into Latin script. While this stands as one amongst many examples of textual interplay displayed on the casket it is the only place

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<sup>617</sup> 1Corinthians 10: 11: haec autem omnia in figura contingebant illius.

<sup>618</sup> Mark 13: 2: et respondens Iesus ait illi vides has omnes magnas aedificationes non relinquetur lapis super lapidem qui non destruat

where Old English moves into Latin and where Anglo-Saxon runes alternate with the Roman alphabet. It is possible that in this instance the text indicates a further level of symbolic meaning. The change in textual form and language occurs at the point in the panel's text that describes the moment when the Jews flee Jerusalem. It is at this precise moment that Rome's victory over the Jews is accomplished. This is made clear by the images located in the bottom register that display scenes of a defeated populace compared to the images in the upper register that show the moments before the Jews ultimate defeat. Thus, Rome's victory is literally marked in the transition to Latin letterforms. Here, Bede's homily on Mark 1:4-8 may offer some insight into this occurrence. Informed by Jerome's *Interpretation of Hebrew Names*, Bede explains that the word 'Jerusalem' means 'vision of peace'.<sup>619</sup> It is possible that the decision to render the later part of the inscription, that carries the name 'Jerusalem', was fuelled by the notion of the temple's destruction as a vision of peace brought about by Titus' victory that would make clear the way for Christianity.

The Franks casket's back panel represents the kind of multivalent imagery that characterises much of the artwork that has survived from the Anglo-Saxon period. Its learned programme of images and texts implies that it was the product of an urbane community who had knowledge of, or contact with, a wide range of both secular and religious sources. Whether this was, as Webster argues, an ecclesiastical/coenobitic foundation,<sup>620</sup> or, as Neuman de Vegvar argues, an intellectual secular milieu with close contact and intellectual exchange with an ecclesiastical or monastic community,<sup>621</sup> it is clear that the casket's makers were citing sources, both literary and visual, that best expressed their knowledge and commitment to late antique forms. This is a process that

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<sup>619</sup> Bede, *Hom.* 1.1 (Martin & Hurst, 1991: 1-8)

<sup>620</sup> Webster, 1982: 20-32; 1999: 236-39

<sup>621</sup> Neumann de Vegvar, 1999: 263

may well have served to advance their personal, social, political and artistic agendas through the wilful display of their knowledge and contact with Rome and at the same time, through their methodological approach, may have added visual authority to their product through direct quotation of authoritative models of inspiration. Moreover, just as the artists of late antiquity drew from the artistic repertoire of imperial Rome, the casket's makers may have invoked the same artistic language of triumph and victory found in Rome in both imperial and Christian contexts as a means of expressing their affiliation with the Church that had its spiritual centre in Rome.

### Conclusion

From this investigation, it has been argued that, as far as the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria in the seventh and eighth centuries were concerned, Rome was the epitome of religious, spiritual and artistic perfection. In calling upon the city's resources, Northumbrian visitors could not only acquire knowledge and familiarity of the practices of the Church and gain experience of the city's cultural climate; they could also share their experiences with those at home. In considering some of the artworks created in Northumbria in the period, it is clear that they were, to a great extent, inspired by models and sources originating from the Continent and that these models were actively 'quoted' in the copying process as a means to add authority to English artistic products. The primacy placed upon derivation, rather than originality, as a means to add visual authority to these art objects offers a powerful insight into the minds of Northumbrian artists. By illustrating the ways that 'citation' and 'twinning' of works deriving from the ultimate source, Rome, may have occurred, we may have a valuable insight into the processes by which artists have displayed their knowledge

and contact with Christianity's heartland, and as a by-product, expressed their affiliation with the Church of Rome.

## CONCLUSIONS

Taking representative artworks deriving from Northumbria in the seventh and eighth century, this study has considered the part played by style in the formulation of these works. However rather than viewing style as something that can help to identify related types and forms, or as a way of situating these various works within homogeneous groups, style is understood here as something malleable and selectable in the creative process. Proposing a hypothesis in which it was assumed that Anglo-Saxon art makers were attentive of the implications for meaning inherent in their style choices, it has been possible to approach these works from alternative perspectives and to offer some new interpretations of works that have already received much focus. Before this was achievable, however, it was necessary to think about how style and its place in the analysis of art works have been regarded by previous generations of scholars. For this reason, it was essential to begin this work with a survey of some of the definitions of style that have emerged in art historical scholarship generally, and to look at the ramifications of these definitions for the study of Anglo-Saxon art.

This summary brought to light some of the divergent views and usages of style that have arisen in scholarship, and from this evaluation of how it has been used and defined in visual studies, it became obvious that a range of disparate understandings of style exist within the subject of art history. It appeared therefore, that the conflicting views about what precisely constitutes 'style' in such discourses come from the presence of opposing philosophical standpoints regarding style's nature existing simultaneously within the field: the analytical, and the theoretical. While some commentators have viewed style analytically, treating it a kind of information repository that can provide qualitative and quantifiable data, others have approached it in a more reflective way and have viewed it as a social, cultural, and personal indicator. As such, early pioneers of stylistic analysis, such

as Thomsen, Collingwood and Salin, can perhaps be best regarded as empiricists who have applied scientific rationale to style seeing it as a carrier of measurable symptoms, whereas other commentators, such as Shapiro, who viewed style as a psychological and social manifestation, represent exponents of a theoretical approach to style. As the study of Anglo-Saxon art has absorbed both of these philosophical traditions, this has led to a situation in which the presence of these polarized views in its disciplinary historiographies has caused significant methodological fractures within the field. This is particularly exemplified by the critical exchanges occurring between Orton, Bailey, and Ó Carragáin on the subject of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, specifically relating to the styles exhibited on the Ruthwell and Bewcastle monuments. Along with these philosophically incongruent views, the situation is further complicated by schisms that have developed in various disciplines regarding the validity of cultural history in such discussions,<sup>622</sup> with scientific and technical approaches being deemed more accurate and therefore more valuable for researching style's place in art.<sup>623</sup> Such a situation seems to have brought about an intellectual impasse within Anglo-Saxon studies generally.

However, the examples discussed at the beginning of this study have also shown that both analytical and reflective approaches each have their merits, as well as drawbacks, and as a result, it seems reasonable to propose that a wholesale review of how style is applied, defined, used and understood in visual analyses in Anglo-Saxon studies may be required. Certainly, it seems that style and its analysis could be treated more critically within the field, as it is often used without explanation, definition, or qualification. This has led to a situation in which a variety of completely valid assumptions have been made about Anglo-Saxon works, each gathered from stylistic evidence interpreted in slightly different ways, that have very little common ground and perhaps even less resolve evident

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<sup>622</sup> E.g. Gombrich, 1969

<sup>623</sup> E.g. Morelli, 1892-93



amongst scholars . Some of the objects discussed in this study thus illustrate the range of opinions formulated upon stylistic evidence and the lack of scholarly consensus that has ensued.

Furthermore, from the opening survey of style definitions, it seems reasonable to conclude that more interdisciplinary approaches to style may be required in order to move the discussion forward, away from debates about stylistic similarities and differences. Indeed, in an area of study in which investigative plurality is frequently necessary to fill the gaps in knowledge brought about by the spaces in the material and written record, and because of the incomplete state of survivals, then cross-subject co-operation may be the only way to move the situation away from entrenched nineteenth- century notions about style that have had a stronghold on the field and shaped the current splintered situation. From this study, it seems there is a need for more tolerance of divergent methodologies within the field, and a climate fostered in which pluralistic approaches to style can co-exist with more established methods of enquiry, each working towards a common goal, rather than pulling in opposite directions. More collaborative work between analysts and theoreticians may be useful and may drive research in new directions.

As a way of stressing some of the critical issues arising from stylistic analyses, the comparative study of the images of Ezra from the Codex Amiatinus and David Rex from the Durham Cassiodorus illustrated some of the assumptions articulated in analyses based upon similarity and difference. This case study looked at how generally applied stylistic terminology may have masked much about the contents of these manuscript images. By examining the terms ‘classical’ and ‘insular’ and by looking at which of these particular stylistic traits could be identified within the images, it became evident that both Ezra and David, to varying extents, employ more than one style in their design. This situation clearly undermines the diagnostic surety of stylistic analysis, as a subjective judgement has

to be made as to which particular stylistic qualities offer the most in terms of analytical information. Thinking about the images' styles from a different vantage point, by looking at the effect these dissimilar styles may have had on their pictorial content, some of the images' distinctive applications of style were uncovered.

Indeed, in suggesting that style may have been used actively in the construction of meaning of these manuscript miniatures, it was hypothesised that the manipulations of Continental 'classical' styles and regional 'insular' styles, rather than being accounted for by visual proximity to models copied, may have been managed as a way of signifying different messages. This may have included using style to cater for different audiences, style being exploited as a visual tool to help in the promotion of orthodoxy, or to express ideas found in biblical texts. Accepting style as a meaningful agent in the creative process, however, does not preclude other forms of stylistic enquiry, and does not set out to undermine or replace stylistic analysis; rather, it supplements and shapes its findings by bringing the mindset of the maker and viewer into the ambit of investigation. This is something comparative analyses have been repeatedly criticised for failing to do in the past. Thus, by bringing the individual into the analytic discussion, by considering what their motivations were for selecting certain styles, the possibility of new lines of academic enquiry can be opened up.

In a related way, viewing style as a vector of meaning may unlock further channels of exploration, particularly if the iconological consequences of styles are measured alongside taxonomic enquiries. Indeed, if style is handled in an iconological way, such an approach may operate in tandem with traditional style analysis and iconographical approaches and provide a useful mediation between analytical and theoretical findings.

With this in mind, this study went on to discuss some of the ways that style, when considered as an essential component in the creation of meaningful imagery, could

contribute to current knowledge by focussing on the images in the Echternach Gospels. This examination indicated that the makers of this manuscript were perhaps harnessing conventional insular artistic practices in order to communicate a number of Roman Christian ideas. The application of divine geometry, and the apparent guiding of the viewer's gaze through the use of complex grids and frames displayed in Echternach's evangelist pages, suggested that, in this particular context, the borders appear to have been styled as carriers of symbolic meaning. This was particularly apparent from the reification of significant forms seen in Echternach's image of Matthew. Certainly, this image in particular seems to function as a visual template, introducing the viewer to a way of seeing through its use of style.

By deconstructing the various elements on the drawn page: frame, figure, and inscription, it was further suggested that the variable uses of style in the image's symbolic programme seemed to point to a number of meaningful signs being encoded in the image. From this, it was determined that style may hold the key to unlocking their symbolic significance. By rationalising why some features of the image look the way they do through their stylistic configuration, a number of Christian tropes and motifs could be discerned.

As part of this, a reconsideration of the visual impact insular metalwork had on graphic forms and styles seen in insular manuscripts was required. Like other studies in this area, it was determined that the replication of metalwork tropes and styles in drawn form had a number of potential artistic benefits. It became increasingly clear that appropriation of metalwork styles could be utilised to bring to mind the arts of Rome, to metaphorically symbolise spiritual wealth, to evoke other significant Christian jewelled objects, to refer directly to ideas expressed in biblical texts, and to materially elevate the

images' status and that of their creators, all the while, creating images suitable to glorify God.

In the case of Echternach's Matthew page, it appeared that style and motif, when considered together, could be determined to function iconographically. This was particularly evident from the combination of two distinct styles used to delineate the man figure. In this analysis, it appeared that figural and abstract styles were yoked together to articulate aspects of Christ's life and to communicate orthodox ideas about his nature and being. The Matthean themes of Christ's human lineage and his earthly and divine character may be extrapolated from the significant forms making up the figure's body and the manner in which they are stylistically rendered. This was apparent from the seemingly deliberate use of strategic symmetries, bilateral dispersal of colour and form and through representative and abstractive juxtapositions of drawn features. These observations imply that a process of embedding style signifiers in the image may have occurred.

The style of the *imago* inscriptions with their rooted Christian symbolism gives this impression, particularly the style of the 'A' and the 'O' used in the Matthew and John images, which may supply reference to Christ through their style and placement in the manuscript, where they appear to work as a visual bridge connecting the first and last gospel. By thinking about the semiotic potential of the word *imago*, by conceptualising its meaning, it was suggested that rather than giving a lucid commentary of the pictures' contents, it could additionally be determined to function as a kind of visual sign or logo of an idea. Taken in this context, its prominent role in the images could suggest that its task was to bring to mind other things. These may have included the evocation of biblical passages, such as those from *Genesis* describing the nature of God and his relationship to humankind, formed in his likeness. *Imago*, serving as a visual mnemonic, may have performed as a device to spiritually prepare the viewer for what they were about to

encounter in the Gospel text. Aided by their style, the *imago* inscriptions, wrought in the same textual manner as the Gospel *incipits*, could convey the message that the creatures displayed on the pages were not just visionary beasts, but also humans made in God's own image and through the Gospel text, the viewer too could look upon the image of God in heaven.

In the Echternach Gospels' images, it seems style was vital for the communication of a range of messages, messages seemingly based on central Christian truths. In this respect, if, as has been previously suggested, the manuscript was made as a gift presented to the Anglo-Saxon missionary, Willibrord, for his consecration, or as a farewell gift marking his departure from Northumbria or Ireland for Francia, then the themes addressed in the images would have been particularly appropriate if the manuscript was intended to aid in the conversion of the pagan Franks. Indeed, the Christological nature of the Matthew page, with its built-in visual references to the *imago Dei* section of Genesis presents the entire Christian ethos writ small. Its allusions to Christ's natures, Trinitarian motifs, crucifixion iconography, and eschatological symbolism present the entire life of Christ in a single image. This may have been a valuable introduction to the Gospels, but also perhaps provided a means of instilling an orthodox view of Christ and his consubstantial nature to its prospective viewers.

Following this discussion, the idea that style could be used as a carrier of meaning was developed further by examining the profound influence of Rome on the minds of Anglo-Saxon Christian artists. This consideration began by looking at the concept of *Romanitas*: the imitation and absorption of 'Roman-ness'. A brief survey of some of the scholarship in this area highlighted some of the reasons why Anglo-Saxon Christians were so keen to imitate Rome. The specific aspects of the Roman manner that Anglo-Saxons such as Benedict Biscop went about cultivating and what characteristics were most

appealing to their aesthetic sensibilities, was then considered. It was established that the arts of the Late Antique Roman world and particularly the Christian arts of Late Antique Rome was the prevailing artistic influence on Northumbrian art makers. Why it held such thrall, why it was so instrumental in influencing the visual culture of Northumbria in the Anglo-Saxon period, and how Northumbrians had access to its forms and styles was then examined. By looking at some of the different routes of transmission of Roman ideas and products through such things as pilgrimage, personal encounter, and material acquisition, it was determined that Rome seemed to have represented a idealised vision of the perfect Christian model, ripe for emulation by the burgeoning Northumbrian Church. The types of works that flooded in to the region through contact with Rome and the new Northumbrian artworks they inspired suggested that the copying processes stimulated by some of these Roman imports, rather than being just slavish and inert, could be considered as an act of creative plagiarism.

The literary tradition of *geminus stilus*, the twinning of literary works as an intellectual copying process, was suggested as a possible template for understanding some of the motivations for copying artistic works. In such a view, the copying or ‘twinning’ of works becomes a planned act of artistic homage, rather than a passive work of duplication. The Bewcastle and Ruthwell monuments with their long recognised iconographic parallels seem to provide examples of this type of creative mirroring. Once again, an examination of the similarities and differences existing between these monuments was necessary.

Examining the surface texture (facture) of the monuments, proposed by Orton as a sign of difference, it appeared that rather than understanding their factual discordance as signs of separation, such differences could equally point to a related programme that relies upon different viewing experiences. When viewed like this, Bewcastle’s shallow relief carvings suggests an instantly accessible engagement with the monument and therefore perhaps

represents a kind of sculpted ‘prose’, whereas Ruthwell, with its moderated views, complex sequential layouts, and angular surface texture perhaps reflects a type of sculpted ‘verse’. Interpreted in this way, the presence of a unified, twinned work remains feasible.

Following on from this, a survey of the monuments’ historiography revealed some of the creative impulses driving the formation of these monuments. Some of the complications of dating these works were also brought to the fore. To highlight some of the issues addressed in the scholarship surrounding these monuments, the groundbreaking work of Éamonn Ó Carragáin was discussed, looking in particular at his work on the panel displaying an image of Christ standing upon two animals. This section looked at the development of new iconographies and considered the place of style in such discussions by thinking about how to respond to iconographic similarities when stylistic differences are evident.

Then, through an investigation of the development of floral style in Anglo-Saxon art contexts, it was suggested that the floriate motifs displayed on the Bewcastle monument were perhaps more than just decorative embellishments to the figural scenes. Focusing on the four panels of foliate design displayed on the monument’s north and south faces, the possibility of an iconographic use of style was proposed. In this analysis, rather than being an indicator of type, the floral and patterned surfaces were seen to contain iconographic information. This led to the suggestion that the foliate panels, rather than being purely aesthetic, might have signified a range of Christian themes. Taking each panel in turn, the variety of floral styles witnessed on the monument seemed to signal that a desire to represent the four seasons through the employment of floral imagery was at play. The form and style of the sundial on the south face of the monument appeared to support this idea. Viewing the floral panels as symbols of the four seasons, and therefore signifying the passing of time, their forms and arrangements seemed to imply that they were designed to

evoke Christian ideas encountered in the Cantic of Habakkuk, a text perhaps popularised in the period by the writings of Bede. These observations are consistent with the seminal findings of Ó Carragáin, and perhaps provide a further link between the Ruthwell and Bewcastle monuments. This example showed that an iconographic approach to style could be viable as its findings were suggestive of iconographic themes identified elsewhere.

The final part of this chapter looked at the influence of Roman architectural forms by focusing specifically on the back panel of the Franks Casket. It began by considering the form of the casket and suggested that in its shape, construction and design, it can be seen to proclaim its Roman influences. Building on the suggestions of Leslie Webster, it was suggested that from the Roman form of the casket and the Roman scenes depicted on some of its panels, it seems that the Franks Casket's makers delighted in Roman forms and were keen to promote their access to them. Examination of the casket's back panel seemed to corroborate that this was indeed the case. It suggested that the back panel draws from a wide range of Roman sources. These visual influences seem to have consisted of a number of architectural forms and styles deriving from Rome, some of which were perhaps witnessed by Anglo-Saxon visitors to the city. These included architectural forms originating from imperial Roman, and Late Antique Christian contexts such as triumphal arches, monumental columns, sarcophagi, and arches placed over the naves of early churches. The arch of Titus, in particular seems to have provided a pivotal inspirational stimulus for the formation of the layout of the casket's back panel. By looking at some of the approaches to layout and arrangements of scenes found in imperial monuments it was determined that the image of the Holy Temple seen on the casket's back panel could be recognised to delineate space in an analogous manner to the arch of Titus. From Andre Grabar's work in this area, it seems that just as early Christian church builders exploited the forms and structures of imperial Rome to articulate the Church's triumph over



paganism, and Christ's victory over death, Northumbrian artists drew from the artistic and architectural heritage of Rome in order to communicate their association with Christianity's heartland.

Following on from this, an interpretation of the back panel's iconography was given in which it was suggested that, as well as recording an historical event recorded by Josephus (as Jim Lang proposed), the scene may have simultaneously served as an image of Roman Christian triumph.

From this scrutiny of various practices of stylistic assimilation, duplication and development of Roman forms and styles it was surmised that such practices were intellectual in process rather than passive and subservient. Indeed, working from the central notion that Anglo-Saxon artists were keen to exploit new products and stylistic influences, that they delighted in the new, venerated the old, and were fully aware of the ramifications of their stylistic choices, then it becomes increasingly clear that how we understand, treat and analyse style may be crucial for unlocking more information about these art objects.

### Seeing is Believing

If, as seems likely, the selection and usage of style was meaningful to art makers in early medieval England, it is worth considering further where an approach that takes this into account may lead in future studies of Anglo-Saxon art, to suggest how a tangential view of style that takes into account its active role in the creation process could be useful to ideas emerging across various disciplines engaging with Anglo-Saxon material, might supplement some of the theories proffered in previous studies. Here therefore, by developing some of the suggestions already outlined, further examples of Anglo-Saxon

works will be considered to illustrate how such a view of style might be similarly applied to other objects.

All of the artworks mentioned in this study shared a common purpose: they were all intended to be seen; they were formed to invite the gaze of spectators. They may have been seen in an act of public consumption, seen with other viewers, or viewed privately, in a personal encounter with the object. It follows from this that where, how, and by whom these artworks were viewed may have had a significant bearing on how they were made, and how they may have been anticipated to function. In other words, style could have featured prominently in such considerations. If this was indeed the case, then it seems reasonable to suggest that understanding the material substance of these works could contribute to our understanding of how artworks were seen and exhibited. Qualities such as texture, colour, reflectivity, size, scale, layout, facture, and style may offer insight into the experiences of viewing and displaying Anglo-Saxon works. It is possible that style could participate in the visual process and may therefore have been purposefully exploited to encourage particular audience responses. Certain styles may have been selected to elicit specific emotions, evoke memory, show kinship, inspire devotion, or advance and promote cultural and ideological ideals. The selection of one style over another may have been driven by a need to maximise (or delimit) viewer experience by providing a visual framework to support (or preclude) the gaze of the spectator and augment the experience of seeing and knowing.

One implication of this is that styles may have performed in diverse ways in different viewing environments. So for example, by considering where an art object may have been seen may have major consequences for understanding the styles selected for particular artworks. Eddius Stephanus' accounts of Wilfrid's church building activities at Ripon and Hexham, for instance, in which he recounts details of the buildings' designs and

the range of sacred objects they contained can provide insight into this. He says of Ripon that:

as Moses built an earthly tabernacle made with hands, of divers varied colours according to the pattern shown by God in the mount, to stir up the faith of the people of Israel for the worship of God, so the blessed Bishop Wilfrid wondrously adorned the bridal chamber of the true Bridegroom and Bride with gold and silver and varied purples, in the sight of the multitudes who believed in their hearts and made confession of their faith. For in Ripon he built and completed from the foundations in the earth up to the roof, a church of dressed stone, supported by various columns and side aisles.<sup>624</sup>

Here, Stephen's description of some of the characteristics of Ripon hints that, just as God's divine plan of the tabernacle, in which 'divers varied colours' could stir the faith of the people, so Wilfrid employed aesthetic variety in a comparable way. His employment of 'varied purples' and 'various columns' could be an indication that internal variations within individual artistic and architectural forms were a desirable aesthetic quality that could have metaphorical significance. Other accounts describing this kind of stylistic diversity are found in Stephen's recording of Hexham's foundation, in which he recounts the 'various columns' and 'various winding passages' contained in the church,<sup>625</sup> and again in his account of the renovation of the church at York, where Wilfrid adorned the altar with 'various kinds of vessels and furniture'.<sup>626</sup> From these testimonials, it seems that variation within types was something viewed in positivistic terms. Moreover, it seems that when it came to Wilfrid's churches, the relationship and proximity of objects to other things created an environment in which visual fecundity was seemingly a prominent and desired effect.

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<sup>624</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* 17 (Colgrave, 1927: 35-37): Sicut enim Moyses tabernaculum seculare manu factum ad exemplar in monte monstratum a Deo ad concitandam Israhelitico populo culturae Dei fidem distinctis varii coloribus aedificavit, ita vero beatissimus Wilfrithus episcopus thalamum veri sponsi et sponsae in conspectu populorum, corde credentium et fide confitentium, auro et argento purpuraque varia mirifice decoravit. Nam Inhrypis basilicam polito lapide a fundamentis in terra usque ad summum aedificatam, variis columnis et porticibus suffultam, in altum erexit et consummavit.

<sup>625</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* 22 (Colgrave, 1927: 45-47): columnis varii...liniarum variis.

<sup>626</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* 16 (Colgrave, 1927: 35): altare in varia supellectili vasorum intus ornavit.

With this in mind, the appearance of multiple styles in a single object, say for example, the assortment of artistic styles evident in the Durham Cassiodorus' David Rex page with its conflation of classical and insular styles and abundance of zoomorphic and knot work patterns, could reflect a desire to instil a work with variety. The multiplicity of forms and styles seen on the page may have been contrived to appeal to this particular Anglo-Saxon taste.

Taking this further, the visual dialogues taking place between objects may also be useful for understanding more about the styles exhibited in Anglo-Saxon works of art. Extant objects from Hexham, for example, provide an illustration of how variations of objects, styles and stylistic crossovers may have contributed to the overall experience of viewing within the churches.<sup>627</sup> So for example, the crypt is largely built from re-used dressed Roman stone.<sup>628</sup> It also has a number of pieces of Roman decorated stringcourses built into its walls (Fig.150). There are also locally retrieved Roman features such as the reclaimed inscription embedded into the walls of Hexham's crypt, which reads:

IMP • CAES • L • SEP ••• IMP  
 PERTINAX • ET • IMPC•••  
 AVR• ANTONINV •••  
 VS ••••••••••  
 •••• HORTE ••••  
 VEXILLATION •  
 FECERVNT SVB •••••

This has been translated as:

The Emperor Lucius Septimus Severus Pius Pertinax and his sons the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antonius Pius Augustus and Publius Geta Caesar the cohorts and detachments made this under the command of .....

It provides an example of how Roman *spolia* was incorporated into the building, perhaps as a way of quite literally embedding *Romanitas* into the very fabric of the church (Fig.

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<sup>627</sup> Taylor & Taylor, 1965: 297-312

<sup>628</sup> Bidwell, 2010

151).<sup>629</sup> Indeed, as Richard Bailey observed the style of the crypt itself, with its twisting passageways and ring-like form, emulates in its form and arrangement Roman ring-crypts such as that of St Peter's basilica in Rome that houses the shrine of the Apostle, Peter.<sup>630</sup> As such, like St Peter's, Hexham church was built, albeit symbolically, upon the very foundations of Christian Rome;<sup>631</sup> as Rosemary Cramp has observed, it seems that 'Wilfrid or Acca must have made a determined effort to create at Hexham an effect of the antique basilica'.<sup>632</sup>

However, such emphatically Roman features displaying their overtly classical styles are likely to have shared the same spaces as locally made objects. While some of these have been readily identifiable as insular works, the origins of others have proved more difficult to determine.<sup>633</sup> Indeed, there remains no resolution as to whether some of Hexham's stonework is re-appropriated Roman work or insular re-workings of Roman originals. Examples such as the carved stone fragment depicting part of a finely modelled figure set within a fruiting vine that seems to have taken its inspiration from antique images such as the viticulture panels of the ceiling mosaics of S. Constanza, or the relief carved porphyry sarcophagus that is located in the loggia of the church of S. Lorenzo *fiori le mura*, and the carved floral rosette panel similar to Roman examples seen in Northern Italy and Gaul<sup>634</sup> have been variously attributed to both Roman and insular makers. (Figs 152a-d). Yet, in other Hexham artworks of Wilfrid's period, their style insistently betrays their local identity.

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<sup>629</sup> Kirby, 1974

<sup>630</sup> See Bailey, 1993 for information of Hexham and Ripon's crypts.

<sup>631</sup> Bailey, 1991; 1993

<sup>632</sup> Cramp, 1974: 122

<sup>633</sup> See Cramp, 1974: 120

<sup>634</sup> Cramp, 1974: 120

These include the relief carved stone animals identified by Cramp as a boar, cow, lion and fish, which she suggested perhaps formed part of an animal frieze,<sup>635</sup> and the surviving carved stone monumental crosses, such as that associated with Acca, and the fragment known as the Spital cross with its crucifixion iconography, provide just a small cross-section of Anglo-Saxon survivals that have been identified as part of Hexham's early building phase (Figs 153-155).<sup>636</sup> A further example is the silver plaque incised on both sides with a line-drawn image of a priest,<sup>637</sup> shown perhaps wearing a Roman pallium,<sup>638</sup> or carrying a cross-inscribed Gospel book (Fig. 156).<sup>639</sup> This is incised in a simple, linear style, which as Bailey notes seems incongruent with the richness of its material.<sup>640</sup> While the Frith stool, now revered as a throne of sanctuary, carved with two-strand twists and triquetra-knots, contained in a double-line incised moulded frame, gives a sense of how important such locally made objects were to the foundation (Fig. 157). This stone chair, hewn from a single block of stone, was probably originally set into the wall of the choir, where it would have occupied a prominent location in the ostensibly 'Roman' Northumbrian Church.<sup>641</sup>

Moreover, these defiantly insular products may have existed alongside other locally made counterparts of objects such as those recorded at Ripon, such as Wilfrid's 'golden cross', his magnificent empurpled manuscript 'with letters of purest gold and illuminated', and a 'case all made of purest gold and set with most precious gems' to hold the books.<sup>642</sup> Together, Eddius' ekphrasis and the material record appear to reconstruct an environment in which combinations of styles, over-layering of artefacts, and miscellaneous types

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<sup>635</sup> Cramp, 1974: 119-20

<sup>636</sup> Coatsworth, 1974: 180-89

<sup>637</sup> Bailey, 1974: 141-67

<sup>638</sup> Cramp, 1967: 17

<sup>639</sup> Bailey, 1974: 157

<sup>640</sup> Bailey, 1974: 156

<sup>641</sup> Cramp, 1974: 178, no.43

<sup>642</sup> Eddius Stephanus, *V. Wilf.* 17 (Colgrave, 1927: 37)

existed side-by-side: Roman, Roman-imitative, and insular; together they contributed to the general sense of visual awe that makers like Wilfrid were trying to inspire through their church building projects.<sup>643</sup> How these things were combined, arranged, and displayed in relation to one another could hint at style's role in the creation of spiritual atmosphere.

Investigations into visual ambience and religious spectacle is an area that is only just beginning to be explored within the field of Anglo-Saxon studies and is a subject in which a view of style such as that proposed here may be useful. Indeed, the recent work of Jennifer Ní Ghrádaigh implies that in the performance of the liturgy for example, style and meaning may have been fundamentally connected, and that objects may have played a significant part in Christian performance rituals.<sup>644</sup>

For example, the concurrence of styles of priestly dress, liturgical equipment, forms of liturgy, and environmental setting may have all interacted and combined to enhance the phenomenological encounter of the spectator and united to create a complex experiential narrative. In such a scenario, the spectacle of objects, the sounds of the liturgy, the smells of incense, chrism, and burning candles, the taste of wine and bread of the Eucharist combine in a kind of sensory assemblage.<sup>645</sup> How various styles may have intersected and interacted in such a stimulatory and dramatic environment is something that may be useful for understanding more about the spaces and places in which worship was conducted, but may also illuminate some of the emotional accounts found in the literature describing the overwhelming reactions and demonstrations of religious piety experienced by Anglo-Saxon Christians.

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<sup>643</sup> The work of Richard Gem in this area provides insight into the possibilities of iconographic approaches to architecture and architectural forms. See e.g., Gem, 1983: 1-18; 1996: 1-6.

<sup>644</sup> Ní Ghrádaigh, forthcoming

<sup>645</sup> This is an area that is only just emerging in Anglo-Saxon studies. I am very grateful to Heather Pulliman for allowing me to read her most recent work on 'sight' and its possible exegetical significance in the iconography of the Book of Kells Temptation page and the Alfred Jewel.

The part played by objects in such sensory experiences may be alluded to in the descriptions of Ceolfrith's final departure for Rome from Wearmouth on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June, 716. Bede explains that immediately before he set off, Ceolfrith attended Mass and took Communion with this fellow monks, first in St Mary's and then in St Peter's where he himself kindled the incense and prayed before the altar before giving his brothers the kiss of peace. Bede then goes on to say that, 'standing on the steps with thurible in hand, surrounded by the sound of weeping that interrupted the singing of the litanies, he then entered the chapel of St Lawrence that was in front of the monks' dormitory'.<sup>646</sup> Ceolfrith then went to the boat where the deacons of the church embarked 'carrying with them lighted candles and a golden cross'.<sup>647</sup> Also recounting the events of this day, the Anonymous says that as Ceolfrith's ship sailed across the river, 'he looked towards the brothers mourning his departure and heard the sounds of their song mixed with grief: he could not prevent his sobbing and tears'.<sup>648</sup>

In these retellings of Ceolfrith's departure, places, spaces, people, smells, sights, sounds and objects are used to convey the real, physical sense of mutual loss felt by Ceolfrith and his community. Objects such as the thurible, the altar, and the golden cross contribute to the atmospheric rendering of this episode, as do the various churches and chapels Ceolfrith visits before leaving. The familiarity of their forms, the part they played in the everyday Christian rituals practiced by Ceolfrith and his monks are perhaps called upon to emphasise the sacrifice of leaving behind the material world of the monastery with its comforting objects, sights, people and places to venture into the world as a pilgrim.

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<sup>646</sup> Bede, *Hist.Abb.* 17 (Plummer, 1896: 382): Ipse, thure incenso, et dicta oratione ad altare, pacem dat omnibus, stans in gradibus, turribulum habens in manu. Hinc fletibus uniuersorum inter laetantias resonantibus, exeunt; beati Laurentii martyris oratorium, quod in dormitorio fratrum erat obuium.

<sup>647</sup> Bede, *Hist.Abb.* 17 (Plummer, 1896: 382): Ascendunt et diacones aecclesiae cereas ardentis et crucem ferentes auream.

<sup>648</sup> Anon, *Hist.Abb.* 27 (Plummer, 1896: 397): Currente trans fluuium nauis, aspectans contra merentes suo abscessu fratres, audiensque sonum sublimem mixti cum luctu carminis, nullatenus ualuit ipse a singultu et lacrimis temperare.



From this it seems that in the creation of spectacles, whether as part of ritual performances, or as a means of inspiring religious devotion, metaphorically recreating the house of God, or to celebrating or commemorating the life of an individual, art objects were not only emotive, but also fundamental signifiers and heralds of meaning.

### Style and Reception

A further impact of viewing style as a possessor of meaning and as something chosen to carry out certain tasks within creative works is that it needs to be considered whom such messages were intended for, and what audiences and participants in visual exchanges may have gleaned from these visual strategies. So for example, if as suggested earlier, geometric styles served as visual demonstrations of intellectual and dextral proficiency, it needs to be asked whom makers (such as Echternach's) were trying to impress. Are such demonstrations of manual skill and geometric expertise appealing to a particular type of spectator, perhaps designed to mystify and amaze an untrained eye, or to bring to mind significant forms, meaningful signs, and symbols for an experienced viewer to decode?

Additionally, it is worth asking whether such displays of graphic adeptness were designed to edify, proclaim status, or bestow largess upon the makers, patrons or recipients of such works. Taken in these terms, the 'magnificently worked copy of the Cosmographers' described by Bede,<sup>649</sup> that was brought back from Rome by Benedict Biscop and given to Aldfrith in exchange for eight hides of land by the River Fresca, could imply that the Roman styles exhibited in this particular book were fundamental to the elevation and conferral of its status and standing as valuable object, and one that befitted the rank of its royal recipient. Style, if viewed symbolically, may therefore offer an avenue of investigation that provides insight into the processes of gift exchange, or could help

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<sup>649</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.* 15 (Plummer, 1896: 380; Farmer & Webb, 1998: 203): Dato quoque Cosmographiorum codice mirandi operas, quem Romae Benedictus emerat, terram octo familiarum uxta flumium Fresca ab Aldfrido rege.

reveal more about communal activity. The way that style may have been used to confer value and meaning in objects given and exchanged like in the example provided by the copy of the cosmographers is elevated to macro-scale if the Lindisfarne Gospels is considered in a similar light (Figs158-159).<sup>650</sup>

This insular manuscript, perhaps more than any other surviving insular work, is remarkable for the sheer amount of artistic styles employed in its illumination. In some ways, it represents a comprehensive ‘pattern book’ of graphic styles available at the period of its production, some time around 700. The vast array it exhibits makes it difficult to categorise under any definitive stylistic label, for, as Michelle Brown has observed, in addition to the abundance of Celtic, Mediterranean, Germanic, Scandinavian, and Pictish styles it displays, it also contains stylistic influences from the Greco-Roman, Byzantine, Lombardic, Ostogothic, Coptic Egyptian, Armenian, Palestinian and Middle-Eastern traditions.<sup>651</sup> Stylistic worlds collide in the pages of this book, a gamut of styles co-exist subsisting in graphic harmony with one another: Celtic peltae, trumpet scrolls, and swirling spirals share the same graphic spaces as zoomorphic animals and knot work; Greek and Roman texts sit side-by-side with elaborate colonnades and figures in Roman dress. The visual evidence gleaned from its numerous styles not only points to the vast range of artistic sources available for the monks of Lindisfarne to exploit, but also gives a strong sense of the universality of the Lindisfarne mindset. When it is considered whom this impressive Gospel book was made for, it is perhaps only then that the amount, assortment, erudition, and significances of its styles can begin to be rationalised.

Thankfully, this is one example of an insular work that has come down to us with a relatively reliable description of its production; although the account of its making was added to the completed manuscript some two hundred years after it was made, there is no

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<sup>650</sup> For the relationships between the Lindisfarne Gospels and Cuthbert’s reliquary treasures, see Kendrick *et al*, 1956-60; Battiscombe, 1956.

<sup>651</sup> Brown, 2003: 3-4

real need to doubt the veracity of its claims. In the middle of the tenth century, the priest and Lindisfarne Gospel's glossator, Aldred, wrote an account of the manuscript's beginnings. He explained that it had been written by Lindisfarne's Bishop, Eadfrith and that it had been made jointly for God, St Cuthbert and for all of the saints whose relics resided on the island of Lindisfarne. He then went on to say that, another Bishop, Ethelwald, had 'impressed it on the outside and covered it – as he well knew how to do' and that the anchorite Billfrith had forged the ornaments for the cover which he 'adorned with gold and with gems and also with gilded-over silver – pure metal'.<sup>652</sup>

Cuthbert, to whom the Gospel book was dedicated, was a former prior of the monastery of Melrose, who was seconded to Lindisfarne in order to re-establish the monastic rule that had lapsed there. Often craving solitude, Cuthbert lived the life of a hermit on a small island adjacent to Holy Island called Farne, where he built a small oratory. Word of his kindness, piety and holiness soon spread and eventually he was persuaded to become Lindisfarne's bishop.

Accounts of Cuthbert's work and deeds and the miracles attributed to him have been preserved in the writings of the Anonymous monk from Lindisfarne, and Bede who wrote both metrical and prose versions of his life. As well as recounting Cuthbert's life and deeds, these *Vitae* record the events surrounding his death on the 20<sup>th</sup> March, 687. They tell us that when Cuthbert's body was taken from Farne it was interred at Lindisfarne. Eleven years after his death (698), Cuthbert's bodily remains were elevated and his body was discovered to be incorrupt; this was seen as powerful proof of his sanctity. It was at this time that Lindisfarne's bishop, Eadfrith (Cuthbert's successor) had the body placed in the carved oak coffin, now housed at Durham Cathedral, and placed aboveground beside

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<sup>652</sup> Jane Roberts has demonstrated the likelihood that the language of the colophon represents a recording of a much earlier oral tradition (Roberts, 2006: 28-43).

the altar so that his body could be venerated by all who visited the church. This was also almost certainly the time at which the creation of the Lindisfarne Gospels was ordered.

As the manuscript's tenth-century colophon explains that it was made jointly *for* God, St Cuthbert, and other saints. This raises questions about the way this manuscript was intended to be seen and by whom. It may be asked whether it was made only for the eyes of supernatural spectators, the multitude of worldly styles put together to feed the eyes of an otherworldly audience, perhaps suggesting that it was shielded from the gaze of mere mortals. Alternatively, the colophon could equally suggest that the manuscript was created as an intercessor to its dedicatees, a direct channel to God and his saints, which now counted Cuthbert amongst their ranks. If this was indeed the case, was it therefore also believed that its decorated pages somehow had the power to punctuate the veil between the natural and the supernatural world and if so, was the inclusiveness of its styles the vehicle by which the temporal and heavenly realms could be crossed? The Gospel text itself was viewed as one means of gaining access to God and the heavens, but the rendering of its words in the Lindisfarne Gospels where, in many instances, words become pictures and pictures become words, could suggest that its artistic styles played a fundamental role in achieving this spiritual objective. How styles may have functioned within such practices of reception and display is an area where more work is necessary, although the new work of Éamonn Ó Carragáin, which considers some of the surviving carved stone monuments, is beginning to question the nature of the relationships existing between spectator and spectacle, form and meaning.

### Style and Iconography

The findings of the final part of this study may be particularly relevant in this area. As the study of Bewcastle's floral iconography demonstrated, it is possible that rather than

providing decorative interludes to the iconographic, figural scenes displayed on the monument, the various styles of floral interlace can be viewed as iconographic signifiers of the four seasons, and by extension, can be seen to signify the passing of time. It was also suggested that these floral forms might also have deep Christological significance by bringing to mind texts describing Christ in botanical terms. This is a vein of enquiry that has thus far been unexplored, although, it seems to offer potential for understanding other examples of floral and foliate forms that seem to have seasonal significance seen in Anglo-Saxon artworks. For instance, building on the ideas presented here, Anna Gannon has identified how the floral panels adorning the Ormside Bowl can be seen to symbolise the four seasons in a similar manner to Bewcastle's foliate panels (Fig. 160).<sup>653</sup>

The findings of the Bewcastle study may also be useful for identifying the floral motif seen on the cover of the manuscript known as the Stonyhurst Gospels (Fig. 161).<sup>654</sup> This small book, with its ornately tooled patterned goatskin binding, is associated with the reliquary shrine of St Cuthbert. Its text is a copy of John's Gospel.<sup>655</sup> While it has proved indeterminable whether the binding of this manuscript is contemporary with its text, Robert Stevick's analysis of its mathematical construction does show that its schematic arrangement has been constructed in a manner similar to that found in other Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, such as the Echternach and Lindisfarne Gospels.<sup>656</sup> On the book's binding, a small budded foliate form with four side shoots forming circular, interwoven volutes dominates the centre panel. Similar to the 'new shoot' identified on Bewcastle's south face, this small, budded plant may have been understood as an image of new, or restored life, and may represent a symbolic abbreviation of Christ in floral form surrounded by the four Gospels, the fruits of his Word, perhaps invoked by the four bosses in the centre of

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<sup>653</sup> Gannon, (forthcoming, 2013)

<sup>654</sup> Stonyhurst Gospels, London: British Library, MS Loan 74

<sup>655</sup> For text, see Brown, 1969.

<sup>656</sup> Stevick, 1987: 9-19

each off-shoot. This would be a particularly appropriate motif for the Gospel of John, which opens with the reminder that ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God’.<sup>657</sup> It seems that rather than viewing certain floral forms as just decorative embellishments or stylistic determinants of date and provenance, considering their styles as iconographic signifiers, does seem to have the potential to ‘bear new fruit’.

A further tacit implication of the identification of Bewcastle’s floral panels as symbols of the four seasons is that they may offer insight into how the monument was designed to be seen. The sequential arrangement of the seasons dispersed around the monument could suggest that particular scenes were best understood if viewed at certain times of the day, perhaps in relation to masses recited at different monastic tides, or at certain events in the course of the monastic year. This is an area of Anglo-Saxon sculptural study that Éamonn Ó Carragáin has pioneered, and is one that may have important implications for how other art works from the period are understood. In his most recent discussions of Ruthwell and Bewcastle, and particularly the Kells and Monasterboice crosses,<sup>658</sup> he has begun to consider how the scenes depicted on crosses may have an implanted order. He has suggested that the sun’s daily course around these monuments may be instrumental for not only revealing the order of scenes depicted on these monuments, but also how it may have added an extra symbolic ingredient to the scenes themselves. As he notes:

Medieval monastic or clerical viewers, who lived on a monastic site, would have experienced their local high cross(es) in a rather different way (to modern photographic reproductions). Most, if not all, of the high crosses were intended to be erected in open air. If so, the appearance of the monuments changed during each day, slowly but regularly, as the sun gradually shone on different sides of the cross. Such regular change offered

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<sup>657</sup> John: 1:1: In principio erat Verbum et Verbum erat apud Deum et Deus erat Verbum.

<sup>658</sup> Ó Carragáin, 2010: 732-55

an opportunity to designers: they could, on occasion, use the sun's course to guide the figural programme on their cross.<sup>659</sup>

In his deft analysis of Bewcastle, he has demonstrated how the themes rendered in the monument's iconography can be seen to draw from the symbolism of lightness and darkness as a means of portraying ideas about Christ's birth, death and resurrection.<sup>660</sup> His analysis of Bewcastle's chequer-board panel is particularly insightful. He suggests that in this panel, a number of interlocking crosses can be detected and that the way the panel is carved, with raised and sunken squares, creates a perpetually repeating series of 'dark' and 'bright' crosses that oscillate differently in changing lighting conditions. Such an effect 'encourages in the onlookers a feeling of uncertainty and mystery'.<sup>661</sup> How the representations of the four seasons, rendered in floral form may have interacted or contributed to this type of experiential, symbolic scheme at Bewcastle, and perhaps also other monuments (one such may be Hoddum, which seems to show signs that a similar use of seasonal iconography is present), is one area where more work may be valuable, especially in light of Ó Carragáin's recent discoveries.

### Style and Referring

Another area in which this study may contribute to our understanding of the way style was invoked in Anglo-Saxon art emerges from the suggestion that works such as the Bewcastle and Ruthwell monuments may have been 'twinned' as part of an intellectual process. This is something that seems to have much broader implications for how other related objects may be understood. One such consequence of this is that the styles selected in works of art may be mutually referential. An illustrative example of this is perhaps the commonly held view that the panel paintings displaying religious scenes brought back from Rome by

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<sup>659</sup> Ó Carragáin, 2010: 714

<sup>660</sup> Ó Carragáin, 2010: 707-55

<sup>661</sup> Ó Carragáin, 2010: 717

Ceolfrith that adorned the nave of St Paul's church at Jarrow may have provided the models for the images carved on the monuments at Rothbury, Bewcastle and Ruthwell.<sup>662</sup> This phenomenon prompts a number of questions that may lead to new directions of study. First, what styles could these images have portrayed, and to what degree could they faithfully be replicated if they were reproduced in stone at Bewcastle and Ruthwell: to what extent can the styles observed in two-dimensional images inform those rendered in three-dimensions? Consideration perhaps needs to be given to the question of whether the translation of the nave images, despite the difficulties may have arisen in the process of translating two-dimensional forms into three-dimensions, was because their content and style was deemed so important that it deserved to be produced elsewhere.

By re-visualising the nave images on a cross, were the makers visually 'quoting' the churches from whence they originally derived? If they were, then it is possible that their reproduction visually ties the crosses to a specific church or community associated with the images displayed on the painted boards. Furthermore, it could imply that when the images and their styles were selected, their placement on these three-dimensional cross shafts was intended to carry, not just a revisualisation of their source model, but also to refer back to the places from which the images ultimately derived: Jarrow-Wearmouth, and Rome. The use of models in this situation could suggest that their selection cements interpersonal relationships with Rome and with other Northumbrian Christian places through form and style quotation. In such a circumstance, style may well have been used as a means of self-identification. Thus, the images on the cross would function as a kind of visual metaphorical portal to the naves of Jarrow and Wearmouth's churches, and vicariously, to the nave of a Roman church. This could imply that the model itself is being invoked through preservation of style: that the reason that style is reproduced is because it

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<sup>662</sup> See p.179



refers back to its original source and the significance of that source to the community emulating it. In such an example, the style selected for the object copied could perhaps carry a memory of an experience, as well as a memory of its model.

### Some Final Thoughts

This study was framed within the confines of Northumbria in the seventh and eighth centuries, not only because it is a region and period that offers an ideal research landscape for the study of Anglo-Saxon art (as outlined in the introduction of this study), and as a means of limiting the scope of enquiry, but also to highlight the array of styles evident in artworks from, associated with, and influenced by Northumbria in the period. By ring-fencing this temporal space, this study gives a sense that as well as their obvious use as taxonomic indices, considerations of styles exhibited in artworks traditionally identified from this place and time, may offer tangible answers to other questions concerning art and aesthetics.

Approaching extant examples of Anglo-Saxon, insular and classical styles from the supposition that Anglo-Saxon artists had a wide range of styles available from which to choose, and that they were knowledgeable about what particular styles could mean or signify to different viewers, has allowed for some new interpretations of well-known objects and images to be made. Of course, the findings offered here could only ever be speculative. Nevertheless, by asking alternative questions of style, it is possible that more answers will be forthcoming.

## Appendix 1

### **Definition of the Latin word *imago***

Entry taken from 'A Latin Dictionary. Founded on Andrews' edition of Freund's Latin dictionary. revised, enlarged, and in great part rewritten by. Charlton T. Lewis, Ph.D. and Charles Short, LL.D'. (Oxford. 1879).

Īmāgo, ĩnis, f. cf. imitor,

**I.** *an imitation, copy of a thing, an image, likeness* (i. e. a picture, statue, mask, an apparition, ghost, phantom; the latter only **poet.** and in post-Aug. prose; cf.: simulacrum, effigies, statua, sigillum): imago ab imitatione dicta, Paul. ex *Fest.* p. 112 Müll.; cf.: imago dicitur quasi imitago, Porphyr.

**Hor. C. 1, 12, 4.**

#### **I. Lit.**

**A.** In gen., *a representation, likeness* (usu. of a person), *statue, bust, picture*:

"Spartiates Agesilaus neque pictamneque fictam imaginem suam passus est esse ... unus Xenophontis libellus in eo rege laudando facile omnes imagines omnium statu asque superavit," **Cic. Fam. 5, 12, 7:**

"Demosthenes, cujus nuper inter imagines tuas actorum imaginem ex aere vidi," *i d. Or. 31, 110:* "Epicuri in poculis et in anulis," **id. Fin. 5, 1, 3:** hominis imaginem gypso e facie ipsa primus omnium expressit ceraque in eam formam gypsi infusa emendare instituit Lysistratus Sicyonius, **Plin. 35, 12, 44, § 153:** "Africani," **Cic. Rep. 6, 10:** "mulieris," **Quint. 7, 7, 5:** "Antigoni," **id. 2, 13, 12:**

"depictam in tabula sipariove imaginem rei," **id. 6, 1, 32:**

"si in tabula mea aliquis pinxerit velut imaginem," *Gai. Inst. 2, 78:* "cereae," *Hor. Epod. 17, 76;* **id. S. 1, 8, 43:** "ut dignus venias hederis et imagine macra," *Juv. 7, 29:* "hoc tibi subnostra breve carmen imagine vivat," *Mart. 9, 1:*

"epistula atque imago me certum fecit," i. e. *the image on the seal, the signet,* **Plaut. Ps. 4, 6, 35;** 4, 2, 29; 4, 7, 105:

"nunc amici anne inimici sis imago, Alcesime, mihi, sciam," i. e. *will act like a friend,* **Plaut. Cas. 3, 1, 1.—**

**2.** *A phantom, ghost, apparition:*

"infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae Visa mihi ante oculos et nota major imago," **Verg. A. 2, 773;** cf.:

"et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago," *shade, spirit,* **Verg. A. 4, 654;** **Plin. Ep. 7, 27, 6;** cf. **id. ib. 1:** "non vanae redeat sanguis imagini," **Hor. C. 1, 24, 15:** "(somnus) Vanum nocturnis fallit imaginibus," *Tib. 3, 4, 56;* cf. **Hor. C. 3, 27, 40;** **Suet. Aug. 94;** **id. Calig. 50:**

"te videt in somnis, tua sacra et major imago humana turbat pavidum," *Juv. 13, 221:* "quid natum totiens falsis ludis imaginibus?" *phantoms,* **Verg. A. 1, 408:**

"ubique pavor et plurima mortis imago," *id. ib. 2, 369;* cf.:

"repetitaque mortis imago," **Ov. M. 10, 726:** "lurida mortis imago," *Petr. 123, v. 257:* "varia pereuntium forma et omni imagine mortium," **Tac. H. 3, 28:**

"caesorum in sepulcorumque," **id. A. 1, 62:** "supremorum (i. e. funeris) imago," **id. H. 4, 45.—Poet.:** "genitiva (with forma), natural shape, figure," **Ov. M. 3, 331;** so, "rudis et sine imagine tellus (= informis), shapeless," *id. ib. 1, 87.—*

**B.** In partic., *an ancestral image* of a distinguished Roman (of one who had been aedile, praetor, or consul; usually made of wax, and placed in the atrium of a Roman house, and carried in funeral processions.—

**(a).** In plur.: obrepisti ad honores errore hominum, commendatione fumosarum imaginum, quarum simile habes nihil praeter colorem, *of smoky* (i. e.

old) *ancestral images*, **Cic. Pis. 1, 1**; cf. *Sen. Ben. 3, 28, 1*; **Plin. 35, 2, 2, § 6**:

“si quid deliquero, nullae sunt imagines, quae me a vobis deprecentur,” *no ancestors of distinction*, **Cic. Agr. 2, 36, 100**; cf.:

“quia imagines non habeo et quia mihi nova nobilitas est,” **Sall. J. 85, 25**:

“qui imagines familiae suae consecuti sunt,” **Cic. Agr. 2, 1, 1**:

“homo veteris prosapiae ac multarum imaginum,” **Sall. J. 85, 10**:

“majorum imagines,” **id. ib. 5, 5**; **Suet. Vesp. 1**:

“multis in familia senatoriis imaginibus,” **id. Aug. 4**:

“esto beata, funus atque imagines Ducant triumphales tuum,” *Hor. Epod. 8, 11*:

“qui stupet in titulis et imaginibus,” **id. S. 1, 6, 17**; **Plin. 35, 2, 2, § 6 sqq.**; *Prop. 2, 13, 19*; **Suet. Vesp. 19**.—

**(b).** In sing. (rare): “jus imaginis,” **Cic. Verr. 2, 5, 14, § 36**:

“imaginis ornandae causa,” **id. Sest. 8, 19**:

“vir honoratissimae imaginis futurus ad posteros,” **Liv. 3, 58, 2**:

“clarum hac fore imagine Scaptium,” *would become an aristocrat*, **id. 3, 72, 4, v.** Weissenb. ad loc.:

“Tunc Cotta ne imago Libonis exsequias posterorum comitaretur censuit,” **Tac. A. 2, 32**.

**II. Transf., a reverberation of sound, an echo** (mostly poet.):

“(mellaria facere oportet) potissimum ubi non resonent imagines,” *Varr. R. R. 3, 16, 12*: “concava pulsu Saxa sonant, vocisque offensa resultat imago,” **Verg. G. 4, 50**; cf. *Sil. 14, 365*:

“alternae deceptus imagine vocis: Huc coëamus ait ... Coëamus retulit Echo,” **Ov. M. 3, 385**: “cujus recinit jocosa Nomen imago,” **Hor. C. 1, 12, 4**; so,

“jocosa Vaticani montis,” *id. ib. 1, 20, 8*: “vaga,” **Val. Fl. 3, 596**.

**III. Trop.**

**A.** In gen., *an image or likeness* of a thing formed in the mind, *a conception, thought, imagination, idea*:

“Scipionis memoriam atque imaginem sibi proponere,” **Cic. Lael. 27, 102**:

“magnam partem noctium in imagine tua vigil exigo,” **Plin. Ep. 7, 5, 1**:

“Verginium cogito, Verginium video, Verginium jam vanis imaginibus audio,” **id.**

**ib. 2, 1, 12**: *imagines, quae εἰδωλα nominant, quorum incursione non solum videmus, sed etiam cogitamus*, **Cic. Fin. 1, 6, 21**; cf.:

“imagines extrinsecus in animos nostros per corpus irrumpere,” *id. Ac. 2, 40, 125*: plena sunt imaginum omnia, nulla species cogitari potest nisi pulsu imaginum, etc.;

**id. Div. 2, 67, 137 sq.**: unum aliquem te ex barbatis illis, exemplum imperii veteris, imaginem antiquitatis, columnen rei publicae dices intueri, *an image of the olden time*, **id. Sest. 8, 19**; cf.:

“expressam imaginem vitae quotidianae videre,” **id. Rosc. Am. 16, 47**:

“quidnam illi consules dictatoresve facturi essent, qui proconsularem imaginem tam saevam ac trucem fecerint, i. e. *by cruelty in office*,” **Liv. 5, 2, 9**:

“naturae ... urbis et populi,” **Cic. Rep. 2, 39 fin.**: “justitiae,” **Quint. 2, 20, 6**:

“virtutis,” **id. 10, 2, 15**:

“similitudines ad exprimendas rerum imagines compositae,” **id. 8, 3, 72**: illae rerum imagines, quas vocari φαντασίας indicavimus, **id. 10, 7, 15**:

“conscripta formantur imagine templa,” *plans, Stat. S. 3, 1, 117*:  
 “scipione determinata prius templi imagine in solo,” **Plin. 28, 2, 4, § 15**:  
 “tua, pater Druse, imago,” *memory, Tac. A. 1, 13*:  
 “magna illic imago tristium laetorumque,” *recollection, id. ib. 2, 53*:  
 “si te nulla movet tantae pietatis imago,” **Verg. A. 6, 405**.—

**B.** In partic.

**1.** In rhet., a *figurative representation, similitude, comparison*:

“comparabile est, quod in rebus diversis similem aliquam rationem continet. Ejusque artes sunt tres: imago, collatio, exemplum. Imago est oratio demonstrans corporum aut naturarum similitudinem, etc.,” *Cic. Inv. 1, 30, 49*; cf.:

“imago est formae cum forma cum quadam similitudine collatio,” *Auct. Her. 4, 49, 62*; *Sen. Ep. 59, 92*; **Quint. 6, 1, 28**; **Hor. S. 2, 3, 320**; *id. Ep. 1, 7, 34*.—

**2.** With the idea predominating of mere imitation, in opp. to what is original or real, a *mere form, image, semblance, appearance, shadow*:

“consecratur nullam eminentem effigiem virtutis, sed ad umbratam imaginem gloriae,” **Cic. Tusc. 3, 2, 3**:

“nos veri juris germanaeque justitiae solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus: umbrae imaginibus utimur,” **id. Off. 3, 17, 69**; cf.:

“non in umbra et imagine civitatis, etc.,” **id. Rep. 2, 30**; and:

“umbram equitis Romani et imaginem videtis,” **id. Rab. Post. 15, 41**:

“haec ars tota dicendi, sive artis imago quaedam est et similitudo, habet hanc vim, ut, etc.,” **id. de Or. 2, 87, 356**: “judiciorum,” *only the appearance of courts, id. Sest. 13, 30*; cf.:

“imaginem rei publicae nullam reliquissent,” **id. Agr. 2, 32, 88**:  
 “his quoque imaginibus juris pretis,” **Liv. 41, 8, 10**:

“imaginem retinendi largiendi ve penes nos, vim penes Parthos,” **Tac. A. 15, 14**:

“habitu et ore ad exprimendam imaginem honesti exercitus,” *the pretence, id. ib. 16, 32*; **6, 27**; **id. H. 1, 84**; **3, 70**:

“qui faciem eloquentiae, non imaginem praestaret,” *id. Or. 34*:

“nec imaginem rerum, sed rebus incendit,” **Quint. 10, 1, 16**:

“infalsa rerum imagine detineri,” **id. 10, 5, 17**; cf.:

“nullo quippe alio vincis discrimine, quam quod illi (hermae) marmoreum caput est, tua vivit imago,” *Juv. 8, 55*.—

**3.** A *representative*: non in effigies mutas divinum (Augusti) spiritum transfusum; “sed imaginem veram, caelesti sanguine ortam, intellegere discrimen, etc.,” **Tac. A. 4, 52**.—

**4.** That which suggests or recalls something by resemblance, a *reminder*:

“me consolatur recordatione meorum temporum, quorum imaginem video in rebus tuis,” **Cic. Fam. 1, 6, 2**:

“a Corbulone petierat, ne quam imaginem servitii Tiridates perferret,” *nothing to suggest slavery, Tac. A. 15, 31*; cf.:

“moriar, si praeter te quemquam reliquum habeo, in quo possim imaginem antiquae et vernaculae festivitatis agnoscere,” **Cic. Fam. 9, 15, 2**.

## Appendix 2

### **Definition of the Latin word *mos***

Entry taken from ‘A Latin Dictionary. Founded on Andrews' edition of Freund's Latin dictionary. revised, enlarged, and in great part rewritten by. Charlton T. Lewis, Ph.D. and. Charles Short, LL.D’. (Oxford. 1879).

**mos**, mōris, m. etym. dub.; perh. root ma-, measure; cf.: maturus, matutinus; prop., a measuring or guiding rule of life; hence,

**I.** *manner, custom, way, usage, practice, fashion, wont*, as determined not by the laws, but by men's will and pleasure, *humor, self-will, caprice* (class.; cf.: consuetudo, usus).

**I. Lit.:** “opsequens oboediensque st mori atque imperiis patris,” **Plaut. Bacch. 3, 3, 54**: “huncine erat aequum ex illius more, an illum ex hujusvivere?” **Ter. Heaut. 1, 2, 24**: alieno more vivendum est mihi, *according to the will or humor of another*, **id. And. 1, 1, 125**:

“nonne fuit levius dominaepervincere mores,” **Prop. 1, 17, 15**: morem alicui gerere, *to do the will of a person, to humor, gratify, obey him*:

“sic decet morem geras,” **Plaut. Most. 3, 2, 35**; **Cic. Tusc. 1, 9, 17**:

“animo morem gessero,” **Ter. And. 4, 1, 17**:

“adulescenti morem gestum oportuit,” **id. Ad. 2, 2, 6**; v. gero.—

**II.** The will as a rule for action, *custom, usage, practice, wont, habit*:

“legesmori serviunt,” *usage, custom*, **Plaut. Trin. 4, 3, 36**:

“legi moriqueparendum est,” **Cic. Univ. 11**:

“ibam forte Viā Sacrā, sicut meus est mos,” *custom, wont*, **Hor. S. 1, 9, 1**:

“contra morem consuetudinemque civilem,” **Cic. Off. 1, 41, 148**:

“quae vero more agentur institutisque civilibus,” *according to usage, according to custom*, **id. ib.**: “mos est hominum, ut nolint eundem pluribus rebus excellere,” **id. Brut. 21, 84**: “ut mos est,” **Juv. 6, 392**; “moris erat quondam servare, etc.,” **id. 11, 83**: “more sinistro,” *by a perverted custom*, **id. 2, 87**.— So with *ut*:

“morem traditum a patribus, ut, etc.,” **Liv. 27, 11, 10**:

“hunc morem servare, ut, etc.,” **id. 32, 34, 5**:

“virginibus Tyriis mos est gestare pharetram,” *it is the custom, they are accustomed*, **Verg. A. 1, 336**: “qui istic mos est?” **Ter. Heaut. 3, 3, 1**:

“mos ita rogandi,” **Cic. Fam. 12, 17, 1**: “ut mos fuit Bithyniae regibus,” **Cic. Verr. 2, 5, 11, § 27**: moris est, *it is the custom*:

“negavit, moris esse Graecorum, ut, etc.,” **id. ib. 2, 1, 26, § 66**; **Vell. 2, 37, 5**:

“quae moris Graecorum non sint,” **Liv. 36, 28, 4**; cf.:

“(aliquid) satis ex more Graecorum factum,” **id. 36, 28, 5**:

“ut Domitiano moris erat,” **Tac. Agr. 39**.—*Plur.*:

“id quoque morum Tiberii erat,” **Tac. A. 1, 80**: “praeter civium morem,” *contrary to custom, to usage*, **Ter. And. 5, 3, 9**: sine more, *unwonted, unparalleled*:

“facinus sine more,” **Stat. Th. 1, 238**; so, “nullo more,” **id. ib. 7, 135**:

“supra morem: terra supra morem densa,” *unusually*, **Verg. G. 2, 227**(cf.:

“supra modum): perducere aliquid in morem,” *to make into a custom, make customary*, **Cic. Inv. 2, 54, 162**: “quod jam in morem venerat, ut, etc.,” *had become customary*, **Liv. 42, 21, 7**.—

**B.** In partic., in a moral point of view, *conduct, behavior*; in plur., *manners, morals, character*; in a good or bad sense:

“est itatemperatis moderatisque moribus, ut summa severitas summā cumhumanitate jungatur,” *manners*, **Cic. Fam. 12, 27, 1**: “suavissimimores,” **id. Att. 16, 16, A, 6**: boni, *id. Fragm. ap. Non. 254, 8*.—Prov.:

“corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia mala,” **Vulg. 1 Cor. 15, 33**: “justi,” **Cic. de Or. 2, 43, 184**: “severi et pudici,” **Plin. 28, 8, 27, § 106**: “sanctissimi,” **Plin. Ep. 10, 20, 3**: feri immanisque natura, **Cic. Rosc. Am. 13, 38**:

“totam vitam, naturam moresque alicujuscognoscere,” *character, id. ib. 38, 109*: “eos esse M'. Curii mores,eamque probitatem, ut, etc.,” **id. Fam. 13, 17, 3**; **id. de Or. 2, 43, 182**: “mores disciplinamque alicujus imitari,” **id. Deiot. 10, 28**: “perditi,” **id. Fam. 2, 5, 2**: “praefectura morum,” *the supervision of the public morals*, **Suet. Caes. 76**: “moribus et caelum patuit,” *to good morals, virtue*, **Prop. 4 (5), 11**,

**101**. “amator meretricis moressibi emit auro et purpurā,” *polite behavior, complaisance*, **Plaut. Most. 1, 3, 128**:

“propitiis, si per mores nostros liceret, diis,” *i. e. our evil way of life*, **Tac. H. 3, 72**: “morum quoque filius,” *like his father in character*, **Juv. 14, 52**:

“ne te ignarum fuisse dicas meorummorum, leno ego sum,” *i. e. my trade*, **Ter. Ad. 2, 1, 6**: “in publicismoribus,” **Suet. Tib. 33; 42**.—

### III. Transf.

**A. Quality, nature, manner; mode, fashion:**

“haec meretrix fecit, utmos est meretricius,” **Plaut. Men. 5, 4, 8**:

“mores siderum,” *qualities, properties*, **Plin. 18, 24, 56, § 206**: “caeli,” **Verg. G. 1, 51**: “Carneadeo more et modo disputare,” *manner*, **Cic. Univ. 1**:

“sihumano modo, si usitato more peccāset,” *in the usual manner*, **Cic. Verr. 2, 2, 3, § 9**: “Graeco more bibere,” *id. ib. 1, 26, 66*:

“apisMatinae More modoque,” *after the manner of, like*, **Hor. C. 4, 2, 27**:

“Dardanius torrentis aquae vel turbinis atri More furens,” **Verg. A. 10, 604**:

“more novalium,” **Col. 3, 13, 4**: “caeli et anni mores,” **Col. 1, Praef. 23**:

“omnium more,” **Cic. Fam. 12, 17, 3**; so, “ad moremactionum,” **Quint. 4, 1, 43**:

“elabitur anguis in morem fluminis,” *like*, **Verg. G. 1, 245**:

“in hunc operis morem,” **Hor. S. 2, 1, 63**: “pecudum in morem,” **Flor. 3, 8, 6**:

“morem vestis tenere,” *mode, fashion*, **Just. 1, 2, 3**.—

**B. A precept, law, rule (poet. and postAug.):**

“moresque viris etmoenia ponet,” *precepts, laws*, **Verg. A. 1, 264**; cf.:

“pacis inponeremorem,” *id. ib. 6, 852*:

“quod moribus eorum interdici non poterat,” **Nep. Ham. 3**:

“quid ferri duritiā pugnacius? sed cedit, et patiturmores,” *submits to laws, obeys, is tamed*, **Plin. 36, 16, 25, § 127**: “ut leo mores Accepit,” **Stat. Ach. 2, 183**:

“in morem tonsa coma, = exmore ludi,” **Verg. A. 5, 556**.

## Abbreviations

<b>ASE</b>	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
<b>Art Bull.</b>	<i>Art Bulletin</i>
<b>CASSS</b>	Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture
<b>CCCM</b>	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medaevalis
<b>CCSL</b>	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
<b>Com. Heiz.</b>	Jerome, <i>Commentariorum in Heizechielem</i> (Glorie, 1964)
<b>Com. Matt.</b>	Jerome, <i>Commentariorum in Matheum</i> (Hurst & Adriaen, 1969)
<b>CSEL</b>	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
<b>CTLO</b>	Centre Traditio Litterarum Occidentalium
<b>DAJ</b>	<i>Derbyshire Archaeological Journal</i>
<b>DBJ</b>	Josephus, <i>De Bello Judicae</i> (Thackery, 1929; Farmer, 1960)
<b>De Doc. Chr.</b>	Augustine, <i>De Doctrina Christiana</i> (Martin, 1962; Green, 1997)
<b>De Civ.</b>	Augustine, <i>De Civitate Dei</i> (Dombart & Kalb, 1955; Dodd, 1950)
<b>De Gen.</b>	Augustine, <i>De Genesi as Litteram</i> (Zycha, 1894)
<b>De Hab.</b>	Bede, <i>On Habakkuck</i> (Hudson, 1983; Connolly, 1997: 65-95)
<b>De Temp.</b>	Bede, <i>De Templo</i> (Holder, 1994; Connolly, 1995)
<b>De Virg.</b>	Aldhelm, <i>De Virginitate</i> (Ehwald, 2001)
<b>De Laud.</b>	Hrabanus Maurus, <i>De Laudibus Sanctae Crucis</i> (Perrin, 1977)
<b>Ex. Ap.</b>	Bede, <i>Expositio Apocalypsis</i> (Gryson, 2001)
<b>Chron. M.</b>	Bede, <i>Chronica Maiora</i> (Jones, 1977; Wallis, 2004: 157-249)
<b>H. E.</b>	Bede, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i> (Colgrave & Mynors, 1969)
<b>Hist. Abb.</b>	Bede, <i>Historiam Abbatum</i> (Plummer, 1896: 365-87; Farmer & Webb, 1998: 187-210)

<b><i>Hist. Abb.</i></b>	Anonymous, <i>Historiam Abbatum</i> (Plummer, 1896: 388-423; Farmer & Webb, 1998: 213-29)
<b><i>Hom.Hiez.</i></b>	Gregory the Great, <i>Homiliae in Hiezechielem Prophetam</i> (Adriaen, 1971; Gray, 1990)
<b><i>In Gen.</i></b>	Bede, <i>Libri Quatuor in Principium Genesis</i> (Jones, 1967; Kendall, 2008)
<b><i>In Ez.</i></b>	Bede, <i>In Ezram</i> (Hurst, 1969; trans. DeGregorio, 2006)
<b><i>JAAC</i></b>	<i>Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism</i>
<b><i>JEH</i></b>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<b><i>JRSAI</i></b>	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i>
<b><i>JWCI</i></b>	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
<b><i>LLT</i></b>	Library of Latin Texts (online)
<b><i>LCL</i></b>	Loeb Classical Library
<b><i>MGHAA</i></b>	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi
<b><i>Mor.in J.</i></b>	Gregory the Great, <i>Moralia in Job</i> (Adriaen, 1979)
<b><i>PL</i></b>	<i>Patrologia Latina Curcus Completes, series Latina</i> , ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1844-64)
<b><i>V.Con.</i></b>	Eusebius, <i>Vita Constantini</i> (Cameron & Hall, 1999)
<b><i>V.Cuth.</i></b>	Bede, <i>Vita Sancti Cuthberti</i> (Colgrave, 1940)
<b><i>V. Will.</i></b>	Alcuin, <i>Vita Santi Willibrordi</i> (Dümmler, 1881; Talbot, 1954: 153-77)
<b><i>V. Wilf.</i></b>	Eddius Stephanus, <i>Vita Wilfridi</i> (Colgrave, 1927)
<b><i>YAJ</i></b>	<i>Yorkshire Archaeological Journal</i>
<b><i>XXX. Quaes.</i></b>	Bede, <i>In Regum XXX Quaestiones</i> (Hurst, 1962; Trent Foley & Holder, 1999: 89-143)



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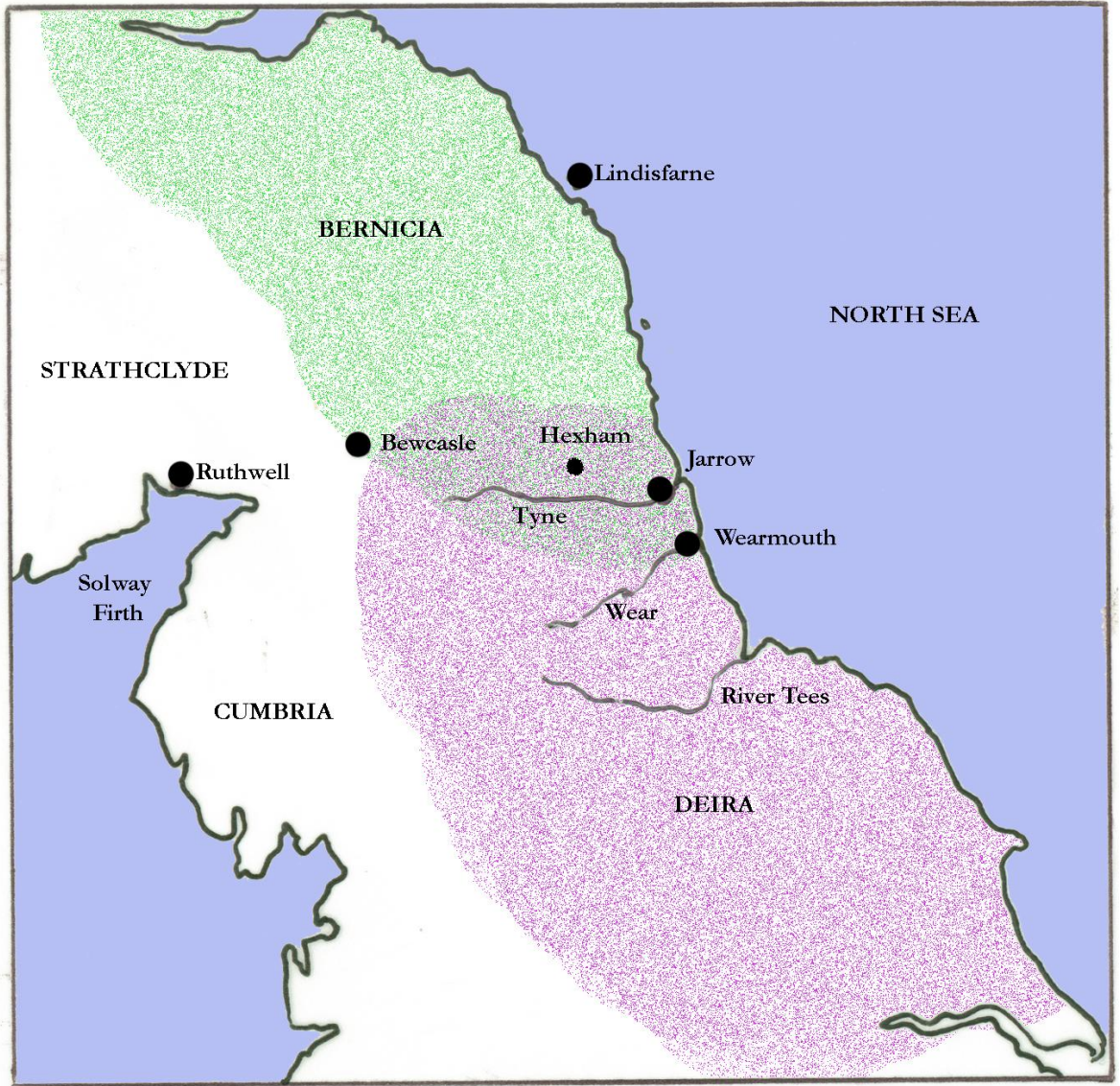


Fig. 1, Map of Northumbria





Fig. 2, View of Bambrugh Castle, Northumbria



Fig. 3, St Peter's Church Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, dated c.674



Fig. 4, St Paul's Church, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear, dated c.685



Fig. 5, St Andrew's Abbey Church, Hexham, Northumbria, dated c.671-3



Fig. 6, Ripon Abbey, Yorkshire, dated c.669-78

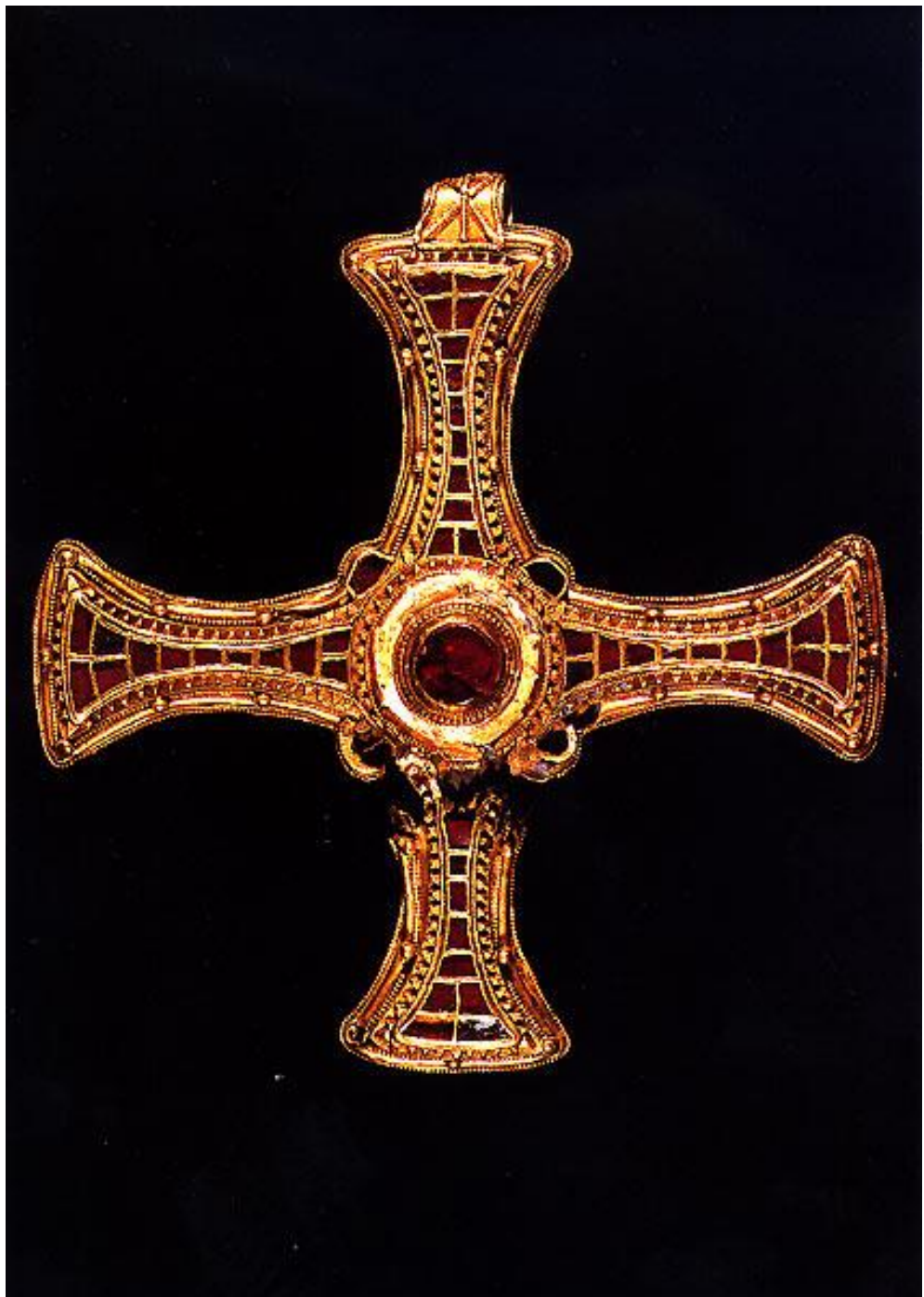


Fig. 7, St Cuthbert's Pectoral Cross, Durham Cathedral Treasury,  
6cm x 6cm, gold and garnet, c. 640-70



Fig. 8, St Cuthbert's portable altar, Durham Cathedral Treasury, 12.8cm x 12.2cm, seventh century



Fig.9, Velamen of Harlindis and Relindis, Aldeneik, now at St Catherine at Maaseik in Limburg, Belgium - English, date unknown, probably early ninth century



Detail of Velamen showing embroidery and beading

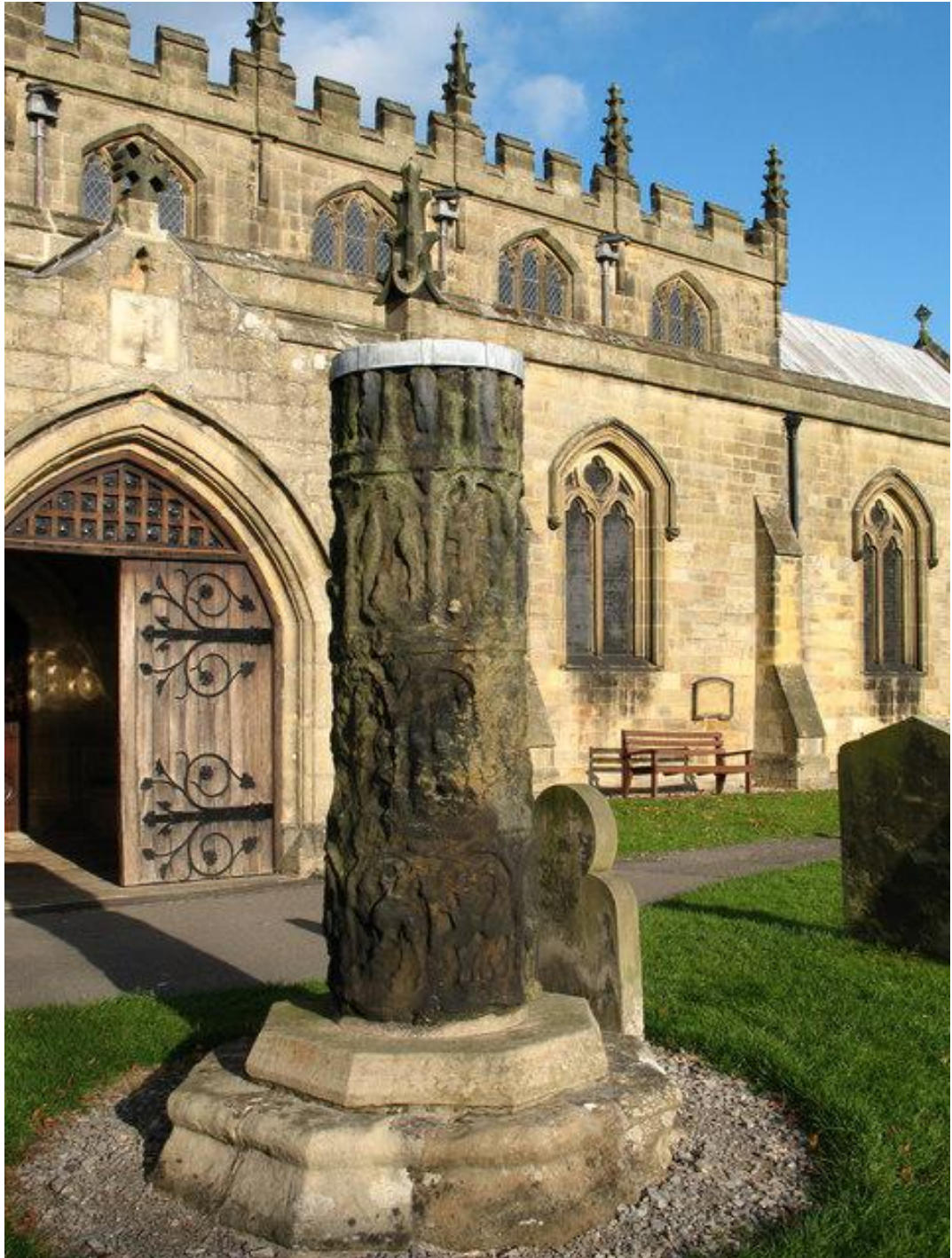


Fig. 10, Masham Column, St Mary's Churchyard, Masham, North Yorkshire, Early ninth century



Fig. 11, Cundall and Aldborough illustration, from Collingwood, 1927





Fig. 12, Hovingham Panel, All Saints Church, Hovingham, North Yorkshire  
Early ninth century



Hovingham Panel detail



Fig. 13, Bewcastle Monument, St Cuthbert's churchyard, Cumbria,  
Early eighth century



Fig. 14, Ruthwell Cross, Ruthwell and Mount Kedar Church, Dumfriesshire, Early eighth century

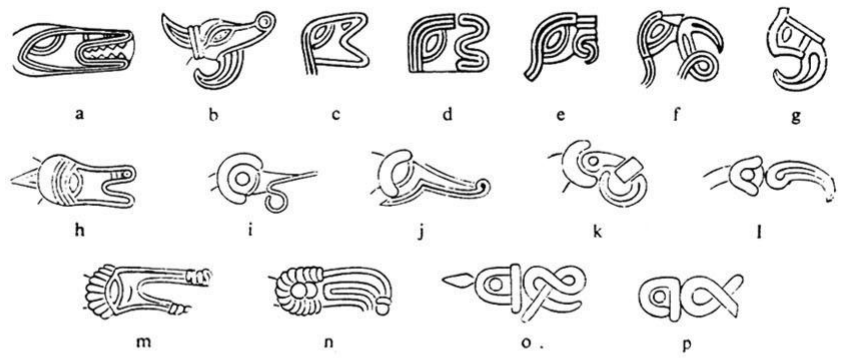


Fig. 15a, Examples of Salin type I birds' heads

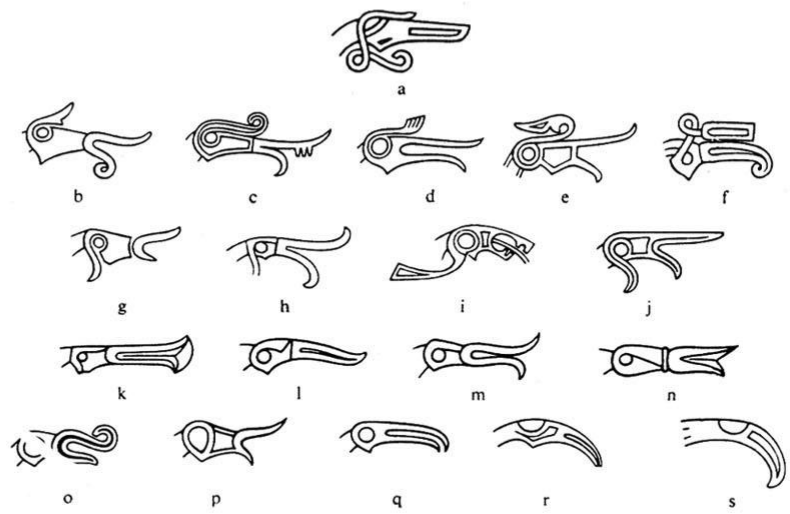


Fig. 15b, Examples of Salin type II birds' heads

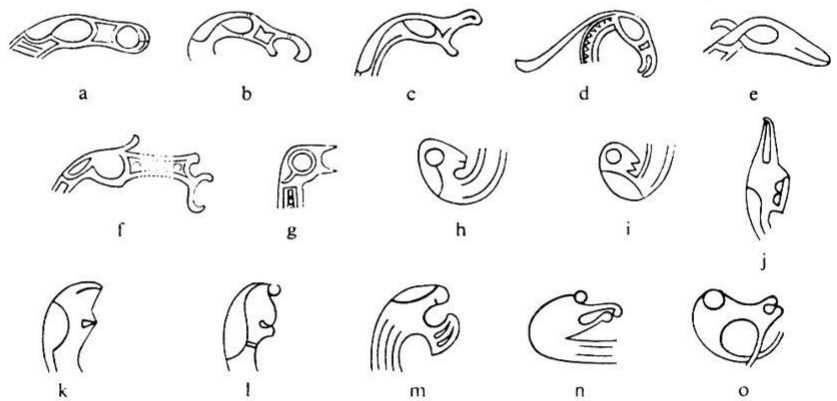


Fig. 15c, Examples of Salin type III birds' heads



Fig. 16, Sutton Hoo, example of finds from burial mound 1, c. 625: top left: Helmet; Top right: Shoulder clasps; middle: Gold and cloisonné belt buckle; bottom: Purse Lid.



Fig.17, Hunterson Brooch, National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, late 7<sup>th</sup> /early 8<sup>th</sup> century



Fig. 18, Hunterson Brooch detail, National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh



Fig. 19, Codex Amiatinus, Ezra Page, fol. 5<sup>r</sup>, Laurentian Library, Florence, First quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century



Fig. 20, Durham Cassiodorus, David Rex, fol. 81<sup>v</sup>, Durham Cathedral Library, Second quarter of the eighth century



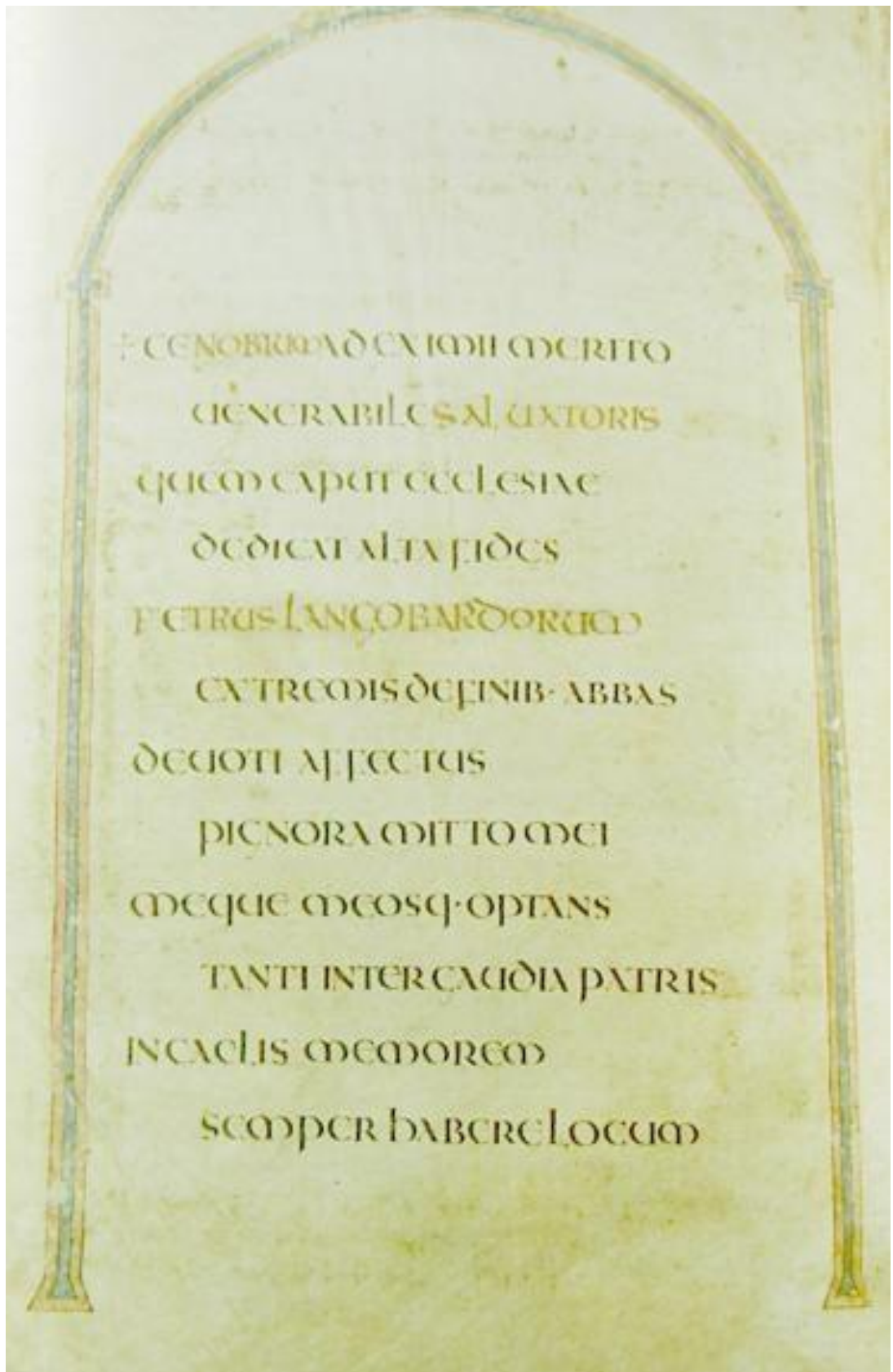


Fig. 21, Codex Amiatinus Colophon, fol.1<sup>v</sup>, Laurentian Library Florence, Italy,  
First quarter of the eighth century



Fig. 22, Valenciennes Apocalypse, fol.4<sup>v</sup> Valenciennes, Bibliothèque Municipale, Early ninth century



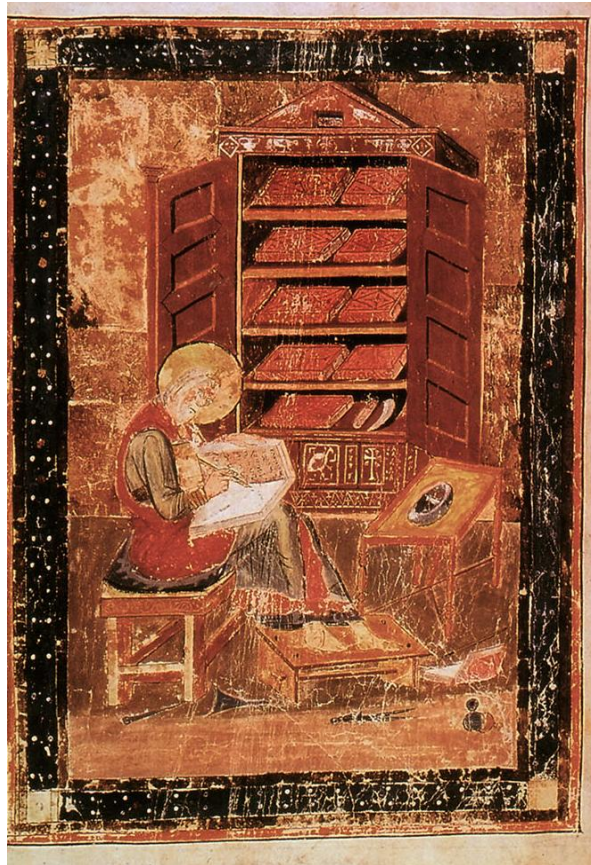


Fig. 24, Codex Amiatinus Ezra & Durham Cassiodorus David





Fig. 26, Bookcase Mosaic detail, Galla Placidia's mausoleum, Ravenna, Italy. c. 430



Fig. 27, Figure of Christ, Sta Maria in Antiqua, fresco, seventh century



Fig. 28, Melchisadek mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy, sixth century



Fig.29, St John the Evangelist mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy, sixth century

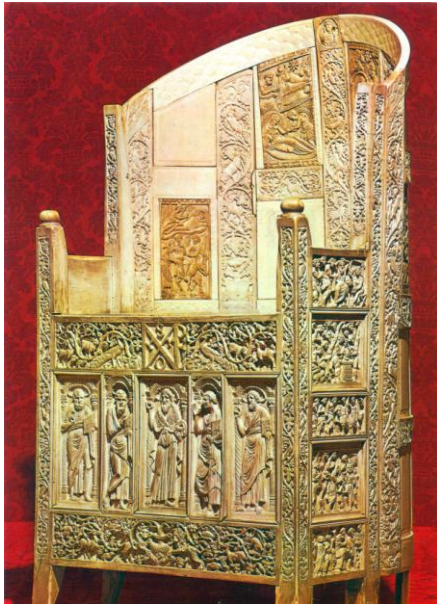


Fig. 30, Maximian's Throne, and detail, Archiepiscopal Museum, Ravenna, Italy, carved ivory, sixth century



Detail of Maximian's Throne showing 'irregular' perspective. Notice the eschewed rhomboid-shape representing the manger arranged to offer a clear view of Christ. See too how Mary's bed is arranged to face the viewer





Fig. 31, Melchisedek's table/altar mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy, sixth century



Fig. 32a, Square-headed brooch, Thornborough, North Yorkshire, sixth Century



Fig. 32b, Detail of square-headed Thornborough brooch, North Yorkshire, sixth Century

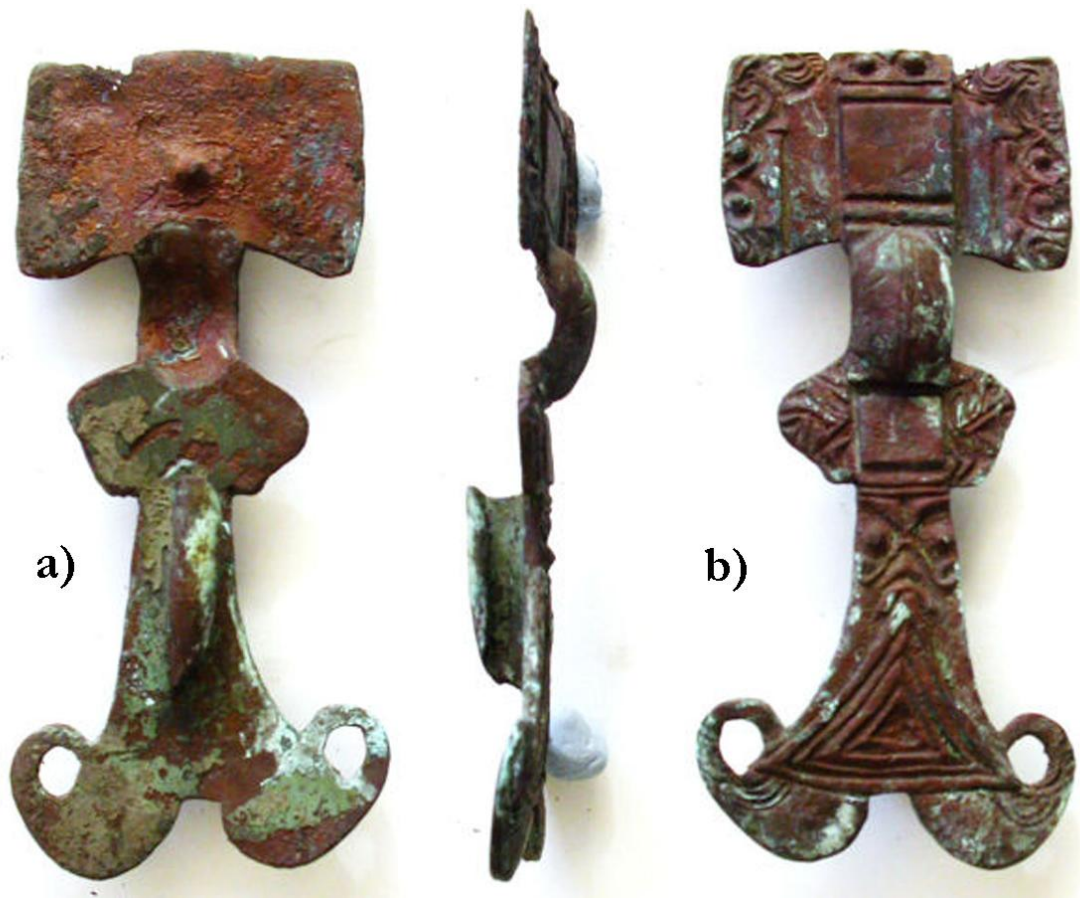


Fig. 33a, reverse of Benwell Brooch, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Museum of Antiquities of the University and Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, sixth century

Fig.33b, front of Benwell Brooch showing Style I ornament and 'mask' motif

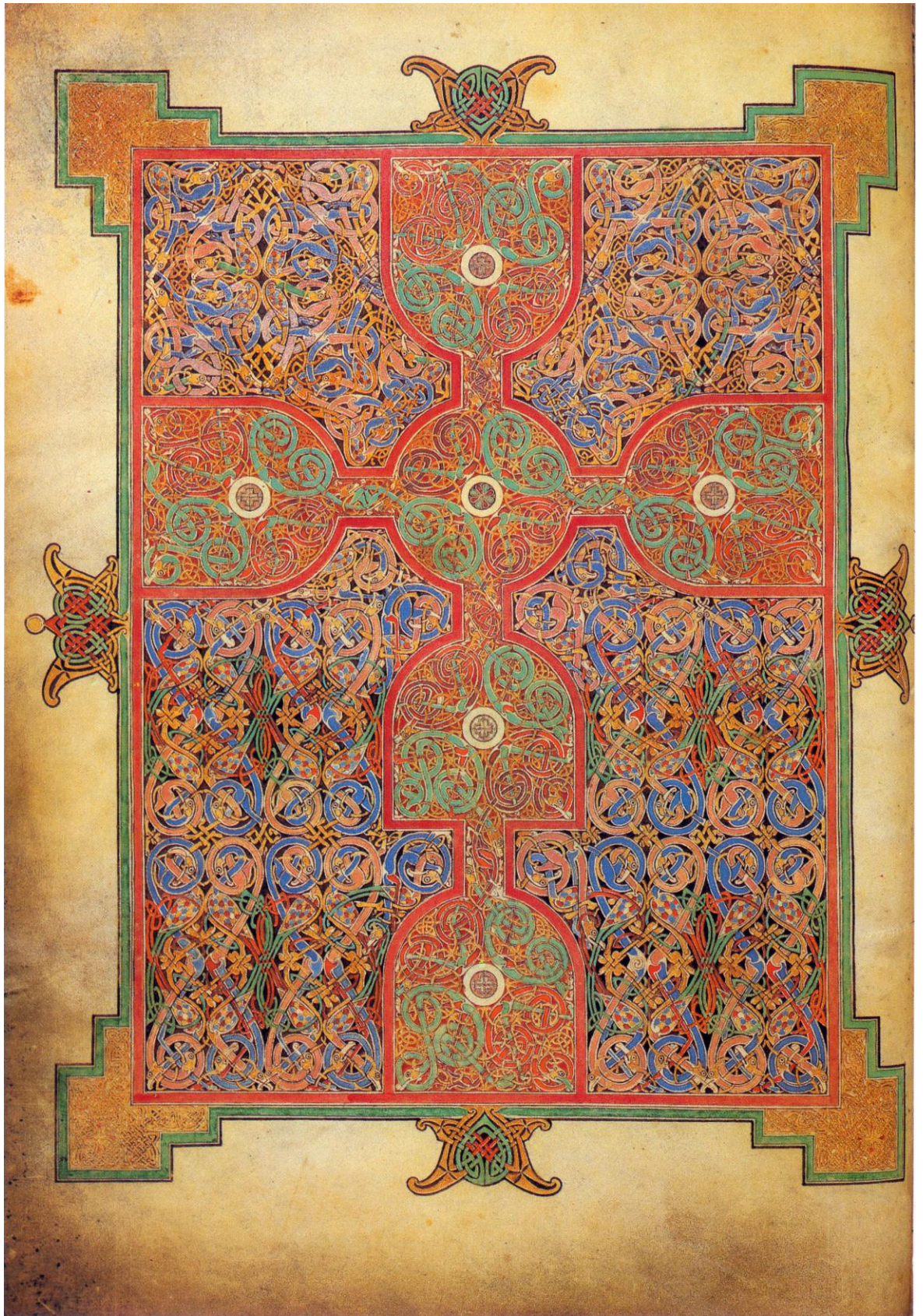


Fig. 34, Lindisfarne Gospels, cross-carpet page, fol.26<sup>v</sup>, British Library, London  
c.700





Fig. 36, Stone cross, St Andrew's Church, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, c.800  
CASSS1 -1a



Fig. 37, Acca's Cross & detail, St Andrew's Hexham, Northumberland, seventh century



Fig. 38, Bamburgh Beast, Bamburgh, Northumbria & Detail of Franks Casket, British Museum, London, carved marine ivory, c.800, with back-biting beasts



Fig.39 Ormide Bowl, Yorkshire Museum, floral and foliate motifs, organic and sinuous rather than linear



Fig. 40, Detail of East Face of the Bewcastle Monument, Cumbria, early eighth century, Bird's tail morphs into part of the vine.





Fig.41,  
Durham Cassiodorus,  
Zoomorphic  
interlacing



Fig. 42, Durham Cassiodorus detail, concentric circle background  
Durham Cathedral Library, first quarter of the eighth century

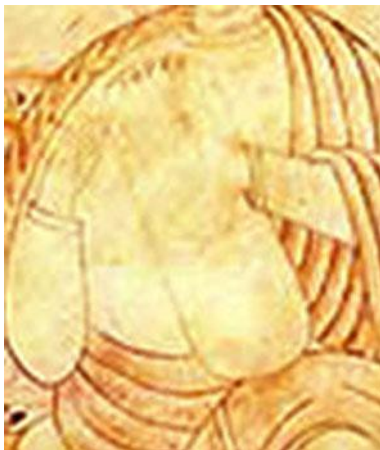


Fig. 43, Insular Lyres, Durham Cassiodorus & Sutton Hoo instrument (reconstruction)



Fig. 44 – Thrones

Durham Cassiodorus David Insular throne with anima motif

San Stephano Rotondo throne with 'lion' legs, fifth century



Fig. 45 'Lion' Masks



Fig. 45a Durham Cassiodorus  
Lion 'mask' detail



Fig. 45b, Echternach Gospel's  
Lion 'mask' detail



Lindisfarne Gospels evangelist/ lion symbol with no mask



Fig. 45c, Codex Amiatinus Lion  
'mask' detail



Fig. 45d, Lindisfarne Gospels  
Cat 'mask'



Fig. 46a, Ezra Halo Detail with foil, Codex Amiatinus



Fig. 46b, Border detail with foil, Codex Amiatinus



Fig. 47, Cross fragment with vine scroll, St Andrew's Hexham (See CASSS1)

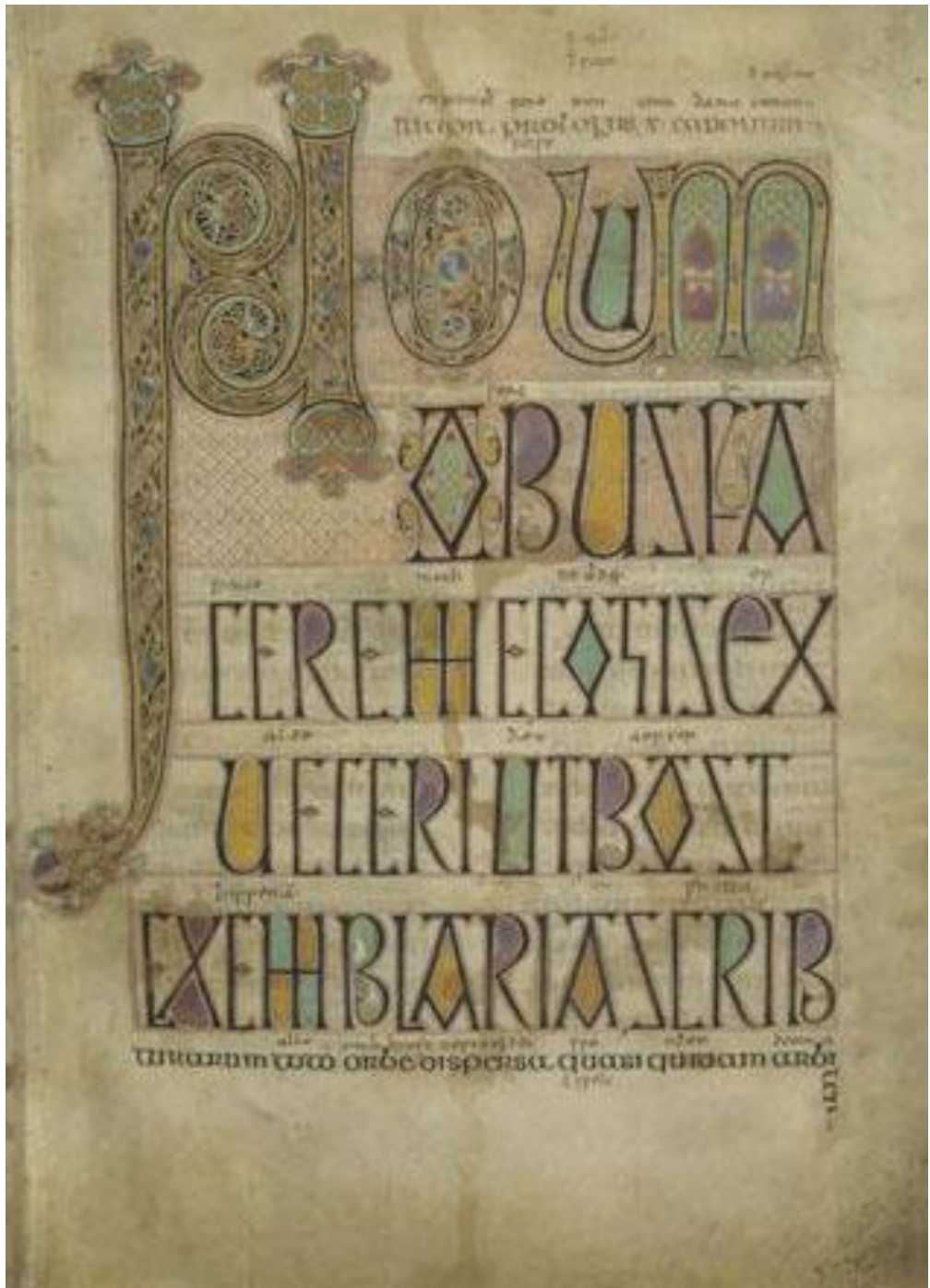


Fig. 48, Lindisfarne Gospels, 'Novem Opus' Jerome preface incipit page, fol.3<sup>r</sup>

British Library, London



Fig. 49a, rounded cushion- Virgin enthroned, San Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy, Sixth-century mosaic



Fig. 49b, rounded cushion – Virgin Enthroned, Sta Maria in Antiqua, Seventh-century fresco



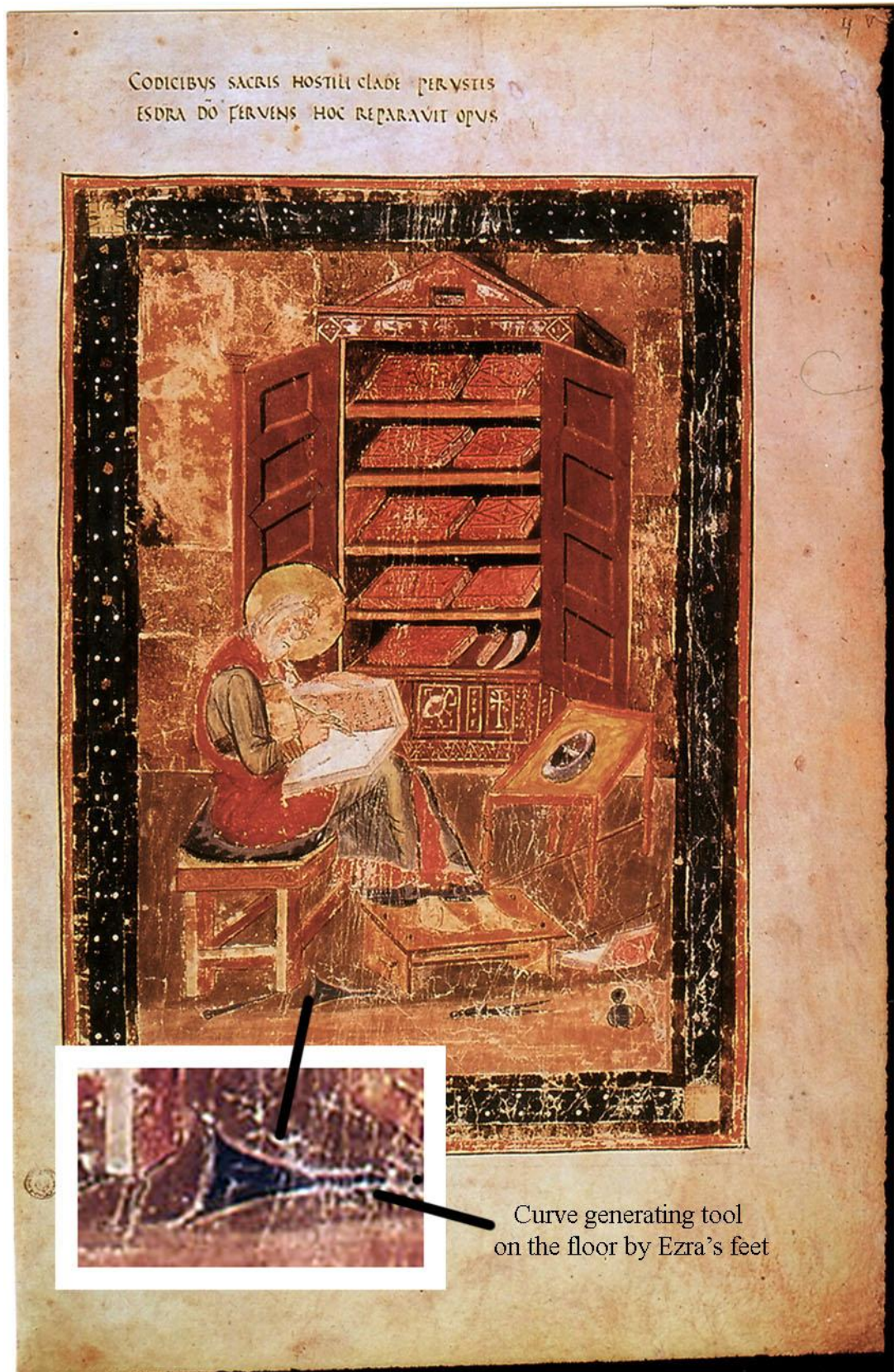


Fig. 50, Ezra's curve generating tool?  
Codex Amiatinus, Laurentian Library, Florence, Italy,  
First quarter of the eighth century

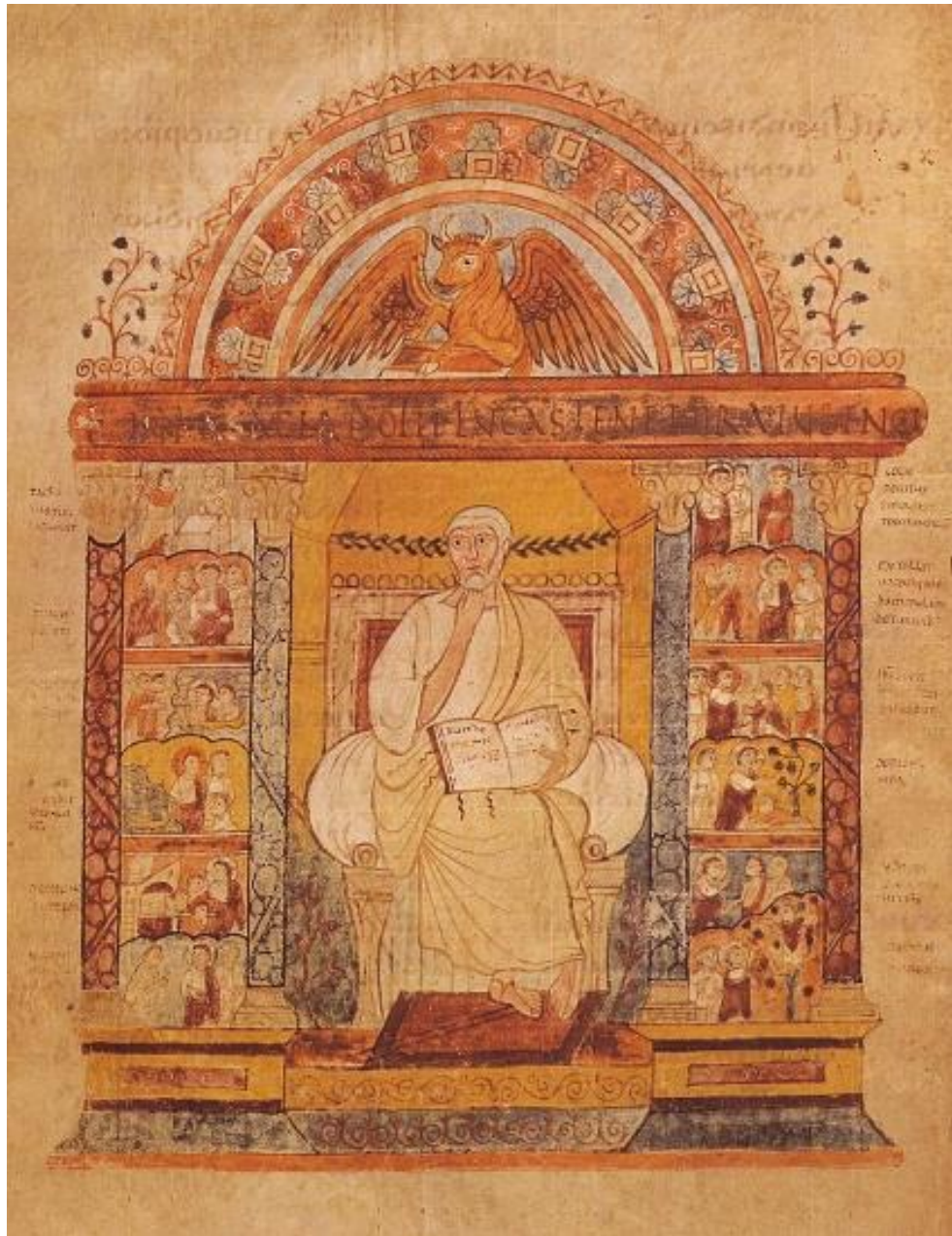


Fig. 51, Luke the Evangelist, St Augustine Gospels, Cambridge, Corpus Christi Library, sixth century



Fig. 52, Codex Amiatinus, Christ in Majesty page, fol.796<sup>v</sup>, Laurentian Library, Florence, Italy, first quarter of eighth century.



Fig. 53a, Christ enthroned on the globe of the universe, San Lorenzo fuori le mura, Rome, Italy, 570-590

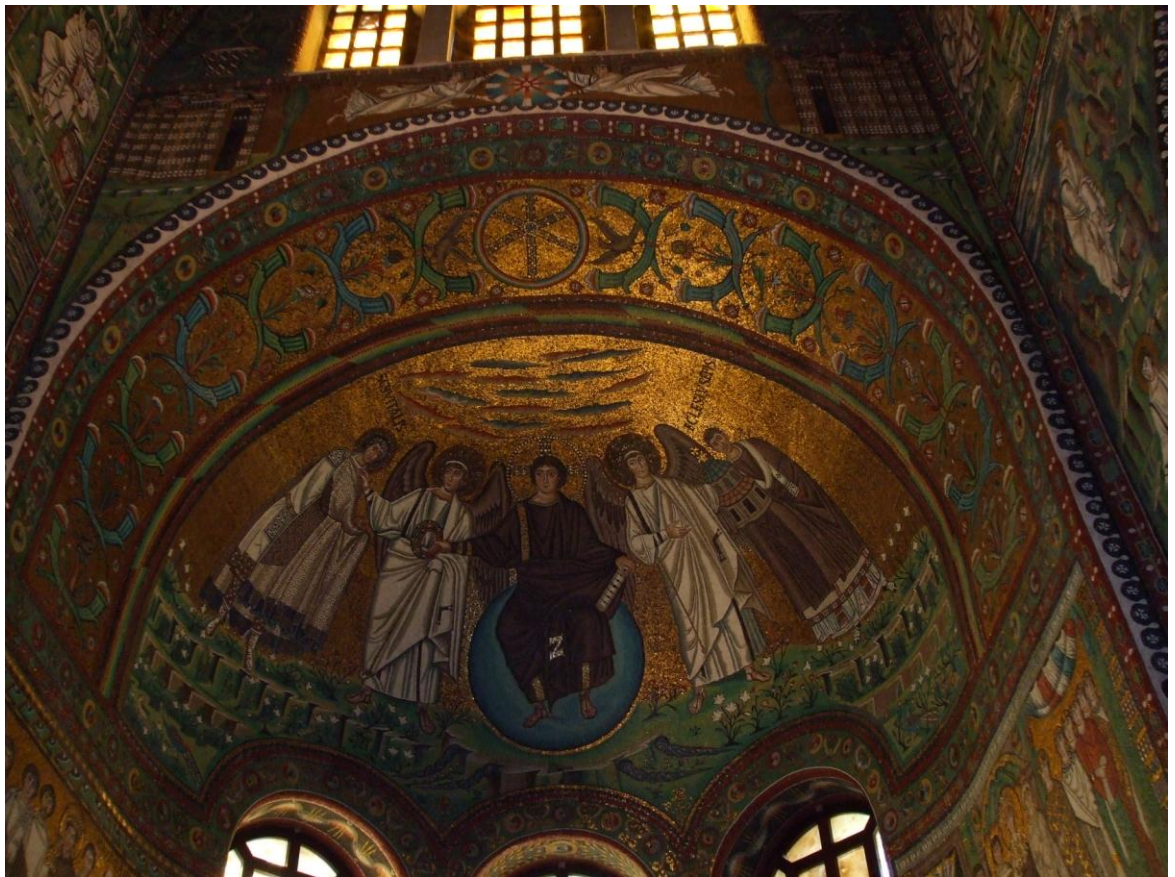


Fig. 53b, (a.) Christ enthroned on the globe of the universe, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy



Fig. 54a, Dome of Galla Placidia's Mausoleum, Ravenna, Italy, fifth century.

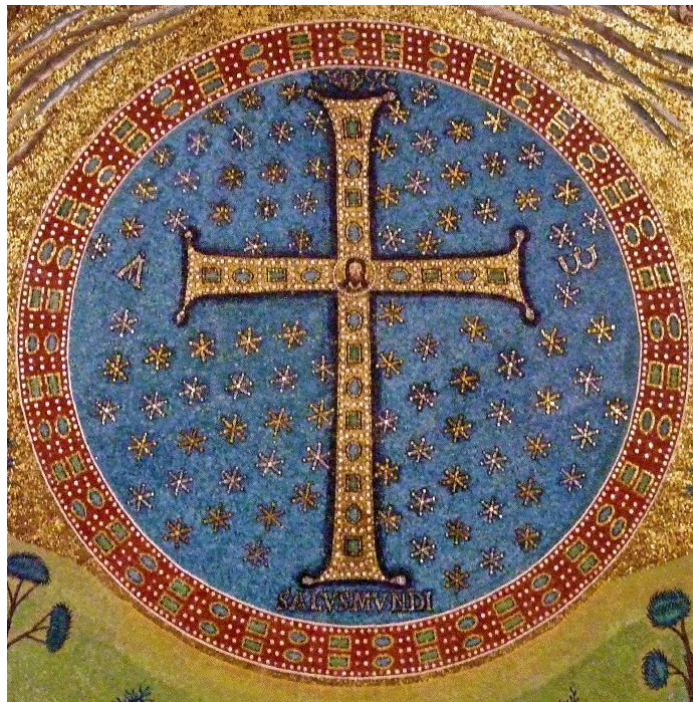


Fig. 54b, San Apollinare in Classe, apse mosaic, Ravenna, Italy, sixth century

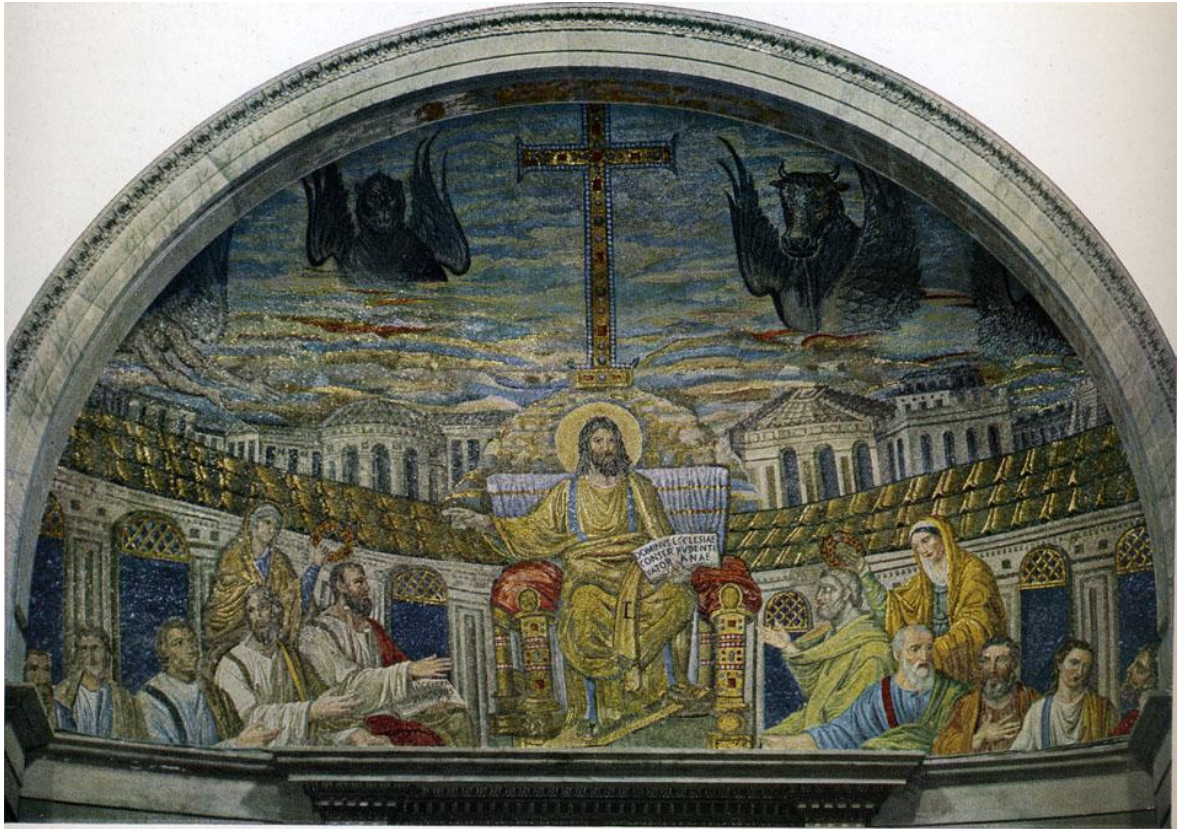


Fig. 55a, Sta Pudenziana, Christ in Majesty flanked by winged evangelist symbols, fourth-century mosaic



Fig. 55b, San Apollinare in Classe, Triumphal arch, Christ and Evangelist symbols, Ravenna, Italy c.549



Fig. 56a, above: David Rex,  
Durham Cassiodorus

Fig. 56b. right: Warrior David  
Durham Cassiodorus

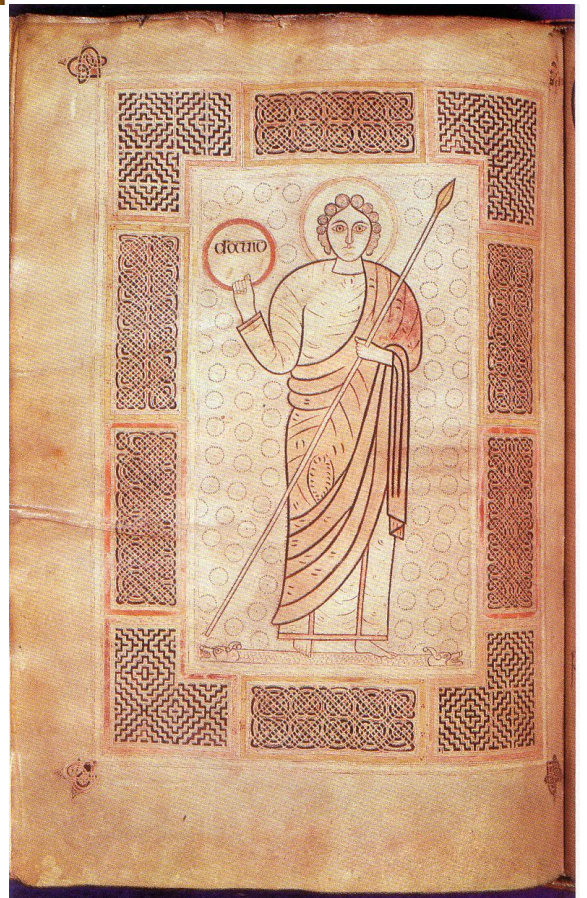




Fig. 57a, Echternach Gospels, fol.18<sup>v</sup>  
Matthew/ Man Symbol



Fig. 57b, Echternach Gospels, fol.75<sup>v</sup>  
Mark/ Lion Symbol



Fig. 57c, Echternach Gospels fol.115<sup>v</sup>  
Luke/ Calf Symbol



Fig. 57d, Echternach Gospels, fol.176<sup>v</sup>  
John/ Eagle Symbol



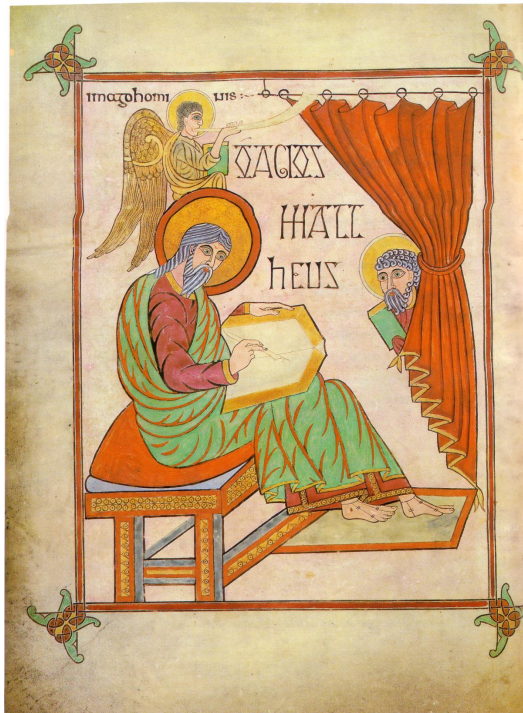


Fig. 58a, Lindisfarne Gospels fol.25<sup>v</sup>  
Matthew/ Man Symbol



Fig.58b, St Gall Gospels, p.418  
Matthew/ Man Symbol



Fig. 58c, Lichfield Gospels p.218  
Luke/ Calf Symbol

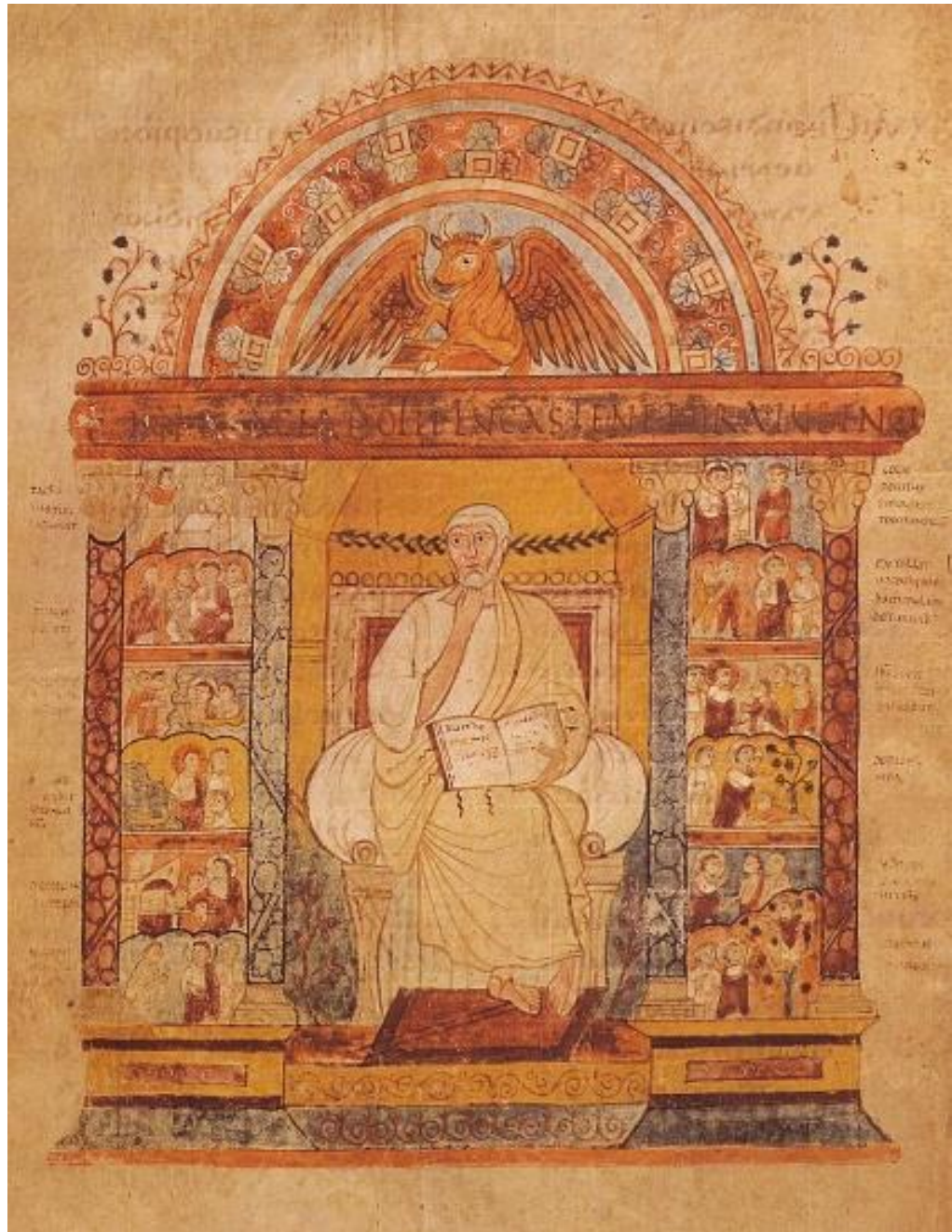


Fig.59, Augustine's Gospels, fol. 129<sup>v</sup>  
Luke Evangelist portrait/ Calf symbol  
Corpus Christi Library, Cambridge



Fig. 60a, Sta Pudenziana apse mosaic, Rome, c. 359,  
'apocalyptic'/'winged' Lion & Calf symbols



Fig. 60b, Galla Placidia's Mausoleum Dome mosaic, Man symbol



Fig 61a, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy, c. 526-548, 'full-bodied'/'terrestrial' Eagle symbol

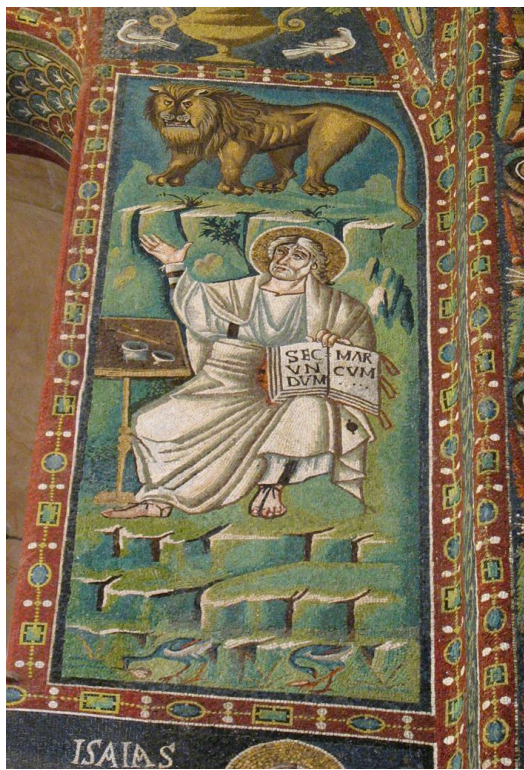


Fig. 61b, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy, c. 526-548, 'full-bodied'/'terrestrial' Calf symbol

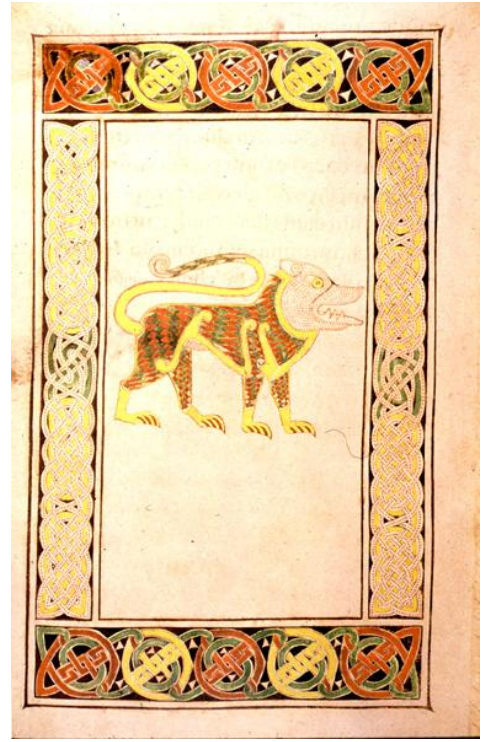


Fig. 62, Book of Durrow, Trinity College Library, Dublin  
Four 'terrestrial' evangelist symbols

Fig. 63, Cambridge-London Gospels Beast symbols,



Eagle symbol, Corpus Christi Library fragment, fol. 27<sup>r</sup>



Lion symbol, British Library Cotton MS Ortho fragment

Fig. 64 Echternach Beast Symbols



Echternach Gospels, fol.18<sup>v</sup>  
Matthew/ Man Symbol



Echternach Gospels, fol.75<sup>v</sup>  
Mark/ Lion Symbol



Echternach Gospels fol.115<sup>v</sup>  
Luke/ Calf Symbol



Echternach Gospels, fol.176<sup>v</sup>  
John/ Eagle Symbol

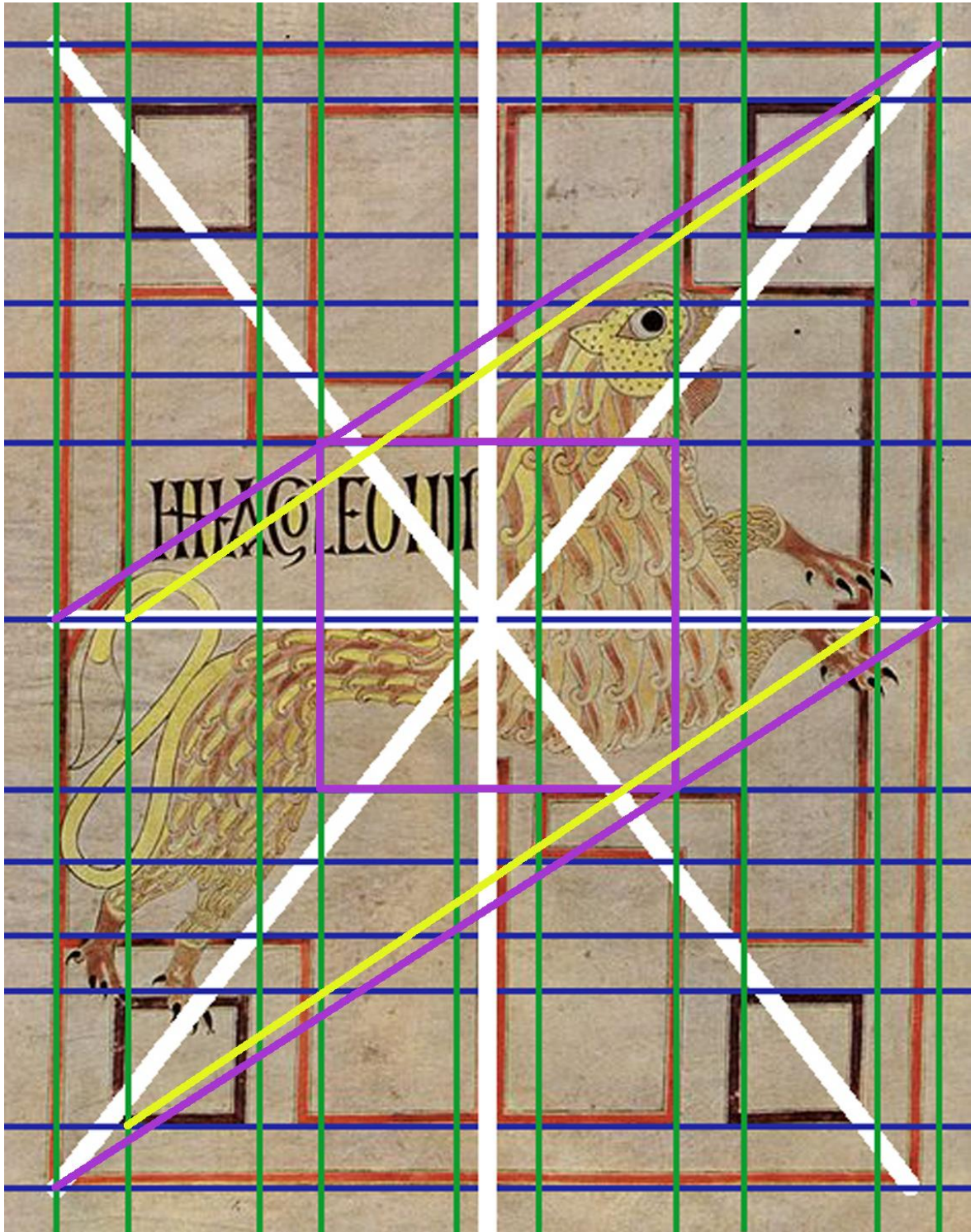


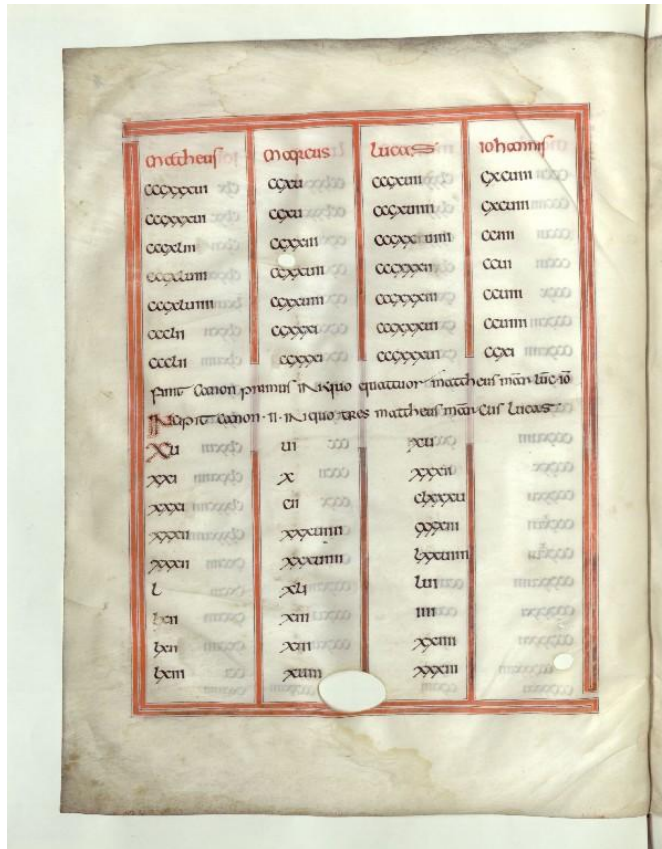
Fig. 65, Echternach Gospels Lion with superimposed grid











Echternach Gospels fol.4v end on first canon and incipit of Canon II  
 In quo tres Mattheus Marcus Lucas



Echternach Gospels fol.5r



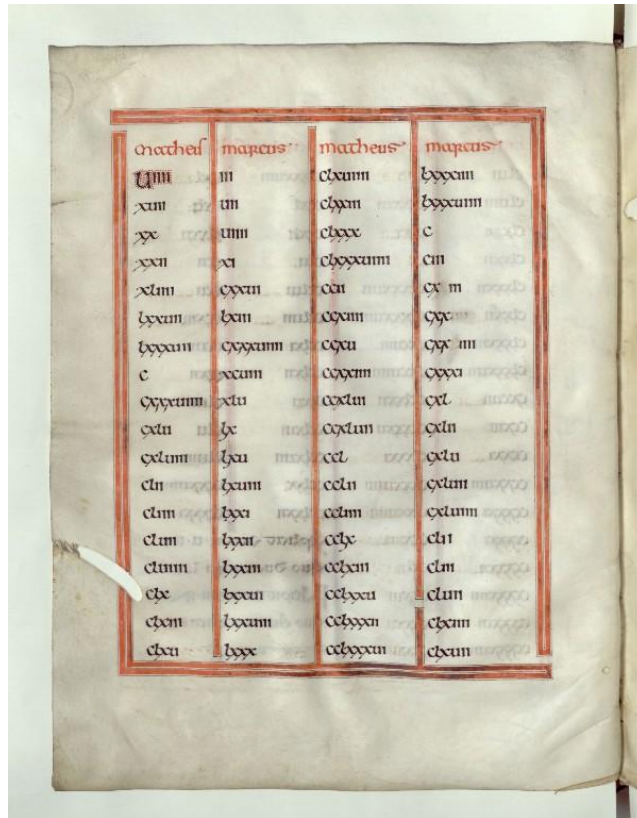












Echternach Gospels fol. 10v



Echternach Gospels fol. 11r. End of Canon VI, start of Canon VII  
 'Incipit canon VII in quo duo math Iohan'  
 End of Canon VII and start of Canon VIII  
 'Incipit Canon VIII in quo duo Luc and Mar'









Fig. 67, Cambridge-London Eagle symbol,  
Corpus Christi MS 197b, Cambridge,  
Fol. 27<sup>r</sup>



Fig. 68, Hovingham Panel, North Yorkshire, early ninth century,  
Below, detail of vinescroll border

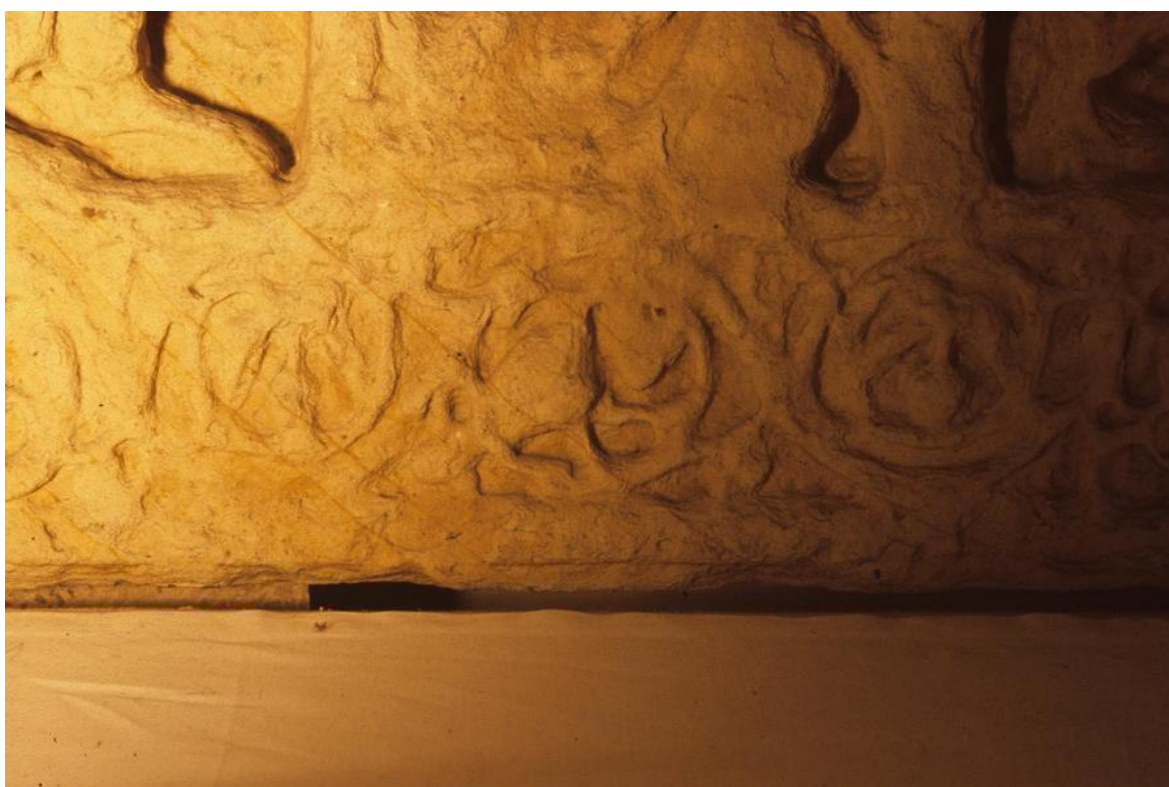




Fig. 69, Book of Kells, Temptation Page, fol. 202<sup>v</sup>  
Trinity College Dublin, c. 800

\*notice how the congregation form the lowermost border of the image



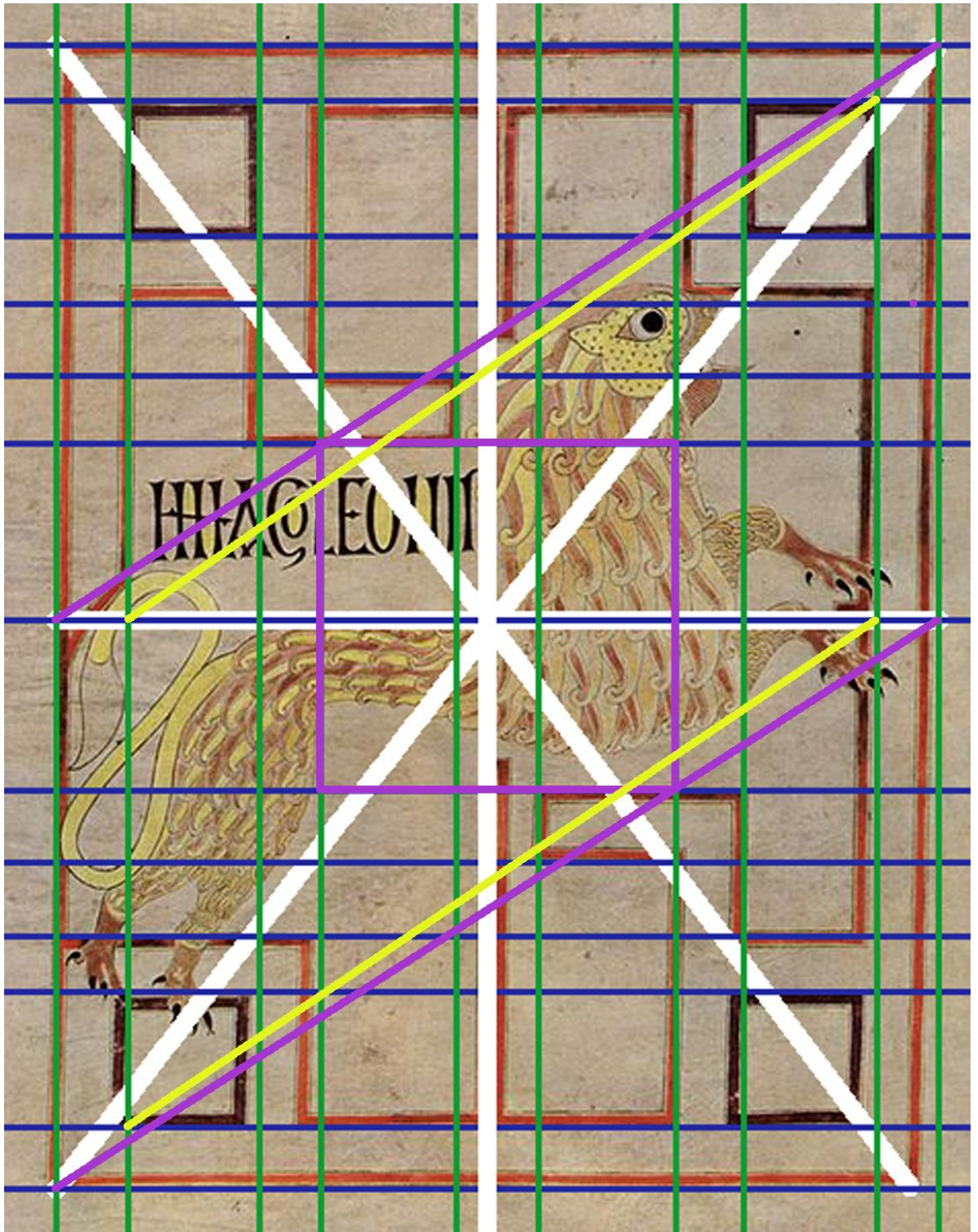


Fig. 70, Echternach Gospels Lion with superimposed grid

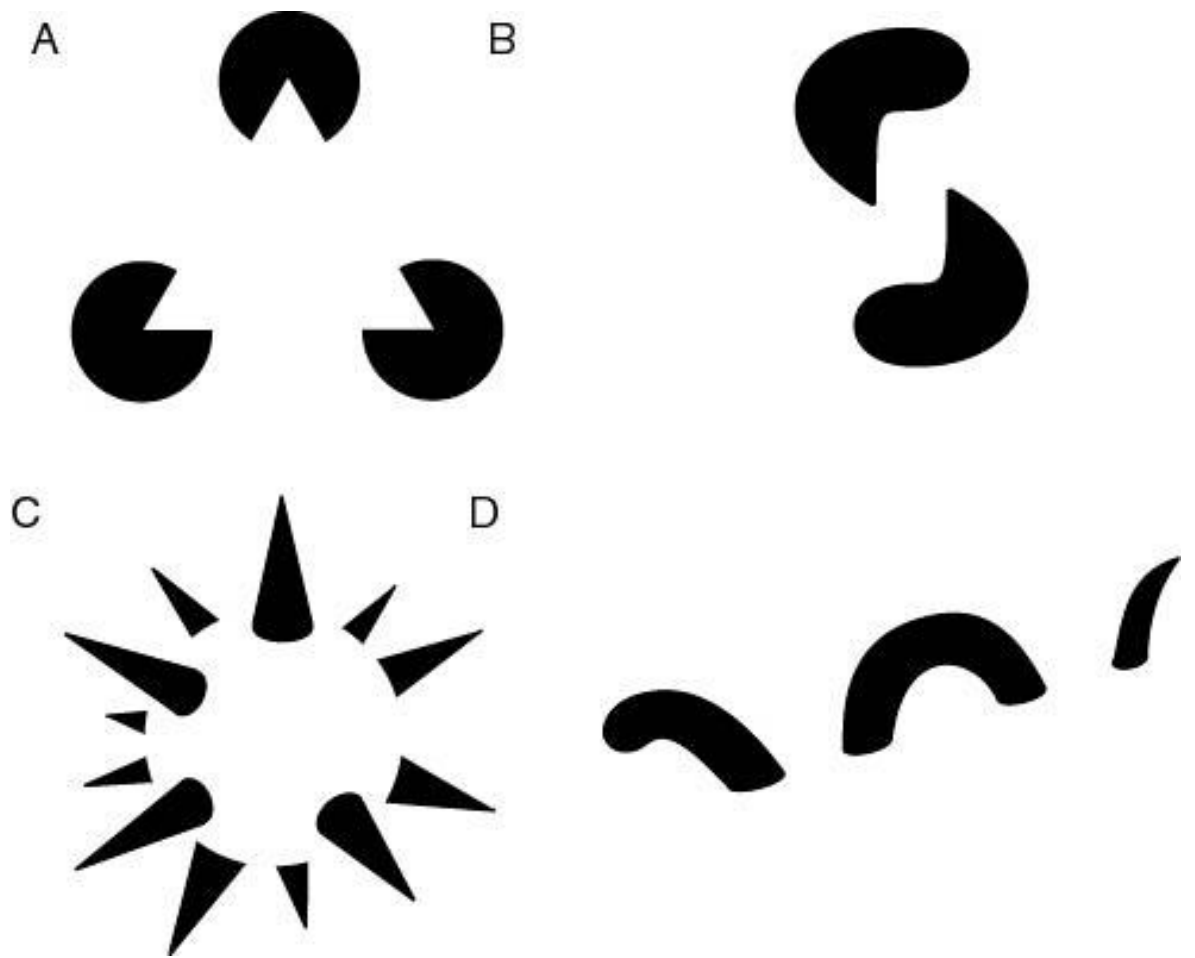


Fig. 71, Reification Images,  
Examples of how the brain 'sees things' that are not actually present



Fig. 72, Echternach Gospels, Matthew page

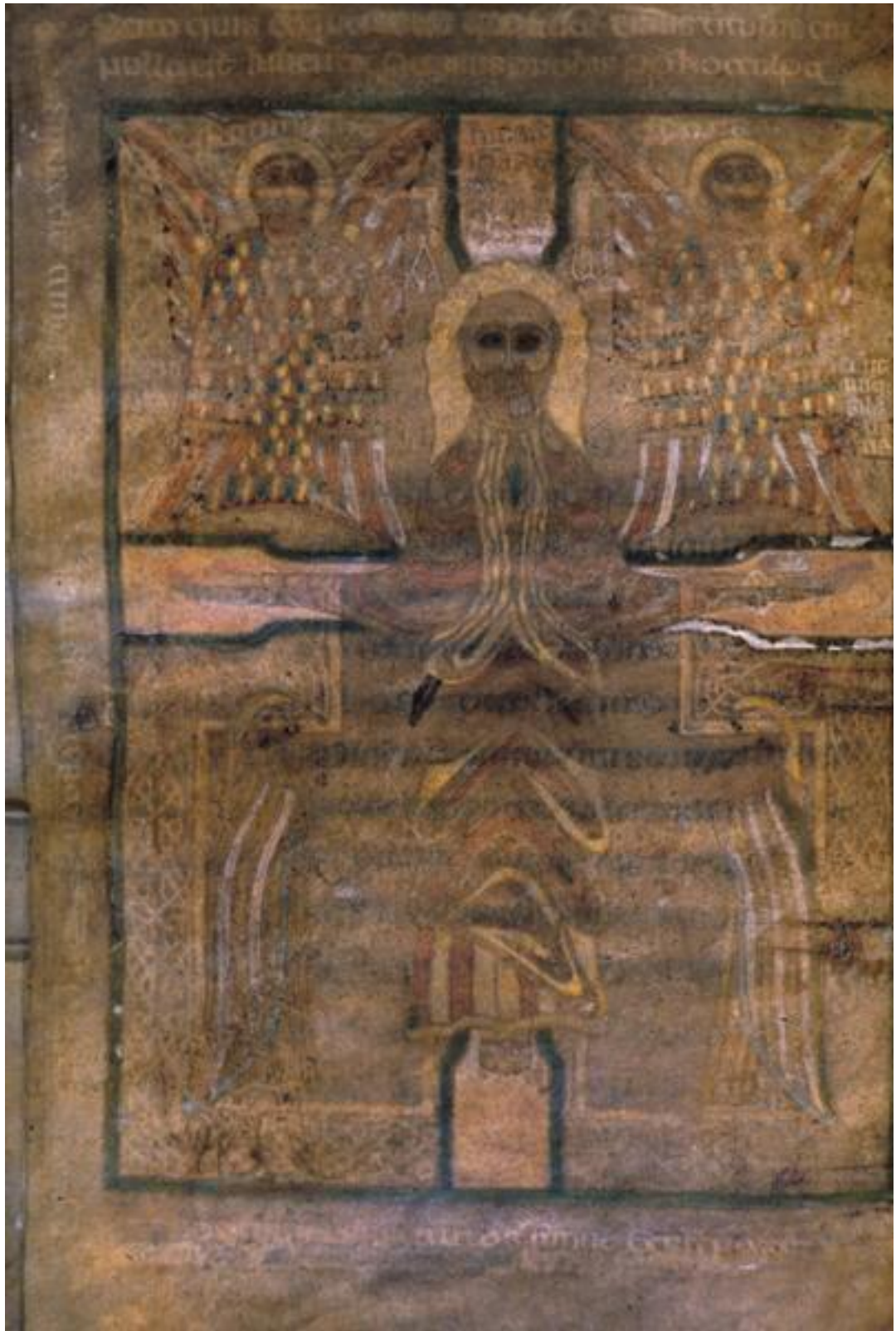


Fig. 73, Durham Gospels Crucifixion page,  
Durham Cathedral Library MS A. II. 17, fol. 38a<sup>v</sup>, date undetermined

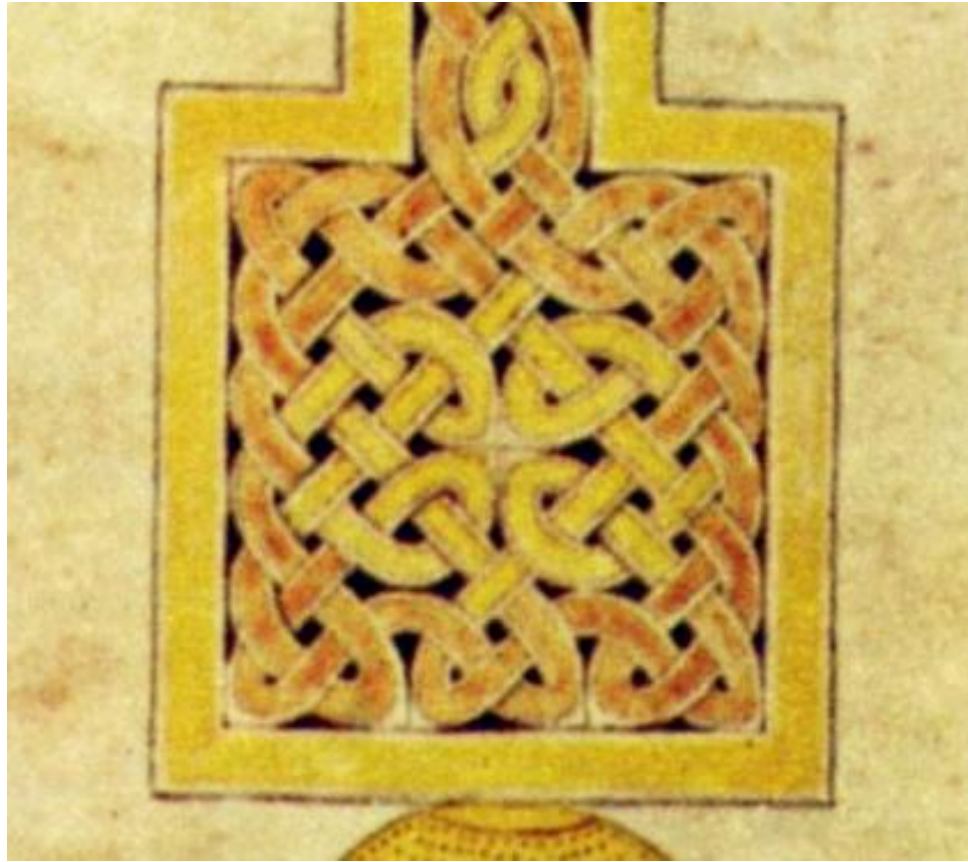


Fig. 74, Echternach Gospels Matthew page border terminal,  
Cross in centre of yellow interlace,  
Proposed 'Book' terminal



Fig. 75a, Man symbol with cross

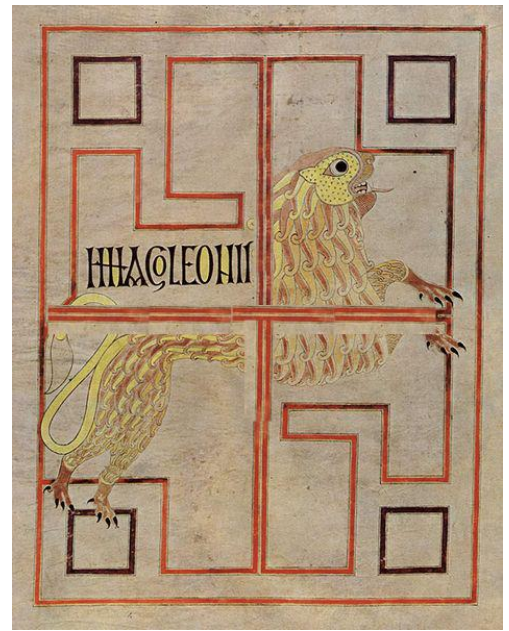


Fig.75b, Lion symbol, 'reified' cross



Fig. 75c, Calf symbol with 'reified' cross



Fig. 75d, Eagle symbol with 'reified' Cross



Fig. 76, Wirkworth Slab illustration, with 4 evangelist symbols arranged around the Cross



Fig. 77, Brandon Evangelist (John/Eagle) Plaque  
Early ninth century



Fig. 78, Sutton Hoo purse lid and belt buckle, British Museum, c. 625





Fig. 79, Bird saddle attachments Bucharest National Museum, c. fifth century and Book of Durrow Eagle symbol





Fig. 80, Book of Durrow Man symbol, fol. 21<sup>v</sup>,  
Trinity College Dublin, seventh century  
and St Patrick's Bell Shrine, Armagh

Fol. 81, 'Niello' Echternach Matthew border and Sutton Hoo Belt Buckle



'Niello' Sutton Hoo Belt Buckle detail, c. 625



Fig. 82, Examples of Jewelled borders seen in the mosaics of San Vitale (above) and San Apollinare in Classe (below), Ravenna, Italy





Fig. 83a. Enthroned Jewelled Cross  
Arian Baptistery Ravenna

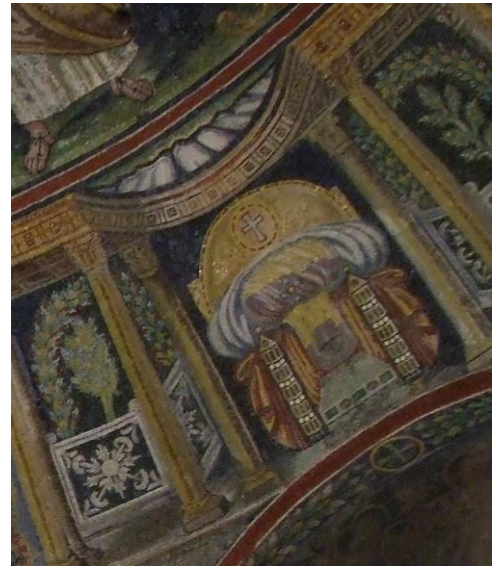


Fig. 83b. Golden Cross enthroned  
Orthodox Baptistery, Ravenna



Fig. 83c, Jewelled Cross,  
Theodoric's Mausoleum Dome  
Ravenna,

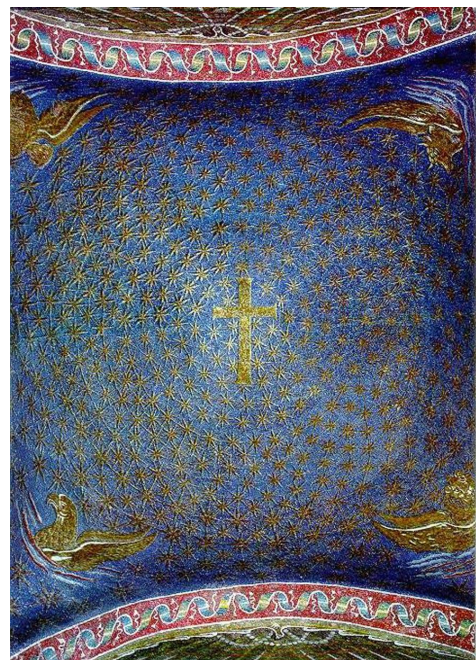


Fig. 83d, Jewelled Cross,  
Galla Placidia's Mausoleum Dome  
Ravenna,



Fig. 84, Priest holding Book, St Gennaro's Catacomb  
Naples, Fifth century



Detail of St Genarro's book with cross



Fig. 85a, Jarrow Cross slab illustration



Fig. 85b, Rupert Cross, eighth century



Fig. 85c. Acca's Cross, Hexham, terminal detail



Fig. 86, Echternach Matthew page





Fig. 87a, Sutton Hoo Purse detail  
'hip joints'



Fig. 87b, Sutton Hoo Belt Buckle with Zoomorphic hip joints



Fig. 87c, Benty Grange Helmet Crest, with hip joints

Fig. 88a, Raven Fibula from Anderlingen,  
(after Wickham Crowley)



Fig. 88b, Sutton Hoo Shield ornament  
With figural hip joint



Fig. 89  
Top left: Echternach eagle symbol  
Top right: San Vitale Eagle symbol  
Middle left: Book of Durrow Symbol  
Middle right: Cambridge-London Eagle  
Bottom left: Knowe of Burray Eagle stone



Fig. 90, Echternach Matthew floral detail



Fig. 91a. Lastingham Cross head with floral boss, Yorkshire (J. Hawkes photograph)



Fig. 91c, Cross with floral boss, embedded in Church wall, Middleton, Yorkshire



Fig. 92, Echternach Gospels Matthew Page



Fig. 93, Book of Durrow Man Symbol

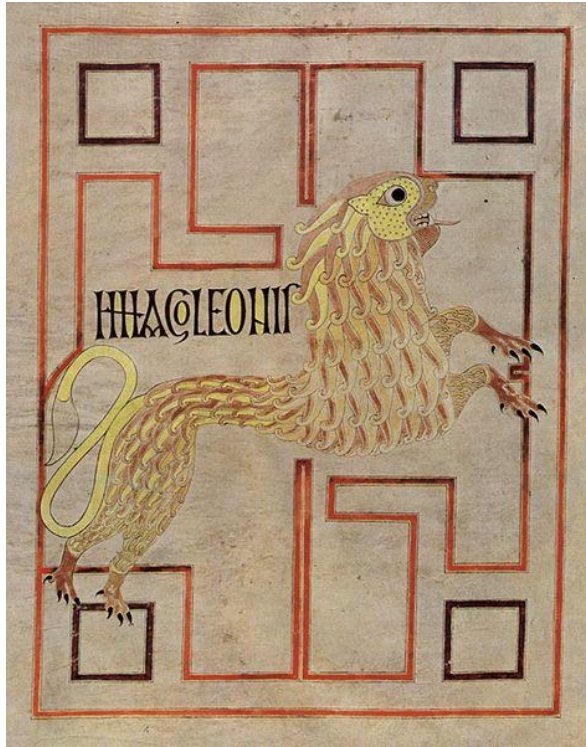


Fig. 94a, Echternach Gospels Lion Symbol page



Fig. 94b, Cambridge London Lion symbol fragment



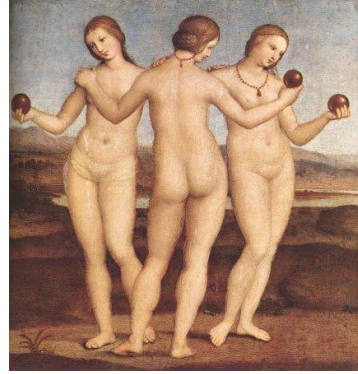


Fig. 95, Book of Cerne Lion/ Mark symbol Evangelist page  
Cambridge University Library, MS Ll. 1. 10, ninth century Anglo-Saxon prayer book  
Mark/Lion

Fig. 96 Apples through the ages



Adam and Eve Panel, Monasterboise



Raphael, 'Apple of the Hesperides'



Rene Magritte, 'Son of Man'



Apple Corps Label, Gene Mahon



Apple Macintosh Logo,  
Rob Janof



Apple iMac logo



Fig 97. Trier Gospels, Matthew Evangelist Page, fol. 187<sup>v</sup>, second quarter of the eighth century, Trier, Domschatz, Cod. 61.



Fig. 98a, Echternach Gospels Matthew Inscription

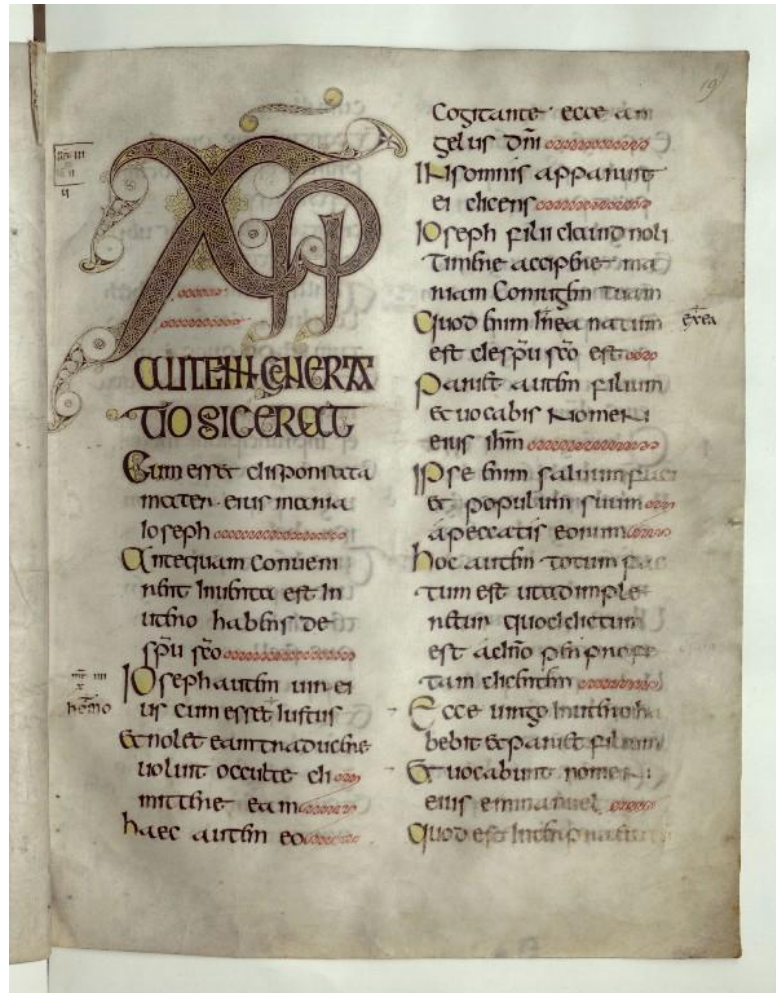


Fig. 98b, Echternach Gospels 'Chi-rho' page  
Fol. 75<sup>v</sup>



Fig. 99, Echternach Matthew 'imago' inscription



Fig. 100, Pillow/Book stone inscribed with  
Alpha and Omega,  
Hartlepool 1A © C.A.S.S.S



Matthew inscription



Mark inscription



Luke inscription



John inscription

Fig. 101, Echternach 'imago' inscriptions



Fig. 102, Interior of St Peter's Church, Wearmouth, Sunderland



Fig. 103, Interior of the Church of Sta Maria in Cosmidin, Rome, c. 600

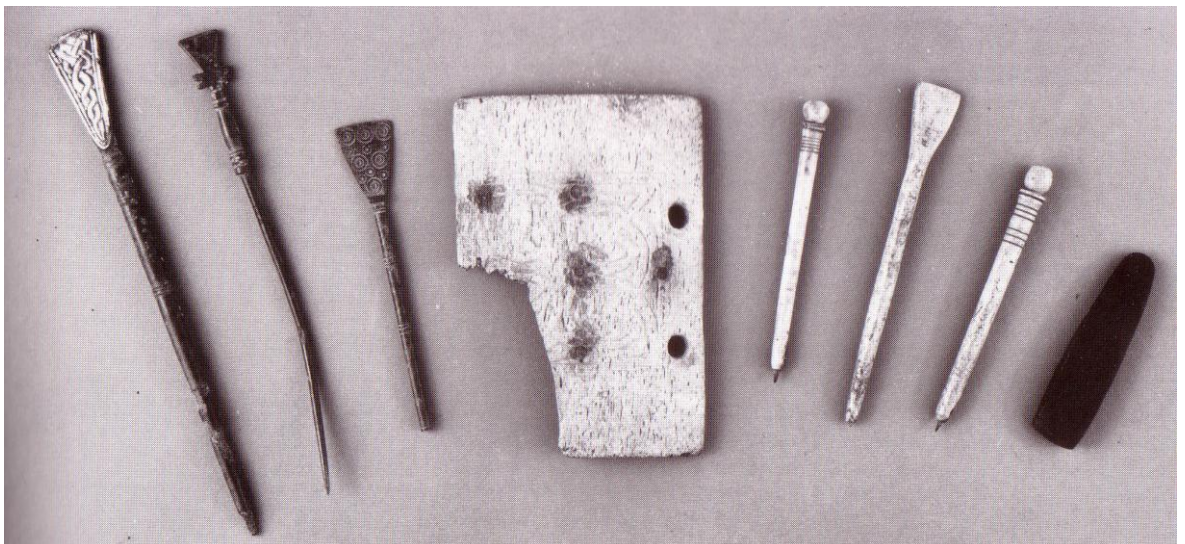


Fig. 104, Early medieval Scribal tools,  
From Backhouse, J. *The Lindisfarne Gospels* (London, 1981)





Fig. 105, Bewcastle Monument, Northumbria, Early eighth century

Fig. 106 Ruthwell's Iconography, images after Collingwood.

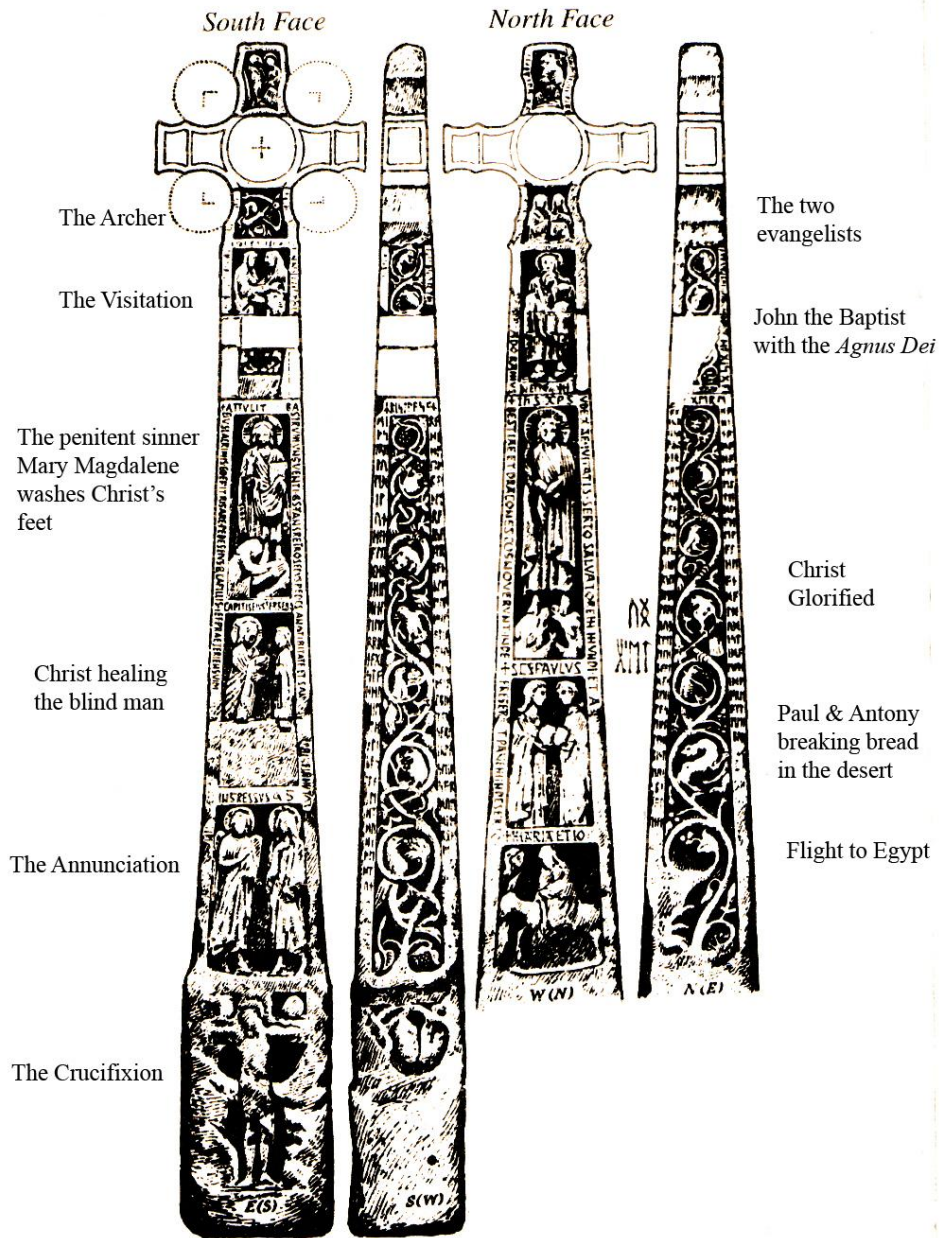




Fig. 107 Bewcastle inscription, West face.



Fig. 108, Lindisfarne Gospels, Matthew Evangelist portrait  
British Library, London, fol. 25<sup>v</sup>

4 v  
CODICIBVS SACRIS HOSTILI CLADE PERVSTIS  
ESDRA DŌ FERVENS HOC REPARAVIT OPVS

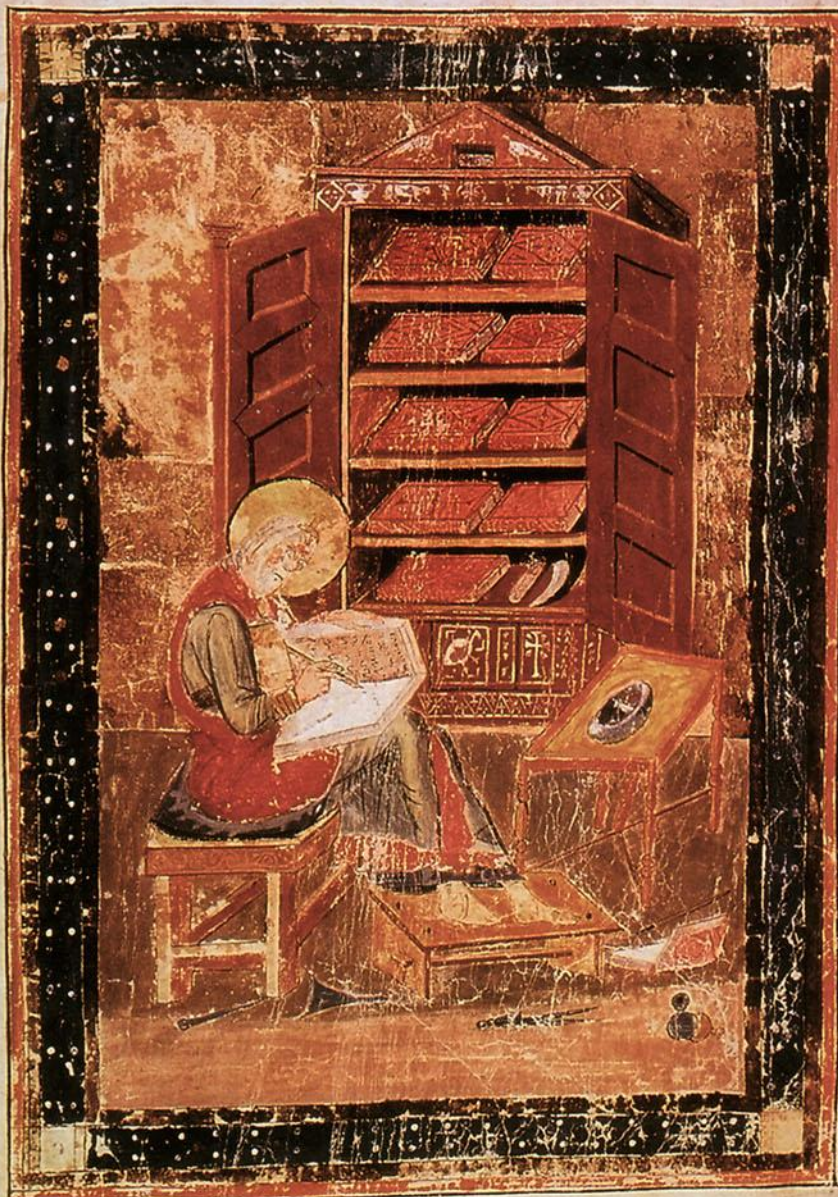


Fig. 109, Codex Amiatinus, Ezra portrait,  
Laurentian Library Florence, fol. 5<sup>v</sup>



Fig. 111 Ruthwell 'Christ on the beasts' panel  
now facing North (originally) West side.



Fig. 110,  
Bewcastle 'Christ on the beasts' panel,  
West face.

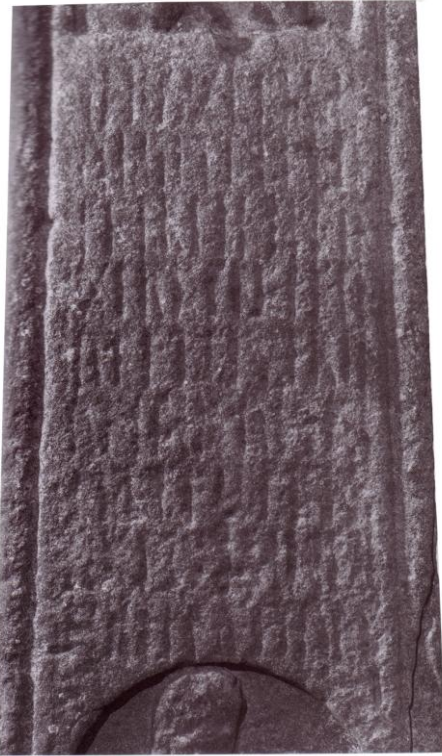


Fig. 112, Bewcastle Inscription



Fig. 113, Ruthwell Inscription

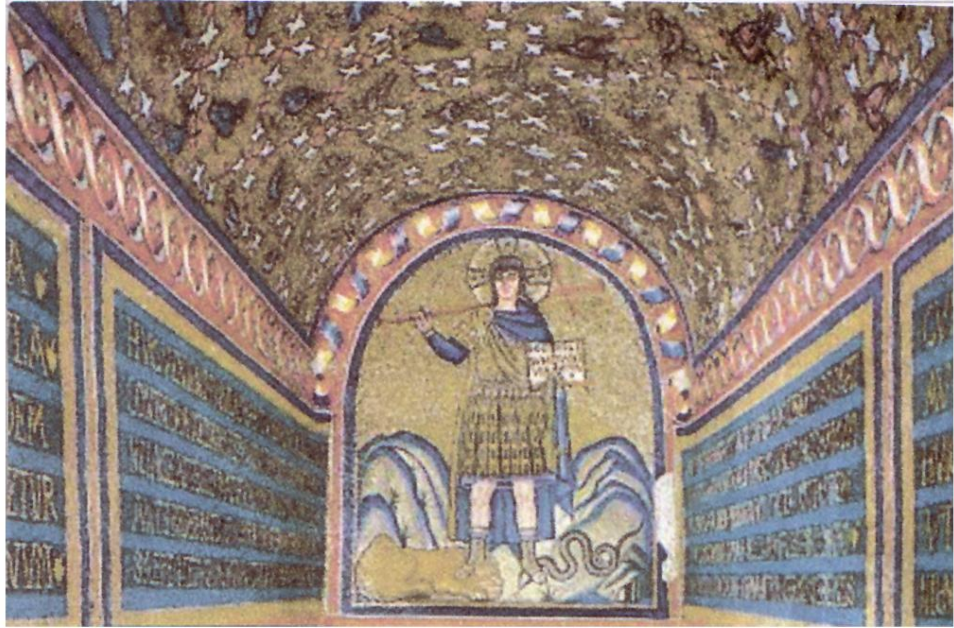


Fig. 114, 'Christ on the beasts' mosaic, Archiepiscopal Chapel, Ravenna., sixth-century



Fig. 115 'Christ on the beasts' stucco panel, Neonian Baptistery, Ravenna, sixth century



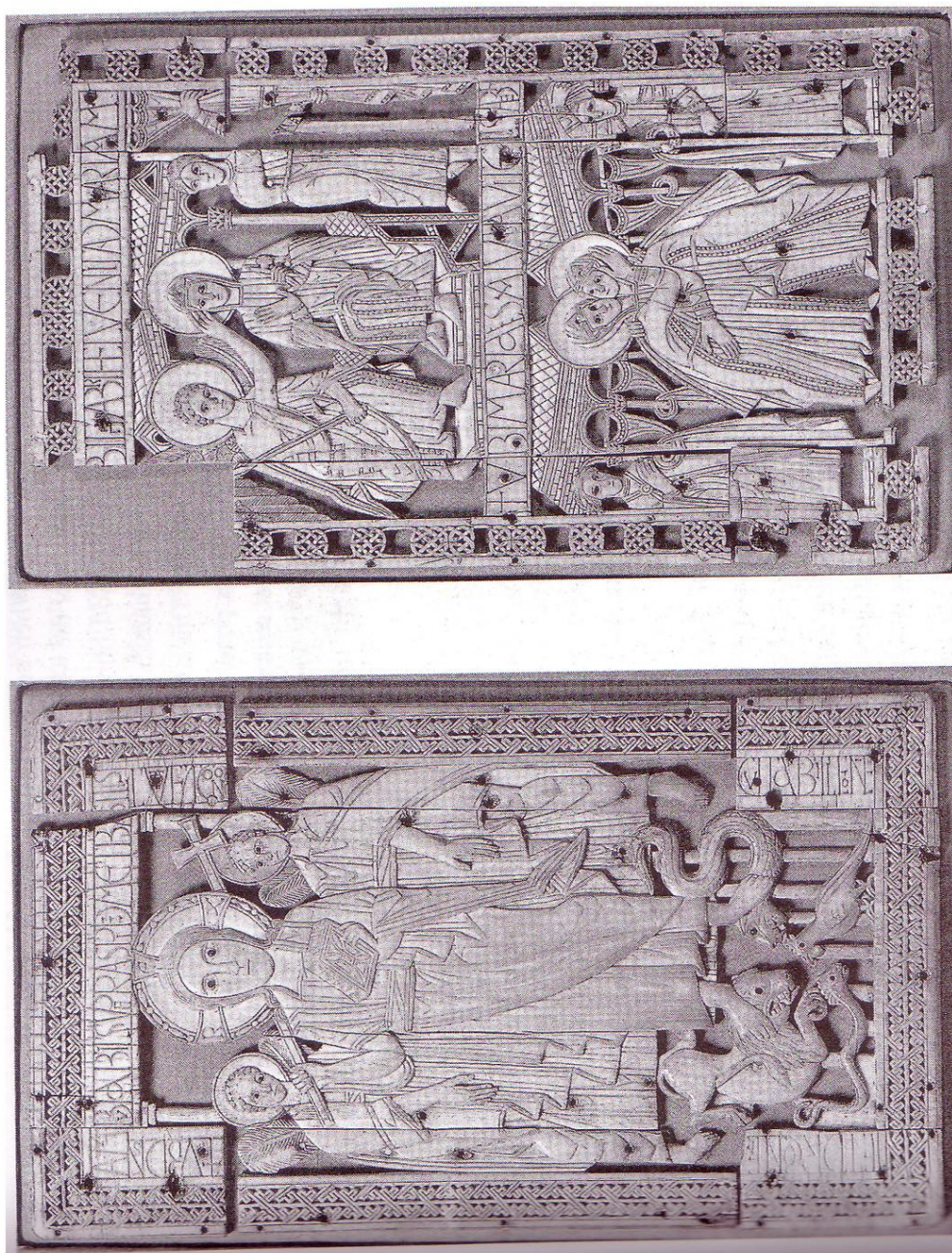
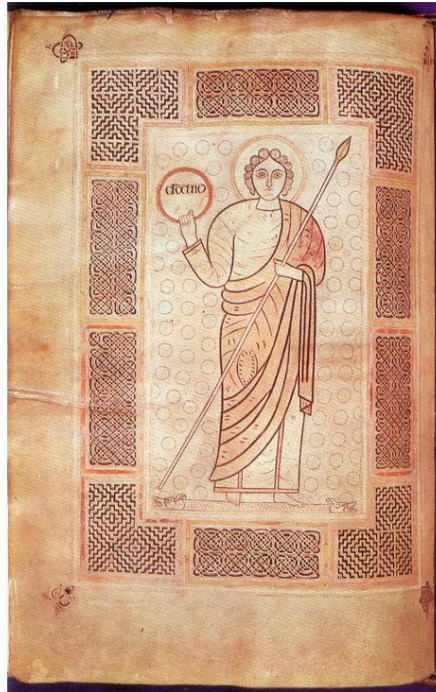


Fig. 116 Genesio-Elders Ivory Diptych, , Brussels Musées Royaux d'art et d'histoire, eighth century.



Fig. 117 Ivory Bookcover showing 'Christ on the beasts',  
Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 176  
Palace School Aachen, dated by Beckwith to late eighth or early ninth century.

Fig. 118 Examples of men on or amidst animals seen in other forms and contexts



King David as Warrior (typus Christus)  
Durham Cassiodorus,  
Durham Cathedral Library,  
MS B.II.30 f.172v.  
Second quarter of eighth century,  
Northumbria

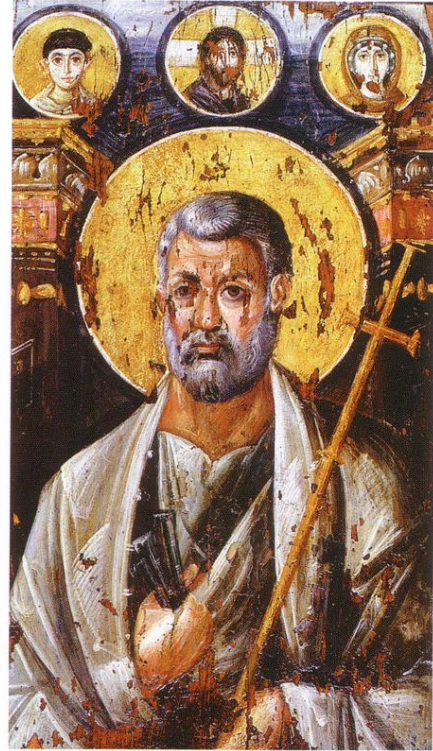
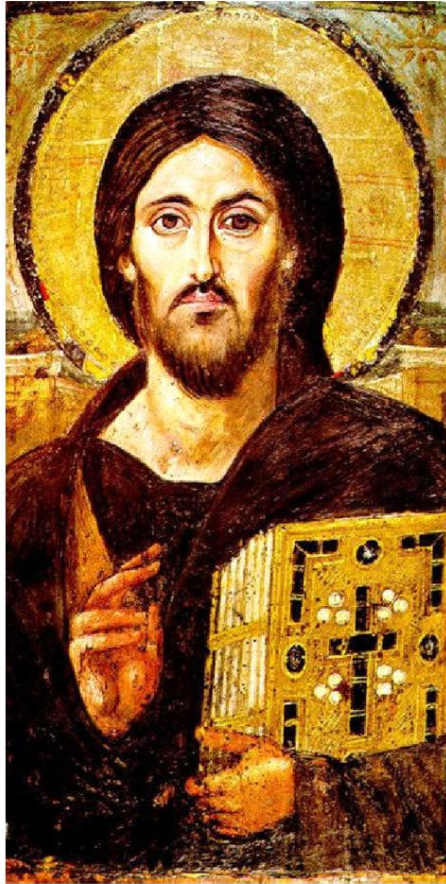


Sutton Hoo Purse Lid,  
detail of man between animals,  
British Museum, first quarter of seventh century



Franks Casket lid detail,  
British Museum, c.800,  
Northumbria.

Fig. 119 Sinai Icons, St Catherine's monastery, Sinai., sixth century.



Above: Sinai Christ icon,  
Above right: Sinai St Peter icon.  
Bottom right: Sinai Theotokos Hodegedria  
with Sts George/Demitrius & Theodore.  
Encaustic painting on wood panel,  
St Catherine's monastery, Sinai, sixth century.





Fig. 120 Top: Bewcastle roll mouldings detail. Below: Ruthwell flat moulding detail



Fig. 121, Bewcastle West face at 5.00am on Summer Solstice



Fig. 122 Bewcastle East face at 5.00am on Summer Solstice



Fig. 123, Bewcastle Monument, west face, 9.00am





Bewcastle sundial on South face,

Fig. 124, Sundials



Escomb sundial,  
on South exterior wall  
of church,



Kirkdale sundial,  
Above western entrance to  
St Gregory's minster,  
10th century



Fig. 125a Bewcastle South face,  
2 foliate panels





Fig. 125b, Bewcastle South face,  
detail of 'sapling' on lowermost foliate panel





Fig. 126a  
Lowermost foliate panel,  
North face, Bewcastle

Fig. 126b  
'Gathered' and 'Tied' detail,  
Bewcastle, North face





Fig.127, Areobindus diptych, 506AD,  
Louvre Museum



Sividius diptych detail, c. 488AD



Fig. 128 Proposed 'poppies' on North face of Bewcastle

Details of Poppy seedhead and poppy leaves





Fig. 129 Bewcastle, North face  
uppermost foliate panel with  
'stepped base' detail



Fig. 130 Sta Pudensiana apse Mosaic, c.390AD, Rome





Fig. 131, Wilton Cross, Norfolk, c.675-700, coin of Emperor Heraclius (610-41) mounted upside down to be seen by the wearer.

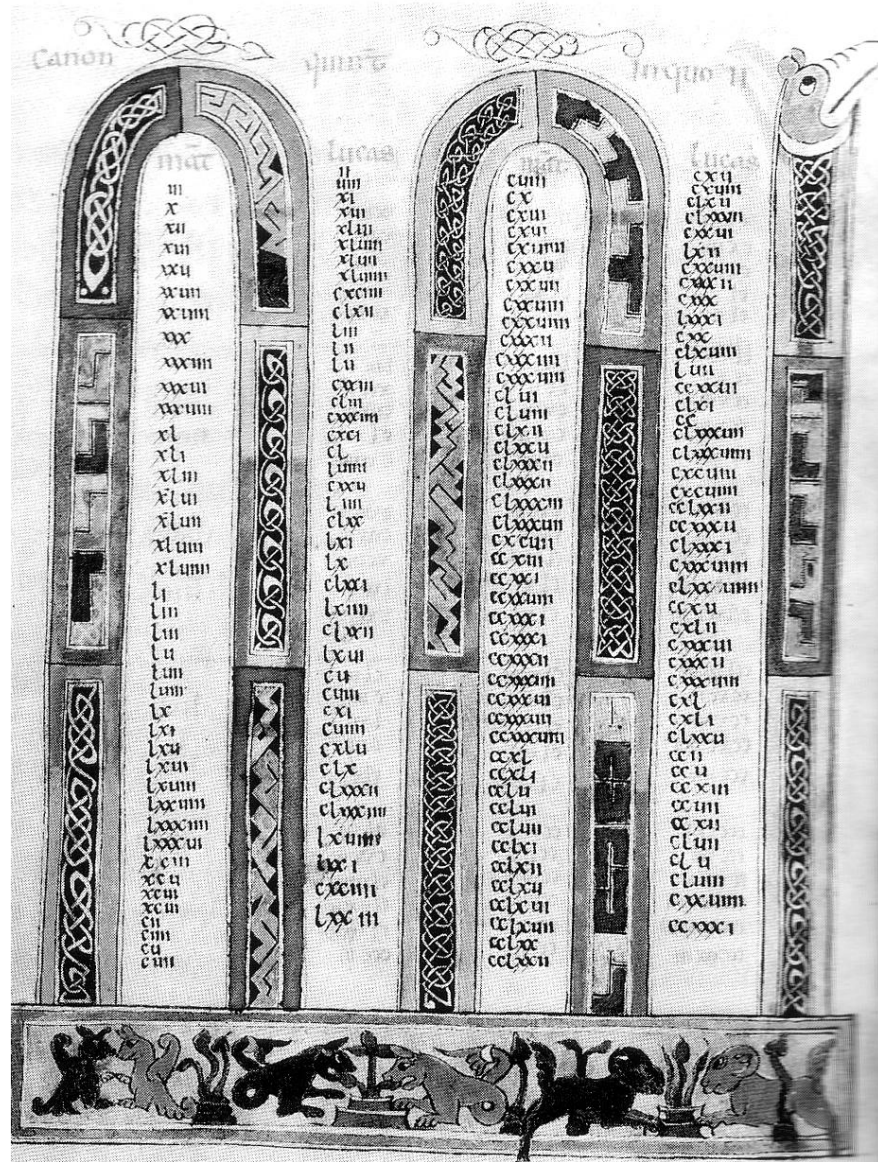


Fig. 132 Cuthbert Gospels, fol.19v., Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Probably produced in Salzburg by a Northumbrian scribe, c. eighth century



Fig. 133, North & west corner:  
'Christ on the beasts'  
Indicating towards stepped base

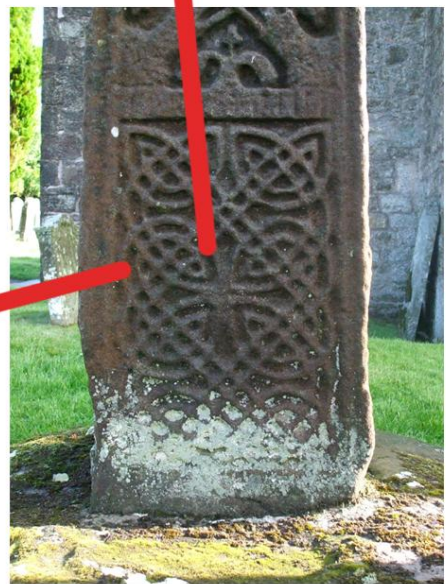
Fig. 134, Hidden Crosses and details



Bewcastle sundial in South face



'Cross' detail



Knotwork panel on South face.

Fig. 135 'embracing' arrangement of foliate panels



North Face



West Face



South Face

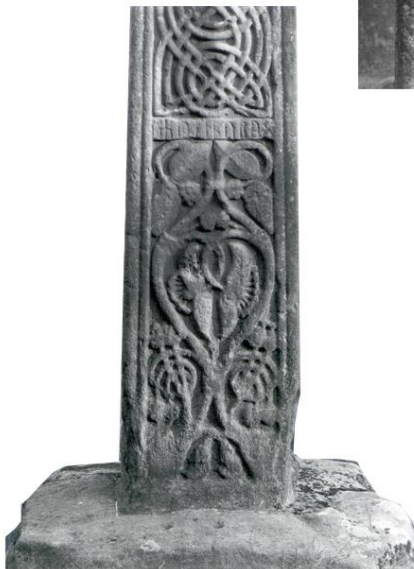




Fig. 136 Franks Casket, British Museum,  
Marine ivory, c.800, Northumbria



Fig. 137 Brescia Lipsanoteca Casket, Italy (?)  
second half of the fourth century,  
Civici Musei d'Arte e Storia, Brescia



Fig. 138 Franks Casket back panel showing Titus's destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in AD 70  
Marine Ivory, c.800, Northumbria, British Museum.



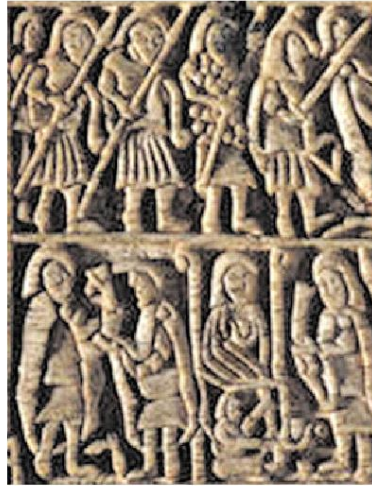


Fig. 139 Detail of back panel's double register



Trajan's Column + detail of superimposed registers

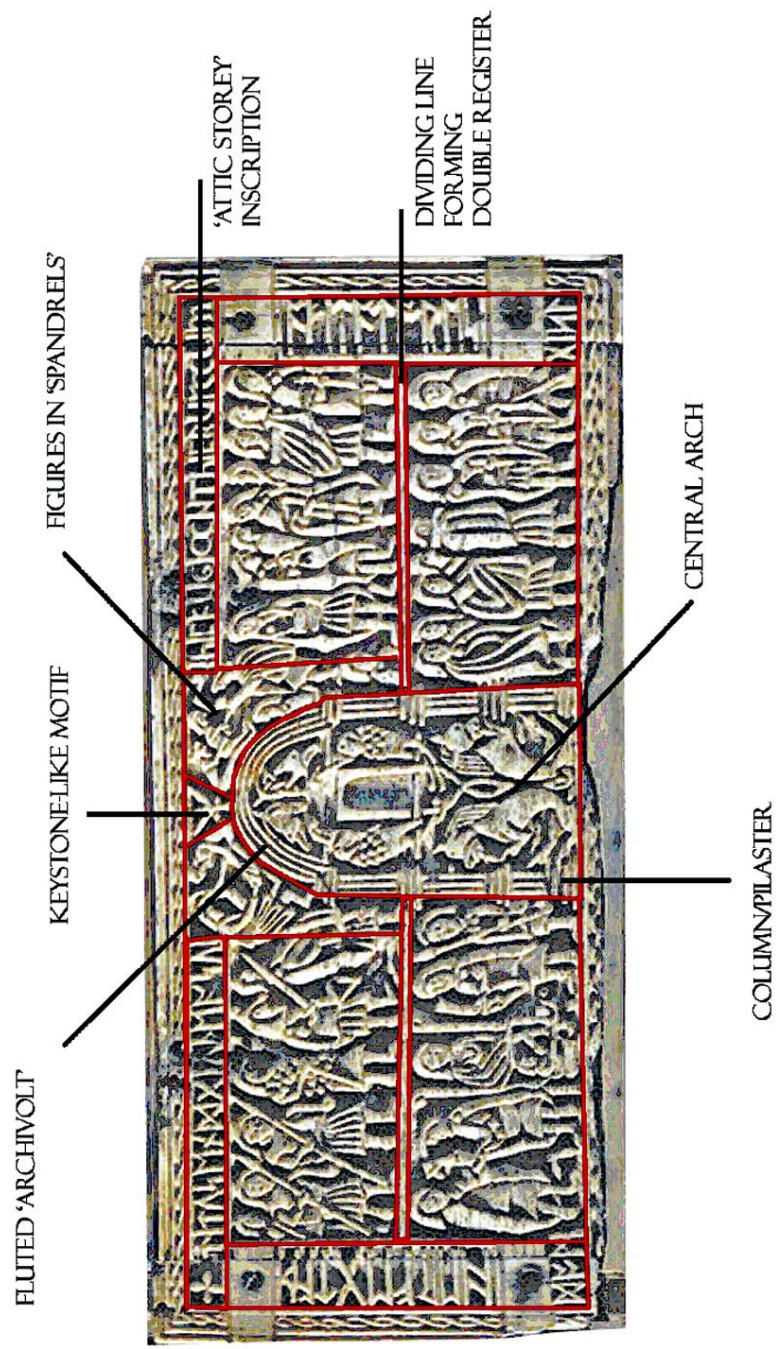


Fig. 140a Diagram of Franks Casket's features associated with triumphal arches

ARCH OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS, VIA SACRA, ROME, DATE

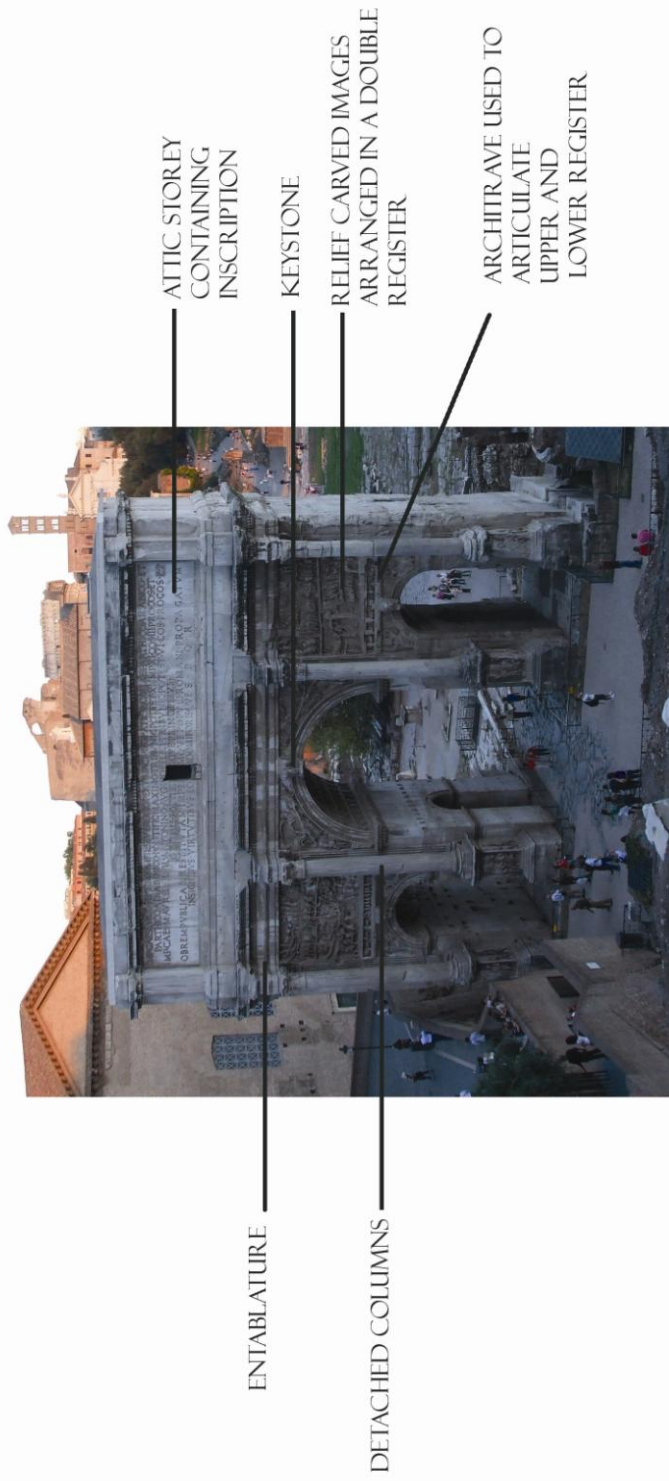


Fig. 140b Features of triumphal arches: Severus's Arch with superimposed registers



Fig. 141 Arch of Titus, Via Sacra, Rome, c.72 AD.



Fig. 142 View of the Roman Forum with Arch of Severus and Arch of Titus

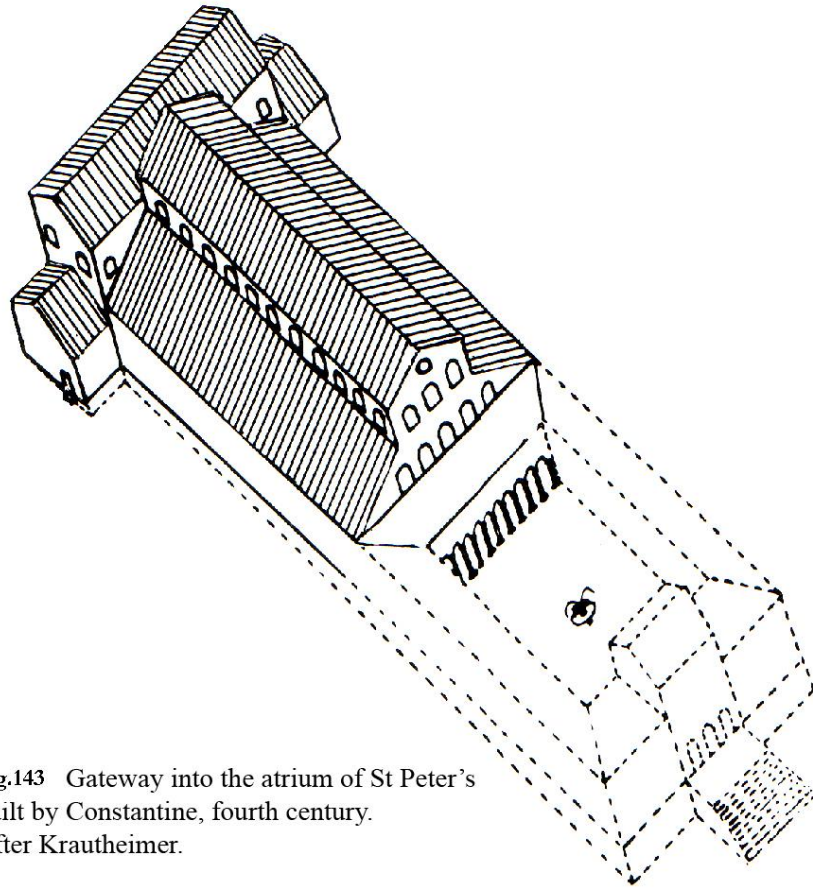


Fig.143 Gateway into the atrium of St Peter's built by Constantine, fourth century. After Krautheimer.



Constantine's Arch, c. 312-315



Fig. 144 Triumphal arch over the nave of S. Lorenzo *Fuori le mura*, Rome, c.seventh century

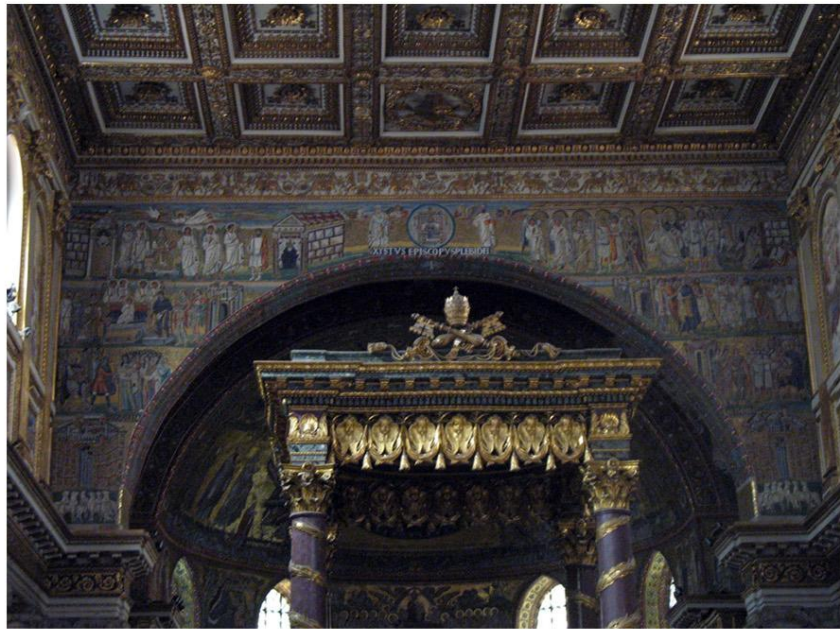


Fig. 145 Sta Maria Maggiore, Triumphal arch over the nave, Rome, c.430

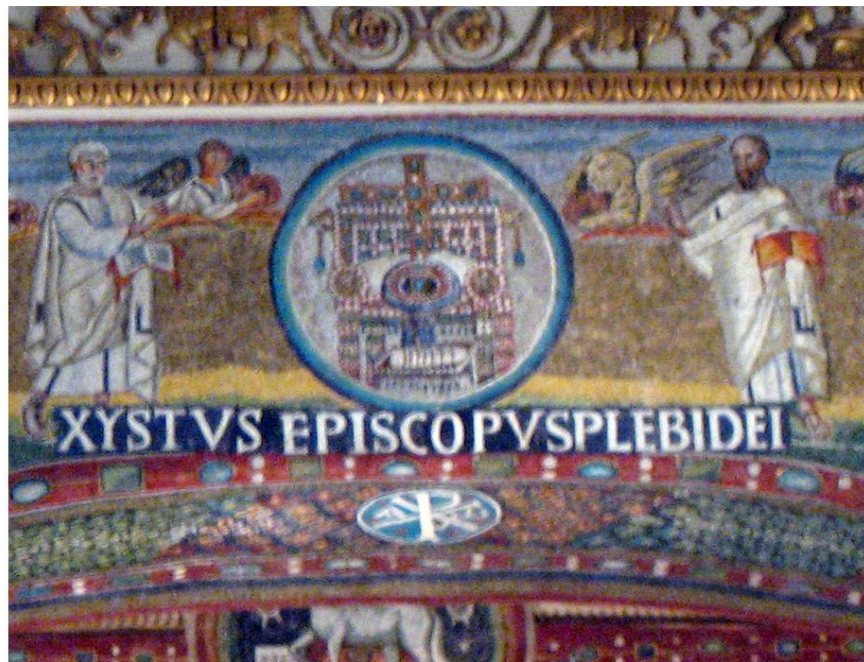


Fig. 146 Sta Maria Maggiore medallion detail, Rome, c.430





Fig. 147 Franks Casket:  
Top: Lid showing dynamic perspective  
middle: Franks Casket front and side view  
bottom: Left side showing Romulus and Remus  
in unconventional icinographic rendering.





Fig. 148 Frieze from the Arch of Constantine, back, left side, Rome, c.312-15

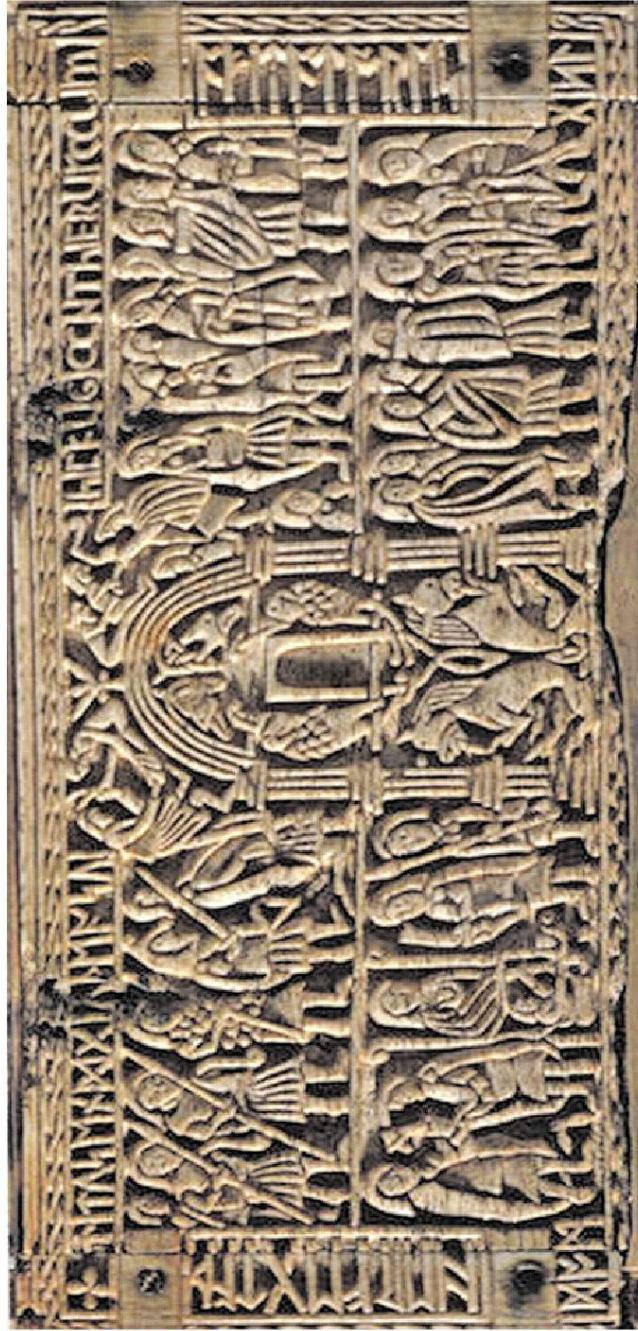


Fig. 149 Franks Casket back panel showing Titus's destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in AD 70  
Marine Ivory, c.800, Northumbria, British Museum.



Fig. 150, St Wilfrid's Crypt at Hexham (top)  
Roman string course embedded in to wall of crypt entrance (bottom)



Fig. 151, Hexham Crypt, Roman inscription



Fig. 152a, Hexham 'viticulture' fragment

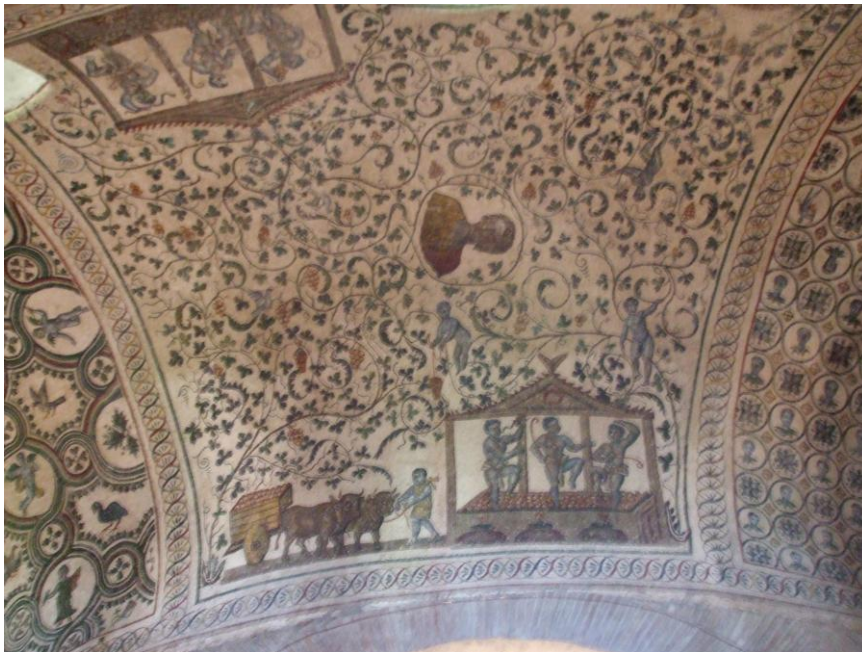


Fig. 152b, Mosaic from Dome of Sta Constanza, Rome



Fig. 152c, Sta Constanza's porphyry sarcophagus,



Fig 152c, Carved rosette, Roman or Anglo-Saxon (?), Hexham Church



Fig. 153. e.g. Hexham carved animal



Fig. 153, Hexham stone carved fish



Fig. 153. top: Acca's Cross, Hexham, bottom, Spital Cross, Hexham





Fig. 156, Hexham Plaque, incised on both sides, silver,  
British Museum



Fig. 157, Hexham, St Andrew's, Frith Stool, solid stone,

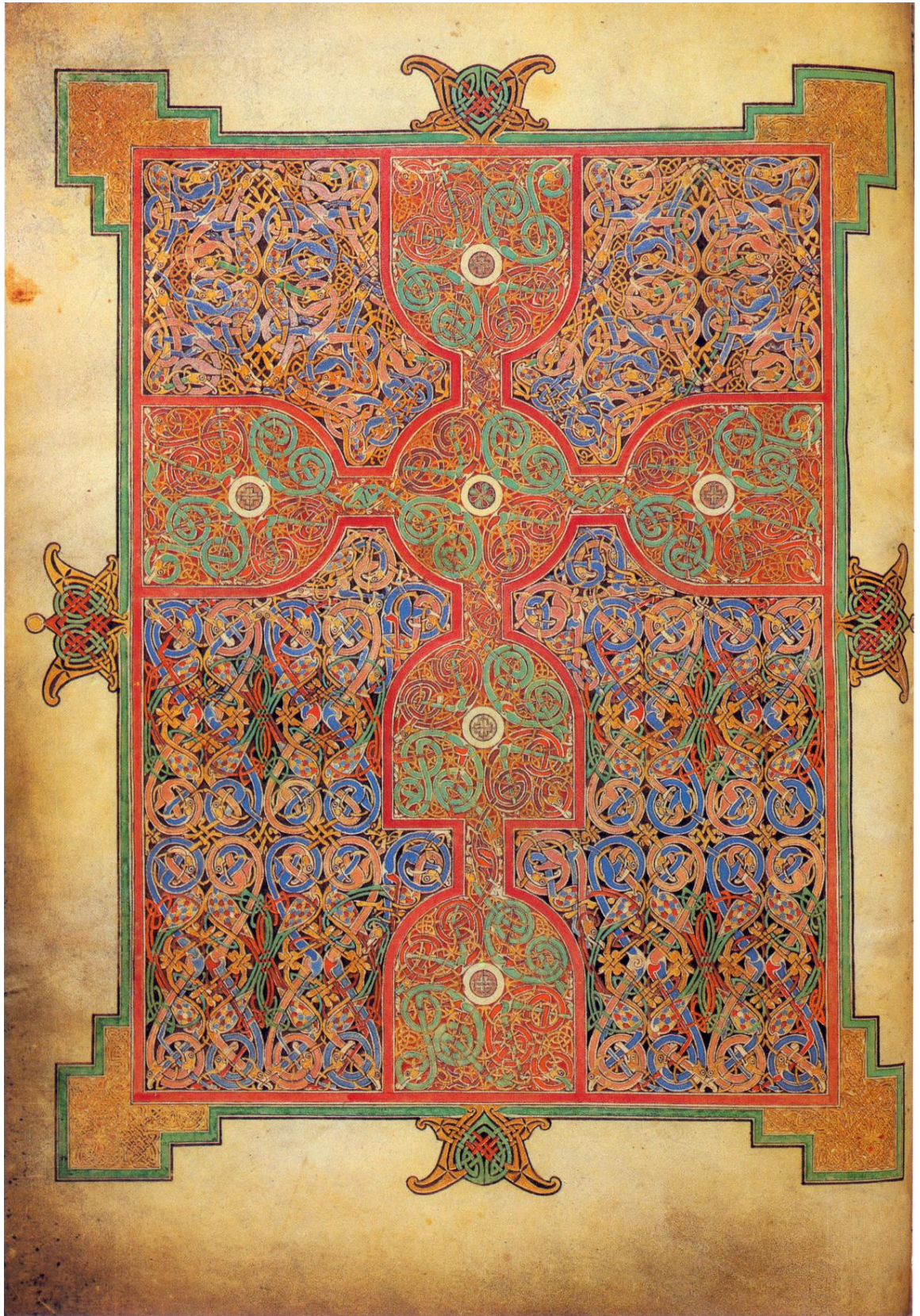


Fig. 158, Lindisfarne Gospels, cross-carpet page, fol.26<sup>v</sup>, British Library, London  
c.700



Fig. 159, Lindisfarne Gospels 'Liber Generationis', Matthew Incipit, Fol.27<sup>r</sup>, British Museum, London c.700



Fig. 160, The Ormside Bowl, Yorkshire Museum,  
Mid eighth century, Northumbria

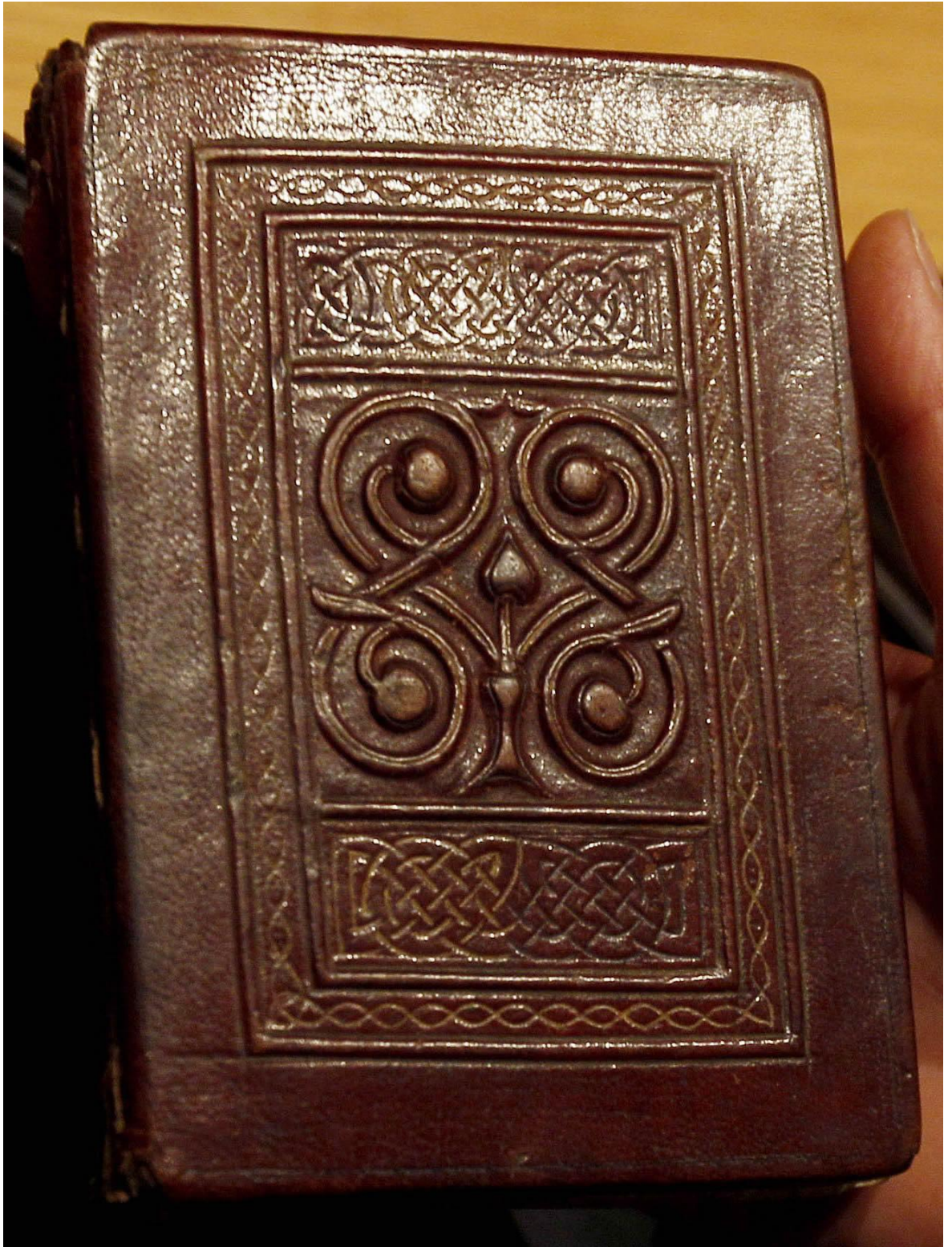


Fig. 161, The Stonyhurst Gospels, British Library, Manuscript associated with St Cuthbert, shortly to be returned to Durham Cathedral. 7<sup>th</sup> century, Northumbria.

