

A. B. Gaulton, *Studies in the Hist. of Medieval Italian
Painting 1-4 (1953-62) 4, p. 266*

Such an analysis would suggest a date in the later 11th or possibly the very early 12th century, which is compatible with the palaeographic evidence quoted above. The illumination would precede that of the Gospels in the Vallicelliana, Ms. E.16 (Fig. 9)¹⁶, or the even later Gospels in the Laurentian Library, Florence, 17.27¹⁷.

Turning to an examination of the iconography of the Evangelists it should first be noted that all four portraits are in essentials identical. This may indicate a poverty of models or it may be a conscious choice made with the aim of balancing the Evangelist and the text in the right hand column. In any event though profile writing types are numerous in both Eastern and Western Gospels there are two features which are less usual¹⁸. One is the placing of the book vertically not horizontally on the lectern together with the position of the Evangelists' hands, particularly the left hand holding the book. The other is the placing of the lectern stand between the figures' knees.

In comparison to the large numbers of Gospels from the 9th century onwards produced in Northern Europe, in France, Germany and England, rather few Italian examples seem to exist. This may be due to accidents of survival, but on the other hand the chances of highly illuminated books of this kind being preserved are relatively high and it may rather reflect an historical situation. Certainly the patronage of the Carolingian Emperors and later of their successors, the Ottonian Emperors, was responsible for the production of numerous luxury copies of the Gospels in France and Germany in the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries. In 10th and 11th-century England and France it seems to have been more the revival of Benedictine monasticism which was mainly responsible for the production of luxury Gospels. Their scribes and artists however, certainly sought to emulate Carolingian and Ottonian manuscripts.

Some of these northern *de luxe* manuscripts found their way to Italy. Neither of the two best-known examples, the Carolingian Bible of San Paolo fuori le mura which, of course, contains Evangelist portraits, nor the Ottonian Gospels probably given to Monte Cassino by Henry II show any connection with the Evangelist type in the present Gospels¹⁹. It is worth mentioning that another late 11th-century Gospels attributed to Monte Cassino by E. A. Lowe (Vat. lat. 3741) has an Evangelist Matthew with an angel symbol of a type found in a 9th century Gospels from Würzburg and also in two copies made in the 11th century, one also from Würzburg, the other from northern France²⁰. This indicates at least a diversity of sources available in Italy at this date.

One type of Western profile portrait was established in the St. Matthew of the Coronation Gospels of Charlemagne of c. 800, and is diffused via the Rheims and Franco-Saxon schools²¹. This includes the book on a lectern and the ink well. Another type with the left hand placed on the lap,



10 Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, San Pietro D. 153, folio 19v. St. Matthew

not on the lectern, is seen in the Godescalc Gospel Lectionary of c. 783 in the St. Mark²². This is also common and seen in the Chigi Gospels discussed earlier (Fig. 8). But the closest portrait I have come across so far to those in the Sta. Maria in Trastevere Gospels is the St. Matthew (Fig. 10) in a Gospels of unknown provenance but which is now in the Vatican (San Pietro D. 153)²³. This important relatively unknown manuscript which has a number of interesting Gospel scenes in addition to Canon Tables, portraits and initials, is likely to come in my opinion from the border areas with Germany either in Flanders or in eastern France and to date to the 11th century.

That the resemblance in the two unusual particulars mentioned above, the position of book, hands and ink well, and of the lectern stand between the knees is significant here, it would obviously be rash to assert in the present state of knowledge. One might, however, go so far as to say that the artists of the Sta. Maria in Trastevere Gospels are likely to have used a more recent, that is an 11th-century Gospels as a model and perhaps one from north France or Flanders rather than a Carolingian or Ottonian model²⁴.

In conclusion the Gospel of Sta. Maria in Trastevere is of interest and importance first because it is a significant

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