Salvation in Nuremberg:

An Iconographic Description of Selected

Historiated Initials from the Geese Book

by

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ABSTRACT

Morgan Library MS M.905 (the Geese Book) is the last known illuminated gradual produced for the Church of St. Lorenz in Nuremberg, Germany. The Geese Book, which was created during the early sixteenth century, has been in the collection of the Morgan Library since 1961. This thesis describes the iconography of the eight historiated initials that illustrate the earthly life of Christ from the Annunciation to the Ascension. A detailed description of the content of each initial is followed by a brief history of the iconographic development of the identified event in order to determine whether or not the Geese Book uses a standard or nonstandard iconography. The results of this analysis reveal how this manuscript fits into the broader contexts of Christian art as well as the specific time and place of its creation. It shows that the iconography of the Geese Book reflected current theological beliefs and societal norms and allowed contemporary viewers of the Geese Book to feel a strong connection to the depicted events.

To my family

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INTRODUCTION

The Geese Book is the last known illuminated gradual (the liturgical manuscript that contains the choral parts for the mass) created for the Church of St. Lorenz in Nuremberg, Germany. This title (Gänsebuch in German) comes from a *bas-de-page* illumination on folio 186r of volume I that shows a choir of geese directed by a wolf. The Geese Book was likely commissioned during Sixtus Tucher's time as provost of the church and the two volumes were completed during the time of his successor, Anton Kress, who became provost in 1504.[1]

The manuscript comprises two large volumes. The first volume, which was finished in 1507, begins the cycle of Masses called the Temporal, which includes those Sundays and festivals related to the life of Christ. It has 299 parchment leaves and measures 65.4 by 44.5 cm closed. The second volume, which was finished three years later in 1510, begins with the Feast for the Vigil of St. Andrew, the common starting place for the cycle of masses called the Sanctoral, which celebrates the lives of the saints.[2] It has 261 parchment leaves and measures 65.4 by 43.8 cm closed.

The colophon found at the beginning of volume I states that Friedrich Rosendorn, the vicar of the Church of St. Lorenz, was the scribe responsible for

[1] Corine Schleif, *Donatio et Memoria: Stifter, Stiftung und Motivationen an Beispielen aus der Lorenzkirche in Nürnberg* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1990), 215.

[2] Christopher de Hamel discusses these two cycles in his chapter on books for priests in *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 2nd ed. (London: Phaidon Press, 1994), 200-231.

the text and musical notation.  The illuminations are attributed to the most famous illuminator in Nuremberg at the time, Jakob Elsner, who also illuminated the Kress Missal several years later.[3]  Although there are no known extant documents relating to the commission and subsequent creation of the Geese Book, it can be presumed that the process followed the standards of the day and that Elsner's illuminations were the final addition before the book was bound and the folios were trimmed.[4]

The Geese Book remained in Nuremberg until 1952, when the officials of the Church of St. Lorenz gave it to Samuel H. Kress and Rush H. Kress (as representatives of the American people) in recognition of their funding the rebuilding of the church after World War II.  On December 30, 1952, Rush H. Kress gave the Geese Book to the National Gallery of Art.  It was then transferred, by exchange, to the Morgan Library as a gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in December 1961.[5]

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[3] Ulrich Merkl, *Buchmalerei in Bayern in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts: Spätblüte und Endzeit einer Gattung* (Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 1999), 386.  The Geese Book is catalogue number 65 and the Latin text and German translations of the colophons from volumes I and II can also be found in Merkl's catalogue entry.  See also William D. Wixom, "Gradual (in Latin)," in *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg 1300-1550* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 187-191.

[4] A detailed description of the physical process of creating a manuscript such as the Geese Book can be found in Christopher de Hamel, *The British Library Guide to Manuscript Illumination; History and Techniques* (London: The British Library, 2001).

[5] Additional information on the history of the Geese Book can be found in Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "Das Gänsebuch: Stimmen vom Rand und aus der Mitte," *St. Lorenz: Der Hallenchor und das Gänsebuch* (Verein zu Erhaltung der St. Lorenzkirche in Nürnberg), NS 48, 2002, 64-75.

The scenes from salvation history illuminated in the Geese Book can be found in several forms: historiated initials (initials that contain an identifiable incident, whether narrative or iconic) and *bas-de-page* illuminations (illuminations that are found at the bottom of the page).[6] Together, the two volumes contain eighteen historiated initials, with eleven in the first and seven in the second. Each of the two volumes also contains eleven *bas-de-page* illuminations, although the majority of these do not have scenes from salvation history.[7]

As Michael Baxandall states in *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, "The painter was a professional visualizer of the holy stories."[8] The intent of this thesis, therefore, is to explore the iconographic possibilities that creators of the Geese Book had available to them and attempt an explanation of why each illumination was illustrated as it was. The illuminations discussed here are the eight historiated initials depicting the life of Christ from his incarnation to his return to Heaven. Several methodologies will be used to identify the iconographic precedents and histories of these initials. Textual sources will also be utilized and for a few of the initials possible text-image relationships within the Geese Book will be proposed.

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[6] An excellent discussion of the various types of initials and marginal decorations used in illuminated manuscripts can be found in Christopher de Hamel, *The British Library Guide to Manuscript Illumination: History and Techniques* (London: The British Library, 2001).

[7] A list of all of the historiated initials and *bas-de-page* illuminations in the Geese Book can be found in William D. Wixom, "Gradual (in Latin)," in *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg 1300-1550* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 187-191 and Merkl, *Buchmalerei in Bayern*, 386.

[8] Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 45.

Every attempt will be made to show how this liturgical manuscript fits into the broader contexts of Christian art and iconography as well as the time and place in which it was created.

THE ADORATION OF THE CHILD

Volume I, Folio 22r

On folio 22r of volume I of the Geese Book is a historiated initial P (*PUER NATUS EST NOBIS*) that begins the introit for the Christmas Day Mass and depicts the Adoration of the Child (Figures 1 and 2).[9] The Virgin Mary kneels on the left-hand side of the initial. Dressed in an elegantly draped blue robe with a voluminous blue cloak edged with gold, she is depicted with flowing blond hair that is uncovered and reaches well below her shoulders. Her head is tilted downward and to the side as she gazes at the Christ Child with her hands touching each other in a gesture of prayer. She has a gold disk nimbus that has two bands near the outer edge and rays which extend from the center to the inner band.

The Christ Child lies unclothed on a portion of the Virgin's cloak that is spread out to cover the ground beneath him. Rays emanate faintly from his body and his arms are bent at the elbows with his lower arms and hands pointing up at Mary. The direction of his gaze is hard to determine—he neither looks directly at the Virgin Mary nor out of the image at the viewer. Kneeling at the child's head is Joseph, the carpenter from Nazareth who Mary was engaged to. Joseph wears a red robe with a blue hood pushed down around his neck and a red cloak. His cloak is also edged with gold and a portion is draped on the ground next to where the Christ Child is lying. He is depicted as a bald, older man with a short gray

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[9] The Biblical accounts of the events immediately surrounding the birth of Christ can be found in the Matthew 1: 18-25 and Luke 2: 1-20.

beard.  His hands are raised in a gesture of prayer that mirrors the Virgin's and he also gazes downward at the Christ Child.

The ground in front of the child and the Virgin and Joseph's cloaks is so thinly covered with grass that the soil beneath is visible at the very bottom of the image, where there are also a few small stones.  Behind the figures is a partially ruined stone structure.  The wall of the structure, built of stone blocks, is only about half its original height on the right side of the initial (behind Joseph).  The left side of the stone wall has a thatched roof supported by a wooden post and beam.  Visible behind the ruined portion of the wall is a landscape that consists of two hills.  The hill on the right side is closer to the foreground and has a stand of trees on it.  Above the two hills is a gold background that, near the top of the initial, has a gold star that is centered above the Christ Child.  Rays emanate from the star in all directions, each one reaching as far as possible within the gold background.

The first representations of the Nativity occur in the early fourth century, and as with the iconography of other Biblical events it initially developed separately in the East and West.  The iconography of the Nativity includes those scenes such as the Journey to Bethlehem; the bathing of Christ, which includes the presence of midwives; Mary holding or perhaps suckling the Christ Child; the Annunciation to the Shepherds; and the Adoration of the Shepherds.  Because of the long history of the iconography of the Nativity, three representative examples ranging from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries will be described and then this

examination will begin in detail with the iconography of the Adoration of the Child as it appeared during the late Middle Ages.[10]

An excellent example that includes two of the scenes mentioned above—the bathing of Christ and the Annunciation to the Shepherds—is a miniature from an eleventh century Gospel lectionary from Austria that accompanies the reading for the Christmas Vigil (Figure 3).  On the left-hand side of the miniature, inside a double-arch, the Virgin reclines on a bed, her left hand reaching down into the lower register where a midwife is bathing the Christ Child.  Joseph sits on a stool on the right of the tub and faces away from the bathing scene, his chin resting on his left hand.  Inside the top of the arches are the ox and donkey.  On the right side of the miniatures two angels in the upper register announce the birth of Christ to a pair of shepherds in the lower register.  The shepherds, surrounded by their animals, gaze upward toward the angels.

A historiated initial C (*CANTATE DOMINO CANTICUM NOUUM QUIA MIRABILIA FECIT*) from a late thirteenth-century French breviary fragment that begins the first verse of Psalm 98 (Figure 4) is divided into two registers.[11]  In the upper register the Virgin Mary reclines on a bed draped with a white sheet.  She

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[10] For discussions of the iconographic developments for the other Nativity scenes and the early iconography of the Adoration of the Child, see: Gertrud Schiller, "The Adoration of the Child in the Late Middle Ages," *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*, vol. 1, trans. by Janet Seligman (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1971), 76-84, and P.  Wilhelm-Red, "Geburt Christi," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. 2, Allgemeine Ikonographie, Fabelwesen-Kynokephalen, ed. by Engelbert Kirschbaum (Herder: Rome, 1968), 86-120.  The iconographic development of the Adoration of the Magi will, of course, be examined later in this thesis.

[11] This psalm is the same one included in the liturgy that the Geese Book initial accompanies and is Psalm 97 in the Vulgate.

supports her head with her right hand, and gazes over her left shoulder at the Christ Child.  He lies, wrapped in cloths and with a nimbus, in a blue and pink manger, and his head is turned at an awkward angle so he can look at Mary. The heads of the ox and donkey reach over the far side of the manger and rest on Christ's body.  Joseph, wearing a blue cloak that covers his head and holding a staff in his hands, sits at the foot of the bed.  His body is angled toward the Virgin, and his eyes gaze at the Christ Child.  In the lower register an angel holding a scroll announces the birth to a pair of shepherds who look up at the angel and the scene in the upper register.  Their sheep surround them and they are joined on the right side of the register by the figure of King David, the author of the psalm this illumination accompanies.

In an initial D (*DEUS IN ADIUTORIUM MEUM INTENDO*) from an early fifteenth-century Flemish book of hours that begins the Versicle for Prime in the Hours of the Virgin (Figure 5) Mary lies on a richly embroidered bed complete with a headboard.  She is wrapped in a blue mantel that is edged in gold and covers her head, and she has a solid gold disk for a nimbus.  She holds the Christ Child in her arms and is suckling him.  Joseph, wearing a red robe with gold accoutrements and a blue hat, sits at the end of the bed.  His body faces away from the bed toward the right side of the initial, but he turns his head as if looking over his shoulder at the scene taking place behind him.  On the far side of the bed is the manger with the ox and donkey behind it.  As these brief descriptions have shown, there were many different Nativity iconographies that developed and were used in certain times and places.  One particular

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iconography, however, came to dominate the later Middle Ages—that of the Adoration of the Child.

As Gertrud Schiller writes, "The piety which appears in many different guises in the art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries has its spiritual roots in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries."[12] These roots can be seen in the mysticism of Bernard of Clairvaux, which the *Golden Legend* repeatedly cites and in such works as the *Meditationes vitae Christi*. Perhaps the most important influence on the development of the episode from the Nativity that is called the Adoration of the Child, however, was the *Revelations* of Saint Birgitta. This influence, first noted by Henrik Cornell in his book *The Iconography of the Nativity of Christ* and Erwin Panofsky, who formalized the connection in his seminal 1953 work *Early Netherlandish Painting*, comes from Saint Birgitta's detailed account of the events surrounding the birth of Christ.[13]

Several years before her death in 1373 Saint Birgitta, a Swedish mystic of noble birth whose canonization was confirmed by the Council of Constance in 1415, decided to recount all of the visions that she had over the course of her life, particularly those that had occurred during her trip to the Holy Land several

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[12] Schiller, "The Adoration," 76.

[13] Henrik Cornell, *The Iconography of the Nativity of Christ*, Filosofi, Språkvetenskap och Hstoriska Vetenskaper 3 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1924) and Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (London: Harper Collins, reprinted 1971).

years earlier.[14]  In chapter 21 of the last book of her *Revelations* Saint Birgitta

writes about the vision that she had while "at the manger of the Lord in

Bethlehem."  She first describes all of the preparations made by the Virgin upon

her arrival in Bethlehem and then the actual process of giving birth, but it is her

account of the adoration that is of particular interest here.  Saint Birgitta

describes Mary as having "most beautiful hair—as if of gold—spread out on her

shoulder blades" and Joseph as "a very dignified old man."  She also envisioned

Christ lying unclothed on the ground surrounded by light, while the Virgin Mary

and Joseph adored him: "the old man entered…and prostrating on the earth, he

adored him on bended knee." [15]

Only a few years after Saint Birgitta's death, images based on the

iconographic elements found in her *Revelations* were created.  The earliest of

these images appeared in Italy around the year 1400 and then spread throughout

northern Europe. [16]  Some of them illustrated the scene from a third-party point of

view and include Saint Birgitta as an observer (much in the way that

commissioned works usually contained portraits of their patrons), such as Pietro

di Minniato's *Scene of the Nativity* at the church of Santa Maria Novella in

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[14] For a complete biography of Saint Birgitta see Bridget Morris, *St. Birgitta of Sweden*, vol. 1, *Studies in Medieval Mysticism* (Woodbridge, England: Boydell Press, 1999).

[15] The complete account can be found in Marguerite Tjader Harris, ed., *Birgitta of Sweden: Life and Selected Revelations* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1990), 202-204.

[16] Schiller, "The Adoration," 79.

Florence, Italy.[17]  Most, however, merely utilize her description and the actual viewer could take on the role of observer and recreate the experience in his or her own time.

An examination of other manuscript illuminations reveals that representations of the Adoration of the Christ Child based on Saint Birgitta's description became the dominant iconography, with, of course, slight variations in details not mentioned by Saint Birgitta.  In an initial D (*DOMINE LABIA MEA APERIES*) from a 1490s Florentine book of hours that begins the Versicle for Matins in the Hours of the Virgin (Figure 6), Mary kneels in adoration on the right side of the initial.  Christ, with rays emanating from his body, lies unclothed on a bed of straw in the center of the initial.  Joseph sits on the left side holding a staff in his hand.  Behind the Virgin Mary is a thatched stone shed where the donkey and ox are lying.  There is a star directly above Christ and in the background an angel announces the good news to the shepherds in the distant hills.

A historiated initial D (*DEUS IN ADIUTORIUM MEUM*) which begins the Veriscle for Prime in the Hours of the Virgin from a book of hours created in Naples in 1483 (Figure 7) depicts the Adoration of Christ in this way: Mary, who has a pearled nimbus, kneels on the left side of Christ, who is lying on a portion of her cloak spread on the ground and has rays of light emanating from his body. On the other side is Joseph, who kneels as well and supports himself with a staff in his left hand.  With his right hand Joseph reaches up and removes his hat from

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[17] This painting is reproduced and discussed in Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, "The images of Saint Birgitta of Sweden in Santa Maria Novella in Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 18, no. 4 (2004): 509-526.

his head.  No star is visible, but rays emanate from above with several reaching down to Christ.  Behind Mary, in a cave, are the ox and donkey.  Craggy mountains are visible in the distance where the sun is rising.

A third illumination, this one a historiated initial G (*GOD WILT DENCKEN IN MIJN HULPE*) which begins the Versicle for Prime in the Hours of the Virgin found in the Croesinck Hours made in the Netherlands between 1489 and 1499 (Figure 8), is perhaps closest to the Geese Book initial in style and content. Even here, however, there are differences.  Mary, depicted with long blond hair and a nimbus formed from rays, kneels, hands clasped in front of her.  Christ, with rays emanating from around his body, lies on a portion of her cloak.  Joseph, portrayed as a middle-aged, not elderly, man, kneels on the opposite side with his hands also touching in a gesture of prayer.  The stone stable behind the Virgin Mary and Joseph is a more complete structure than that in the Geese Book and the donkey and ox are again included.

In addition to the placement and gestures of Mary and Joseph, the unclothed Christ is another Birgittine influence on the iconography of the Adoration of the Child.  Vida Hull discusses this development in her article on the sex of the Christ during the Renaissance.  As Hull points out, Birgitta emphasized the unclothed state of Christ in more than just her description of Mary and Joseph worshipping him, but also during the Adoration of the Shepherds, where the shepherds specifically wanted confirmation that Christ was male.[18]  While

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[18] Vida J. Hull, "The Sex of the Savior in Renaissance Art: The *Revelations* of Saint Bridget and the Nude Christ Child in Renaissance Art," *Studies in Iconography* 15 (1993), 78.

Saint Birgitta's vision was unlikely the only source for artists who chose to depict an unclothed Christ, the popularity of Birgitta's account of the Adoration of the Child greatly increased the frequency with which Christ was portrayed unclothed.

A final interesting iconographic inclusion is the detail of the rays of light emanating from the Christ Child's body. This image of light surrounding Christ is found in the account of St. Birgitta, but perhaps had its beginnings in earlier apocryphal sources and the writings of the early church theologians. Meyer Schapiro examines this possibility in reference to a similar phenomenon, the apparent extension of the arms of a crossed nimbus outside the rim of the nimbus, during his discussion of the Nativity fresco at Castelseprio. He notes that these do not have the physical presence of the crossed arms as found in other examples of crossed nimbi, but instead are "more suggestive of the luminous and emanatory than of the instrument of torture."[19] As he further argues, early Christian theologians and mystics often used "metaphors of light and emanation" when attempting to describe the Godhead in physical terms.[20] The rays emanating from the Christ Child's body, therefore, would be a visual symbol of his divinity. In several of the representations examined above Christ has a nimbus in addition to the rays of light, but the emanating rays are more prominent than the rather small nimbi and draw greater attention to the fact that this was no ordinary child born of a woman, but the Christ. Combined with the

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[19] Meyer Schapiro, "The Frescoes of Castelseprio" and "Notes on Castelseprio," in *Late Antique, Early Christian and Medieval Art* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1979), 99.

[20] Ibid.

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worshipful poses of the Virgin Mary and Joseph, the viewers of the Geese Book initial would be reminded of the importance of the birth of Christ and the way in which he was to be revered by everyone.

Figure 1.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I, folio 22r,
Adoration of the Christ Child

Figure 2.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I, folio 22r (detail),
Adoration of the Christ Child

Figure 3.  Morgan Library, New York, MS G.44, folio 2v (detail), Nativity and Annunciation to the Shepherds

Figure 4.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.1042, folio 65v (detail), Nativity and Annunciation to the Shepherds

Figure 5. Morgan Library, New York, MS M.439, folio 62v (detail), Nativity

Figure 6.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.14, folio 20r (detail),
Adoration of the Christ Child

Figure 7.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.1052, folio 43r (detail),
Adoration of the Christ Child

Figure 8.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.1078, folio 19r (detail),
Adoration of the Christ Child

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

Volume I, Folio 38v

Epiphany, considered by Western Christians as early as the fourth century to be the revelation of Christ in human form to the Gentiles, is celebrated on January 6.  In the Geese Book, the Epiphany Mass introit opens with a historiated initial E (*ECCE ADUENIT DOMINATOR DOMINUS*) depicting the Adoration of the Magi (Figures 9 and 10).  The Virgin, at the center of the initial, is dressed in blue robes with a white veil.  Her blond hair is visible over her left shoulder and she has a simple gold disk nimbus.  On a white cloth placed in her lap she holds the unclothed, blond Christ, who has his arms bent at his elbows. The oldest of the three Magi kneels in front of the Virgin and Christ.  He is hatless, revealing his short gray hair and he wears an elaborately embroidered robe with a brown fur collar trimmed with black.  In his left hand he holds a small casket-shaped container with a delicate pattern incised on it.

On the left side of the initial, behind Mary's right shoulder, kneels the second of the Magi.  Dressed in a red robe with white on the inside of the sleeves and a white fur collar, he has shoulder-length blond hair and a blond beard and mustache and wears a red hat with a gold crown encircling it.  In his hands he proffers a finely-detailed, monstrance-shaped container.  The third Magus kneels behind the first.  Depicted as a clean-shaven black man, he wears a green mantel over a white tunic with a gold border at the top edge and has a crowned turban on his head.  In his left hand he holds a tear-drop shaped container.  All

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three of the Magi gaze at Christ and he looks back at the one kneeling before him.

The architectural and landscape background of this initial is almost identical to that found in the Nativity initial. The ruin, with its wall extending across the initial, has a thatched roof supported by a beam, this one with a diagonal support in the corner, and there are several rows of hills, the one nearest having a small stand of trees. In the sky is the star that the Magi followed on their journey from the East.

The Gospel of Matthew is the only gospel to mention the visit of the Magi.[21] In that gospel, the Magi travel to Bethlehem from "the East" and stop first in the capital city of Jerusalem, inquiring of King Herod where Christ could be found. After King Herod consulted with various Jewish leaders and determined that Christ was born in Bethlehem, the Magi continued on their journey with Herod requesting that they return and let him know where Christ was. When the Magi arrived in Bethlehem the star that had been leading them stopped over the house where Christ and his parents were staying.

There are several aspects of the iconography of the Adoration of the Magi that deserve attention. The development of the identities of the Magi is complex and will be discussed first. The multi-faceted meanings of the various additional elements of the iconography (such as the various containers and gifts brought by the Magi) will then be examined. Before beginning these in-depth iconographic analyses, however, a brief note on the architectural and landscape background

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[21] Matthew 2:1-12

of the Geese Book initial is in order.  As mentioned above, these elements of the

initial are practically identical to those of the Adoration of the Child initial.

A close examination of the continuation of the narrative in the Gospel of

Matthew indicates, however, that the arrival of the Magi occurred perhaps

several years after the birth of Christ.  After the wise men returned to their own

country by a different route—being warned not to go back to King Herod—Herod

ordered his soldiers to kill all of the infant boys in Bethlehem who were two years

of age or younger.  This was based on the time he had learned from the Magi

that the star had appeared in the sky.[22]  Also mentioned in the Matthew narrative

is the fact that the Magi found Christ and his mother in a house.  Based on these

portions of the Biblical story, it seems odd to depict the Adoration of the Child

and Adoration of the Magi as occurring in the same setting.  This is very

common, however, and this Biblical time difference between the birth of Christ

and the Adoration of the Magi, was obscured by the two festivals, both of them

very significant, being celebrated only twelve days apart.

The German contributions to the iconography of the Magi and the

development of their mythology are significant.  In 1164 a prelate of Cologne

named Rainold von Dassel brought the relics of the three Magi to Cologne and

prompted a new level of interest in the Magi.  The iconography of the Adoration

of the Magi began to develop in the third century in the catacombs and on

sarcophagi.  These first representations of the Magi took Saint Matthew's

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[22] Matthew 2:16 reads "Then Herod perceiving that he was deluded by the wise men, was exceeding angry; and sending killed of the men children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men."

statement that "wise men came from the east to Jerusalem" to mean that the

Magi were from Persia, and they were dressed in belted chitons and wore

Phrygian headdresses.[23]  Although the Bible does not mention how many Magi

there were, the traditional number of three has been accepted by the Western

church since the 10th century, and the three Magi also acquired names.  In the

mosaics at San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, the Magi are given the names

Gaspar, Balthasar and Melchior, while the Egbert Codex gives the names

Caspar, Pudizar and Melchior.[24]

Perhaps the most intriguing German contribution to the development of

the iconography of the Magi is the usage of a black figure for one of the three

kings.  Although this usage was commonplace by the beginning of the sixteenth

century, it did not appear until the middle of the fourteenth century.[25]  Black

figures had appeared in the story of the Magi before this time, but they were

relegated to the role of attendants.  Many of these early usages are attributed to

the Hohenstaufen dynasty, although the connection is somewhat vague.  The

Hohenstaufen family was originally from Swabia, but they ruled as the Holy

Roman Emperors for two generations, controlling an empire that stretched from

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[23] A. Reis, "Drei Könige," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. 1,
Allgemeine Ikonographie, A-Ezechiel, ed. by Engelbert Kirschbaum (Herder:
Rome, 1968), 541.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Paul H. D. Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art*, Studies in the
Fine Art, Iconography 9 (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985), 2.

Northern Europe to Africa.  Because of this, they actually had black emissaries

who either visited or were a part of the Hohenstaufen court.[26]

The first textual reference to a black Magus is found in the writings of John

of Hildesheim.  In his treatise on the Magi, *Historia Trium Regum*, John describes

"Jaspar" (Caspar), as a "black Ethiopian, of which there is no doubt."[27]  Caspar

was the youngest of the three Magi, and the gift that is attributed to him is myrrh.

As Kaplan makes clear, this attribution forms a distinct tradition separate from the

"Pseudo-Bede where the middle-aged King Balthasar is described as dark," and

he continues that "medieval confusion about the relationship of the names to age

and degree of precedence could have easily lead to this transposition of the

black King."[28]

The first appearances of a black Magus that can be firmly dated appear in

Germany during the early fifteenth century.[29]  These instances remain relatively

few until the latter half of the fifteenth century, when the inclusion of a black

Magus spread throughout Germany and began to develop in other areas of

Europe.  In the course of approximately two centuries, then, the black figure

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[26] Paul H. D. Kaplan, "Black Africans in Hohenstaufen Iconography," *Gesta* 26, no.1 (1987): 32.

[27] John of Hildesheim, *Historia Trium Regum*, chapter xxi.  Quoted in Kaplan, *Rise of the Black Magus*, 63.  A complete translation of *Historia Trium Regum* is included in Frank Schaer, *The Three Kings of Cologne: Edited from London, Lambeth Palace MS 491*, Middle English Texts 31, ed. by William Marx, et al. (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter Heidelberg GmbH, 2000).

[28] Kaplan, *Black Magus*, 63.

[29] Paul Kaplan discusses other representations of apparently black Magi earlier than this date, but concludes that none of these earlier examples can be either definitively dated, or judged to be originals and not later copies.

included in the Adoration of the Magi went from attendant to king.  The

development of the black Magus, however, was not the only element of the

broader interest in the Magi that grew during this time period.  The Adoration of

the Magi became one of the most popular and elaborate of the religious plays,

and the Eucharistic undertones of the Adoration also evolved.

There were four liturgical plays that created the Nativity series, and the

*Officium Stellae* was the play of the Magi.  As Mary Hatch Marshall states, "the

play of the Magi…was the most widespread and had the most influence."[30]  The

adoration of the shepherds was occasionally included at the very beginning of

these plays, but the drama centered on the journey and adoration of the Magi.  In

these liturgical plays, the Magi briefly explain the "traditional allegorical

significance of their gifts…which] belongs to the liturgical dramatic tradition, not

to the Gospel narrative." [31]  These allegorical meanings for the gifts brought by

the Magi, however, reinforced the connections between the Adoration of the Magi

and the Eucharist.

Ursula Nilgen and Renate Fransicsono explore these connections

between the liturgy and the mimetic quality of the *Officium Stellae* and the

Eucharist, and Ilene Haering Forsyth connects Romanesque wooden statues of

the of Madonna and Child known as the *sedes sapientiae* (Throne of Wisdom) to

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[30] Mary Hatch Marshall, "The Dramatic Tradition Established by the Liturgical Plays," *PLMA: The Journal of the Modern Language Association of America* 56, no. 4 (1941): 965.

[31] Ibid., 969.

the celebration of this festival.[32]  The Magi's symbolic role in the *Officium Stellae*

as the Gentiles of all nations and ages, a type of everyman, provided a concrete

object lesson for Christians on the appropriate methods and practices of

worshipping God.  The Magi traveled great distances and brought expensive

gifts, which indicated the honor and level of devotion that Christ was owed.  Use

of a statue of the Virgin and Christ Child that perhaps was a miracle icon, or

housed relics, would reinforce in the minds of the viewers the intrinsic honor due

to Christ.  The gifts of the Magi were offered at the altar, which further reinforced

the Eucharistic undertones.[33]

The Geese Book scene, having been reduced to only the necessary

elements, is relatively free from these multi-layered references that are found in

larger representations of the Adoration of the Magi.  A comparison of the Geese

Book Adoration of the Magi to two other manuscript illuminations of the same

motif reveals that the Geese Book initial is similar to other manuscript

illuminations of this scene (Figures 11 and 12).  The first is a miniature from a

late fifteenth-century French book of hours that accompanies the Versicle for

Sext in the Hours of the Virgin.  The second is a miniature from an early

sixteenth-century Netherlandish book of hours that accompanies the Versicle for

Terce in the Hours of the Virgin.  In each of these representations the oldest of

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[32] Ursula Nilgen and Renate Franciscono, "The Epiphany and the Eucharist: On the Interpretation of Eucharistic Motifs in Mediaeval Epiphany Scenes," *Art Bulletin* 49, no. 4 (1967): 311-316.  Ilene Haering Forsyth, "Magi and Majesty: A Study of Romanesque Sculpture and Liturgical Drama," *Art Bulletin* 50, no. 3 (1968): 215-222.

[33] Forsyth, "Magi and Majesty," 220.

the three Magi is kneeling with his hat removed from his head, while the black

Magus is at the far edge of the scene.  The Magi are even dressed in similar

embroidered robes.  These illustrations indicate that the iconography of the

Adoration of the Magi in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was

relatively unified in Northern Europe and that the creators of the Geese Book

used that standard.

Figure 9.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I, folio 38v,
Adoration the Magi

Figure 10.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I, folio 38v (detail),
Adoration of the Magi

Figure 11.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.1003, folio 87r (detail),
Adoration of the Magi

Figure 12.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.166, folio 82v (detail),
Adoration of the Magi

THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

Volume I, Folio 121r

The introit for the Mass for Palm Sunday, which marks the beginning of Holy Week, begins on folio 121r of volume I.  Christ's entry into Jerusalem is depicted within an initial D (*DOMINE NE LONGE FACIAS AUXILIUM)* that begins the introit for Palm Sunday and is made up of blue foliage and surrounded by gold leaf incised with decorative patterns (Figures 13 and 14).  Christ, seated astride a donkey which stands facing the right side of the initial, is at the center. He is wearing a simple light blue robe and has a crossed nimbus.  His left hand grasps the rein of the donkey's simple halter and his right hand is raised in a two-finger blessing directed towards the citizens gathered in the city gate on the right-hand side of the image.

Christ is followed by the twelve disciples, of which only two are identifiable, the rest merely indicated by a series of gold disk nimbi.  Peter and John, who can be identified by their physiognomies, stand close behind the donkey.  Peter, a balding older man with gray hair, is dressed in a blue robe with a red cloak and holds a staff in his right hand.  He is glancing ahead toward the crowd at the city gate while John, a young man with blond hair and dressed in a red robe with a green cloak, is looking back toward Peter and has his left arm extended as if to hold Peter back.

The citizens who make up the crowd gathered in the city gate are a diverse group of men.  A young blond man wearing the attire of a deacon is kneeling down, having placed a yellow robe on the ground on which the donkey

is standing.  Next in the series is an older man with a long gray beard wearing a

pinkish-red robe with a green cuff on the right sleeve and a blue hat who stands

with his hands together as if in prayer.  Just behind his left shoulder stands a

man with a close-fitting gray turban and a green robe trimmed with fur.  Behind

these two men is a hatless figure that is mostly obscured, but is wearing a blue

robe.  Only the red hat of the last citizen is visible.

The entrance to the city that the citizens are gathered in is part of a stone

wall with a turret on the left side of the gate.  The artist has not depicted this

stone wall as separate stones, but the entire wall and turret are smooth masonry.

Above the gently curved archway is an architectural detail of several short

engaged columns.  In the background, extending behind the tower at the end of

the city wall is a hill on which grow two trees, possibly a depiction of the Mount of

Olives, which Christ and the disciples would have passed on their way to

Jerusalem from Bethany.  Visible underneath the donkey, beyond the yellow

robe, are two small stones.[34]

The inclusion of Christ's entry into Jerusalem in the narratives of all four

Gospels gave early Christian artists detailed textual information on which to base

their representations of this scene.[35]  The basic iconographic elements as

described in the Gospels of Christ riding on a donkey, followed by the disciples

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[34] Although the inclusion of these stones may seem curious, one potential
reading for their inclusion may be as a subtle reference to Jesus' remark to the
Pharisees when they asked him to silence the crowds: "I say to you, that if these
shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out." Luke 19: 40

[35] Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-15.

and greeted by a gathered crowd appear in almost all representations of this event.[36] Even these basic iconographic elements, nevertheless, offered artists a great deal of flexibility in the numbers and placement of figures and there were a variety of additional iconographic details, such as the stones noted above, that were available to artists. There were also differences between early depictions in the East and West. Gertrud Schiller describes the early Western depictions as follows: "One disciple walks in front, turning to look back, another brings up the rear. Christ, in the beardless Hellenistic type, rides in the Roman fashion astride an donkey. He raises his right hand in a princely gesture and holds the reins with his left."[37] In early Eastern depictions, on the other hand, Christ was usually presented with a nimbus and beard and sat sideways on the donkey, not astride. Eastern depictions also usually included larger numbers of active participants than their Western counterparts did.[38] These differences in the iconographic representations of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, though, only lasted a few centuries. By the tenth century a standard image of a bearded Christ with a nimbus, seated astride the donkey, was in common usage throughout Europe.[39]

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[36] There are certain manuscript illuminations that, due to space limitations, omit most or all of the disciples and the crowd. For instance, in Morgan Library MS M.855, a gradual created in Austria during the second half of the thirteenth century, only Christ riding on the donkey is illustrated in the initial D on folio 46v.

[37] Gertrud Schiller, "Christ's Entry Into Jerusalem," in *Lexikon der christlichen Kunst*, vol. 1, trans. by Janet Seligman (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1971), 19.

[38] Walter W. S. Cook, "The Earliest Painted Panels of Catalonia (V)," *Art Bulletin* 10, no. 2 (1927): 168.

[39] Ibid.

A brief examination of a series of historiated initials reveals that because of the size of the Geese Book initial its iconography has more in common with full-page miniatures of the same scene than with other, smaller historiated initials.  In Morgan Library MS M.855, a late thirteenth-century Austrian gradual, sequentiary, and sacramentary (Seitenstetten Missal), for instance, there are two historiated initials that accompany different Palm Sunday liturgies (Figure 15 and 16).[40] The first of these depicts Christ with a crossed nimbus astride the donkey, holding a palm branch in his left hand and with his right hand raised in a two-finger blessing.  The second depicts a youth in a tree grasping two stylized palm branches.  This manuscript is unusual, however, for containing two historiated initials connected with a single festival.  Additional examples of smaller historiated initials include an initial D (*DOMINE NE LONGE FACIAS AUXILIUM*) which begins the introit for the Mass for Palm Sunday from a fifteenth-century German missal (Figure 17) and an initial O (OMNIPOTENS SEMPITERNE DEUS QUI HUMANO GENERI) from a late fifteenth-century German breviary for Birgittine use that begins the collect for the Mass for Palm Sunday (Figure 18).  Both of these initials show Christ, simply dressed, sitting astride the donkey with the reins in his left hand and his right hand raised in blessing, and although the initial O from the fifteenth century German missal depicts a smooth masonry entry gate there is no gathered crowd.

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[40] On folio 46v a historiated initial D (*DOMINE NE LONGE FACIAS AUXILIUM*) begins the introit for Palm Sunday, while on folio 142r a historiated initial O (*OMNIPOTENS SEMPITERNE DEUS QUI HUMANO GENERI*) begins the collect for the Mass for Palm Sunday.

A comparison with several miniatures, on the other hand, reveals that the Geese Book initial more closely corresponds with the iconographic elements used in these illustrations of Christ's entry into Jerusalem.  A miniature which accompanies the Blessing of the Palms reading for Palm Sunday from a Flemish lectionary (Figure 19) created during the first half of the sixteenth century depicts Christ's entry using very similar elements to those in the Geese Book.  Christ, dressed in a simple blue robe and with a solid gold nimbus, is seated astride a donkey, his left hand grasping the reins while his right hand is raised in blessing. The only identifiable disciple is Peter, dressed in his traditional red and blue robes; although two other disciples are partially visible, the rest are indicated by a series of translucent nimbi.  The donkey is stepping onto a yellow robe, just as in the Geese Book illumination.  However, there are still many differences between the illuminations.  Perhaps the most accurate conclusion to draw from these comparisons is that, although the iconographic elements which make up the iconography of Christ's entry into Jerusalem are relatively codified, the artist's use of these elements is not.

If artists had a great deal of freedom in choosing the elements of Christ's entry into Jerusalem that they wanted to use, what other factors influenced the illuminator of the Geese Book Palm Sunday initial?  A contemporary account of a Palm Sunday procession is quoted by Michael Baxandall in *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*:

> "Palm Sunday comes…A wooden ass on a trolley is pulled around
> the town with the image of their God on it; they sing, throw palms
> before it, and do much idolatry with this wooden God of theirs.  The

parish priest prostrates himself before this image, and a second priest also creeps up.  The children sing and point with their fingers. Two Bacchantes prostrate themselves before it with outlandish ceremony and song, and then everyone throws palms at it: whoever catches the first makes big magic with it."[41]

The author of this tale, Sebastian Franck, was a Reformer who had lived in Nuremberg for awhile and married the sister of two Nuremberg artists. [42]  His intention was to mock the festival and illuminate the idolatry of the people who either actually worshipped or appeared to worship a wooden idol, but this account nonetheless provides a vivid account of a Palm Sunday procession.

According to Roger Reynolds, literary and drama historians identify three distinguishing characteristics of drama: dialog, action and impersonation or representation.[43]  Applying this standard to the description above, the liturgical

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[41] Sebastian Franck, *Weltbuch* (Tübingen, 1534), quoted in Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 58.  Franck does not indicate in the *Weltbuch* where this particular procession occurred.  The original German reads as follows: "Auff diß kumpt der Palmtag…Vnd füret [man] ein hültzin Esel auff einem wägelin, mit einem darauff gemachten bild yhres Gots, in der statt herumb, singen, werffen palmen für yhn, vnd treiben vil abgötterei mit disem yhrem hültzinen Gott.  Der Pfarrer legt sich vor disem bild nider, den schlecht ein ander pfaff.  Die schüler singen vnd deütten mit finger darauff.  Zwen Bachanten legen sich auch mit seltzamer Ceremoni vnd gesang vor dem bild nider, da wirfft jedermann mit palmen zu, der den estern erwischt, treibt vil zauberei damit."

[42] Biographical details about Sebastian Franck can be found in Alison Stewart, "Paper Festivals and Popular Entertainment: the Kermis Woodcuts of Reformation Nuremberg," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 24, no. 2 (1993): 301-350.  Sebald Beham, the artist who created many kermis prints, was the brother-in-law of Sebastian Franck.  Some of his other beliefs are discussed in Gerta Calmann, "The Picture of Nobody: An Iconographical Study," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 23, no. 1/2 (1960): 60-104.

[43] Roger E. Reynolds, "The Drama of Medieval Liturgical Processions," *Revue de Musicologie* 86, no. 1 (2000): 135-136.  Dialog refers to not only verbal discourse between two or more persons, but also monologue and proclamations.  Action

procession performed on Palm Sunday was drama: the people sing and point,

the wooden ass is pulled around and the priest prostrates himself, and the

wooden ass with an image of God on it represents Christ on the first Palm

Sunday.  In addition to those dramatic elements was the additional aspect of

participation.  Generally lay participation in the rites of the Church was not

possible during the late Middle Ages.  Masses were performed in Latin and the

divine office was restricted to those performing it.[44]  Passion plays were

performed, but for the most part the audience did not actively take part.

Processions such as the one on Palm Sunday, on the other hand, required the

active participation of all members of a congregation.

The *Palmesel* (Sebastian Franck's "wooden ass on a trolley…with an

image of their God on it") was the focal point of the procession and examples

from Germany and the Low Countries exist to this day, including a late

fourteenth-century *Palmesel* from Nuremberg that is in the collection of the

Germanisches Nationalmuseum.[45]  The 1493 sacristan's manual from the

Church of St. Lorenz gave instructions to the sacristan on such matters as  which

altars were to be opened and decorated for the various church festivals.  It also

contained information regarding the *Palmesel*, which on Palm Sunday would be

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refers to "a distribution of roles between at least two persons."  Impersonation or
representation includes both live impersonation and the use of statues,
maquettes and the like.

[44] Reynolds, "Drama," 135-136.

[45] In this thesis, as in the articles referenced, the term *Palmesel* (which translates
from German as Palm Donkey) is used to refer to the complete statue: the
donkey and the figure of Christ.

processed around the city to the church, where an *Eselstall* was constructed for it.[46]  Arnd Reitemeier, who repeatedly cites the 1493 St. Lorenz sacristan's manual, writes about the similarities between the Palm Sunday procession in Nuremberg and other cities in his book on parish churches in the late Middle Ages.[47]

An example of a *Palmesel* that is on view in the United States was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1955 and is almost life-size.[48]  Lorenzo Carletti and Christian Giometti begin their short study of medieval wooden sculptures and their settings in several churches in and around Pisa with an example of a *Palmesel,* and then compare its use to that of the statues of cows and the gods that the Roman historian Livy recounts were used in processions.[49]  Elizabeth Lipsmeyer also discusses the *Palmesel*, focusing on these statues from the point of view of standards of decorum that would have governed their aesthetic qualities based on the dignity required "to sustain the

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[46] Albert Gümbel, *Das Mesnerpflichtbuch von St. Lorenz in Nürnberg vom Jahre 1493*, Einzelarbeiten aus der Kirchengeschichte Bayerns 8 (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1928), 18-19, 51.

[47] Arnd Reitemeier, *Pfarrkirchen in der Stadt des späten Mittelalters: Politik, Wirtschaft und Verwaltung*, Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeshichte-Beihefte 177 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 341-342.

[48] Vera K. Ostoia, "A Palmesel at the Cloisters," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 14, no. 7 (1956): 170.  Ostoia also gives a succinct overview of the processional use of the *Palmesel* and its post-Reformation history.

[49] Lorenzo Carletti and Christian Giometti, "Medieval Wood Sculpture and Its Setting in Architecture: Studies in Some Churches in and around Pisa," *Architectural History* 46, (2003): 37-38.

integrity of the represented idea."[50]  The *Palmesel*, therefore, was the central

element of the Palm Sunday procession as well as the central element of any

artistic representation of Palm Sunday.

Carletti and Giometti state that the *Palmesel* and liturgical procession

allowed the participants "to identify…with the main characters and feel part of the

holy drama."[51]  This carried into visual representations of Palm Sunday as well.

As discussed above during comparisons of the Geese Book initial with other

representations of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, medieval depictions of the city of

Jerusalem correspond closely with the attributes of medieval cities with stone

walls, gates, and turrets.  The gathering citizens are also shown wearing

contemporary dress.  These two elements reveal that artists also attempted to

contextualize Palm Sunday within their own time, much in the way that the event

was reenacted year after year within their own architectural, geographical and

social landscapes.[52]

While the availability of visually descriptive textual material from the

Gospel accounts greatly affected the initial iconographic development of Christ's

entry into Jerusalem, several authors have posited that the writers of the Gospel

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[50] Elizabeth Lipsmeyer, "Devotion and Decorum: Intention and Quality in Medieval German Sculpture," *Gesta* 34, no. 1 (1995): 20.

[51] Carletti and Giometti, "Medieval Wood Sculpture," 37.

[52] That Christ and his disciples are dressed in traditional robes can be explained by the necessity of keeping their identifiable attributes, but also perhaps reinforces Mary C. Erler's discussion of various London parishes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that rented costumes and props to be used in the Palm Sunday pageantry.  Mary C. Erler, "Palm Sunday Prophets and Processions and Eucharistic Controversy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (1995): 58-81.

narratives themselves were affected by the Greco-Roman tradition of triumphal

entries by emperors and generals.  Several of them then conclude that the

subsequent representations and traditions surrounding Christ's entry into

Jerusalem affected the medieval celebrations performed when rulers and church

leaders visited ("entered") cities.[53]  The interconnected development of the

liturgical processions and secular processions also extends to the artists'

iconographic decisions for depicting this same scene.  The basic iconography as

laid out in the Gospel narratives was elaborated on and changed by the

contemporary processions that the artists would not only have been familiar with,

but would also have participated in.  The visual representation of Palm Sunday

found in the liturgical drama cannot be considered separately from other visual

representations of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, including the Geese Book initial.

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[53] In his article titled "The March of the Divine Warrior and the Advent of the Graeco-Roman King: Mark's Account of Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111, No. 1 (1992): 51-71, Paul Brooks Duff examines the various elements in Mark's account that parallel or allude to a divine warrior and Greco-Roman entry processions.  Of equal interest is Ernst H. Kantorowicz's article "The 'King's Advent': And the Enigmatic Panels in the Doors of Santa Sabina," *Art Bulletin* 26, no. 4 (1944): 207-231, which begins with a detailed analysis of the liturgies that accompanied the arrival of a ruler or figure of ecclesiastical import.

Figure 13.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I, folio 121r,
Entry into Jerusalem

Figure 14.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I, folio 121r (detail),
Entry into Jerusalem

Figure 15.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.855, folio 46v (detail),
Entry into Jerusalem



Figure 16.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.855, folio 142r (detail),
Entry into Jerusalem

Figure 17.  Columbia University, Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, New York, UTS MS 003, folio 70v (detail), Entry into Jerusalem
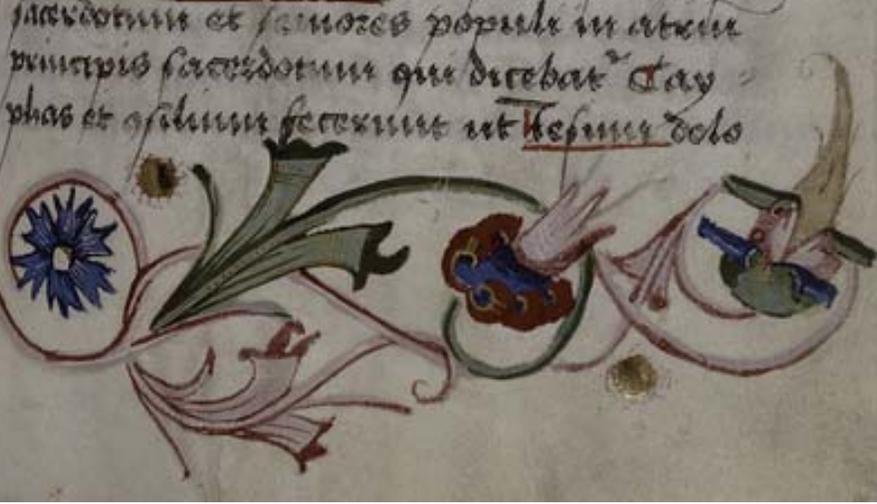
Figure 18. New York Public Library, New York, Entry into Jerusalem, Breviary for Birgittine Use, 1476

Figure 19.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.5, folio 1r (detail),
Entry into Jerusalem

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

Volume I, Folio 156r

The introit for the Easter Sunday Mass is found on folio 156r of volume I and begins with a historiated initial R(*RESURREXI ET ADHUC TECUM SUM*) containing a representation of the Resurrection of Christ (Figures 20 and 21).[54] In the center of the initial Christ stands wrapped in an elaborately draped red mantle that he draws around himself with his left hand, which also supports a cross-topped staff with a red flag with a white cross and green fringe on the three tails that wave in the breeze. Depicted with curling shoulder-length hair and a neatly trimmed beard, Christ has a crossed nimbus and his right hand is raised in blessing. The wounds are fully visible on his hands, right foot and side—the mark is curiously absent on his left foot.

Behind Christ on the left side of the initial is one of the tomb guards. Dressed in a short yellow robe with red stockings, shoes and a blue mantel, he rests his head—eyes closed—on his bent right arm which is placed on his right knee. His weapon, a mace, lies harmlessly on the ground in front of him. On the other side of the initial is the second of the tomb guards. This man, dressed in a blue robe with yellow cuffs over a dark brown tunic and whitish leggings, touches his right hand to his head, upon which sits a yellow hat. His eyes are open and he looks up at Christ, his left hand just below the cutting edge of the halberd that is lying across his lap.

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[54] Each of the four Gospels contains a narrative version of the Resurrection: Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-9; and John 20:1-18.

The tomb is behind the guard on the right-hand side of the initial.  A stone

door covers the opening of the tomb that is carved out of the hill, which has grass

growing on it.  The front of the door is textured and there are three red wax seals

that remain unbroken.  The city of Jerusalem is depicted by a series of turreted

buildings that rise from the hills in the background that are still tinged blue from

the night.  Above the hills a naturalistic sunrise lightens the skies from blue to

pink to yellow.

The accurate inclusion of elements from textual sources in some respects

contrasts with the Resurrection iconography that includes the risen Christ holding

a triumphal banner as such a scene is not mentioned in any textual source.[55]

Indeed, in the Gospel accounts, Christ's presence is not mentioned from the time

he is placed in the tomb until his appearance later to either Mary Magdalene

when she mistakes him for the gardener, his appearance to the other women, to

the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, or to his disciples in the locked room.

Instead, the Gospel accounts draw attention to his absence through the angel

who greets the women at the tomb and the empty tomb itself.  This examination

will attempt to discover possible motivations behind the development of the

Resurrection iconography from allusion and typology to a depiction of the risen

Christ as imagined by artists and will also discuss the details of the Resurrection

iconography as depicted in the Geese Book.

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[55] In the apocryphal Gospel of Peter the soldiers and Jewish religious leaders
view the descent of two angels, who enter the tomb and return with a third man
(Christ) who is followed by a cross.  The Gospel of Peter, however, was not
widely accepted by the early church and disappeared from Christian literature
until its rediscovery in the late nineteenth century.  Ulrich Luz, "The Resurrection
of Jesus in Art," *Interpretations* 65, no. 1 (2011): 46.

The earliest depictions of the Resurrection that do not rely on typology (for instance, Jonah being swallowed by the fish, where he remained for three days) are found in the third century and show the arrival of the women at the tomb, where they are greeted by an angel.[56]  A fifth-century ivory plaque from the Bayerische Nationalmuseum in Munich embodies this early iconography.  In the lower register the three women approach from the right-hand side of the ivory.  On the left-hand side, sitting outside the tomb, which is depicted as a small temple, is an angel who raises his hand in greeting.  This was the main iconography for the Resurrection during the early centuries of Christianity and it was from the liturgical trope connected with this event (*Quem quaeritis in sepulchro*) that the oldest of the religious plays developed.[57]  First found in a tenth-century manuscript, this play came into existence around the same time as the new iconography of the Resurrection.[58]  Perhaps on some level, the question raised and repeated during the play and the associated liturgy prompted artists to

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[56] Louis Réau, "La Résurrection," in *Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien*, vol. 2 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), 543. A complete history of the iconography of the Resurrection can also be found in P. Wilhelm, "Auferstehung Christi," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. 1, Allgemeine Ikonographie, A-Ezechiel, ed. by Engelbert Kirschbaum (Herder: Rome, 1968), 201-218.

[57] The development of the *Quem quaeritis in sepulchro* (Whom do you seek in the tomb) trope as the foundation of this liturgically-based play is discussed in depth in Karl Young, "The Origin of the Easter Play," *PLMA: The Journal of the Modern Language Association of America* 29, no. 1 (1914): 1-58.

[58] Young, "Easter Play," 1.  The earliest known depiction of Christ's presence at the Resurrection is found in an early ninth century psalter (possibly French) illustrated and discussed in Franz Rademacher, "Zu den frühesten Darstellungen der Auferstehung Christi," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 28, no. 3 (1965): 196-197.

reconsider the existing iconographic formats in relation to the theology of the Resurrection.

Before beginning an examination of the possible motivations behind the radical shift in Resurrection iconography that occurred around the beginning of the tenth century, a brief look at three Resurrection scenes that utilize the same moment of the Resurrection as the Geese Book, but have varied details, will be performed as these details are relevant to an understanding of the new iconography and its motivations.  The first example to be considered is an initial A (*ANGELUS DOMINI DESCENDIT DE CELO*) which begins the Responsory for the Nocturn of the Easter Sunday Matins in an Italian antiphoner (Figure 22).  In this depiction of the Resurrection, Christ steps from the open sarcophagus that represents the tomb.  His right foot, with the visible stigmata, is placed on the edge, while his left foot is still inside the sarcophagus.  In his left hand he holds the banner-topped cross-staff and with his right hand he makes the sign of the blessing.  The nail print is visible on the palm of his right hand and as is the wound on his side.  The lid of the sarcophagus has been completely removed and an angel, who raises his right hand, perhaps in a gesture of greeting, sits on the left-hand side of the sarcophagus facing Christ.  Two soldiers dressed in medieval clothing are asleep in front of the sarcophagus.

Another example of a historiated initial, this one an initial D (*DEUS IN ADIUTORIUM MEUM INTENDE*) that begins the Versicle for Sext in the Hours of the Virgin in an Italian book of hours (Figure 23), depicts the resurrected Christ standing with both feet on the edge of the sarcophagus.  The lid is directly next to

Christ and is perpendicular to the image plane.  Christ, surrounded by rays of light, holds the triumphal banner in his left hand and raises his right hand in blessing.  He does not look out at the viewer, however, but gazes down and to his right at the sarcophagus that could not contain him forever.  Two soldiers with bronze helmets and red shields are asleep with one at each of the back corners of the sarcophagus.

The final example that will be introduced here is a three-quarter page miniature from the Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal that accompanies the Invitatory for the Easter Sunday Matins (Figure 24).  Christ, holding the triumphal banner in his left hand and raising his right in blessing, hovers above the ground.[59]  Although the flag flutters out behind him as if moving, the drapery folds of the red robe he wears appear static, with an unnatural stiffness especially apparent behind Christ's visible leg.  Behind Christ the tomb is cut into the side of a hill and its rectangular door is still sealed with red wax seals.  Three soldiers are present: the two in the foreground are dressed in medieval clothing and hold poles, to which weapons are likely attached but not shown.  The third, located directly next to the door of the tomb and only partially visible on the right-hand side of the initial, is dressed in a suit of armor.  A glowing lantern stands on a patch of grass at the bottom left corner of the miniature, and in the distance the sun is rising over the city of Jerusalem.

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[59] A brief examination of the iconography of Christ hovering above or near the tomb is Elly Cassee and Keese Berserik, "The Iconography of the Resurrection: A Re-Examination of the Risen Christ Hovering above the Tomb," *Burlington Magazine* 126, no. 970 (1984): 20-24.

As can be seen in this and other initials from the Geese Book, the illuminations in the Geese Book more closely correspond to those found in manuscripts produced in Belgium or Flanders than those produced in France or Italy. William Wixom explores this connection, especially in regard to the naturalistic landscape elements found in this initial and the initial depicting Christ calling Andrew and Peter, which will be discussed later. Wixom asserts that the main artistic influence came from Ghent, because of the residence in Nuremberg of Maximilian I, who was never crowned emperor but took the title of emperor-elect in 1508. Maximilian, who owned several Ghent manuscripts, was a patron of the arts and his taste undoubtedly influenced local artists.[60] It is interesting to note that the miniature discussed above from the Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal is attributed to the same artist who created one of Maximilian's prayer books, the Master of the Older Prayer Book of Maximillian.

It has been noted previously that the earliest instances of this new Resurrection iconography can be found in manuscripts dating to the tenth century and as has been shown here briefly, there were many acceptable variations available to artists regarding the positioning of Christ, the presence or absence of angels, the number and dress of the guards, and the depiction of the tomb itself. These variations, particularly regarding the positioning of Christ, are thoroughly explored elsewhere.[61] What will be explored here are the possible

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[60] Wixom, "Gradual (in Latin)," 190.

[61] Réau, "La Résurrection," 538-550, and Wilhelm, "Auferstehung Christi," 201-218.

theological motivations that spurred artists to create a new iconography of the Resurrection.

Caroline Walker Bynum states in a paper she read as her presidential address at the 1994 American Catholic Historical Society meeting, "Those of you who are practicing Christians…[and] observant Jews may perhaps know that you are supposed to affirm the resurrection of the dead…. The idea is, however, implausible to common sense."[62] This lack of ability to reason out how the resurrection would occur and, specifically, what type of resurrection it would be caused theological problems in the early Christian church beginning with Gnosticism and Docetism in the second century. Both of these denied a resurrection of the original, physical body, instead presenting the resurrection as a metaphor or an escape from the body.[63] The controversy over a bodily resurrection was perhaps already foreseen by the authors of the Gospels who made sure to recount the appearances Christ made to his disciples and others after his resurrection. In the account of the first appearance of Christ to his disciples in the Gospel of Luke, Christ himself finds it necessary to prove his fleshly existence and specifically points out the wounds and eats a little food in order to quell the disciples' fears that he is a ghost, not a man.[64]

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[62] Caroline Walker Bynum, "Images of the Resurrection Body in the Theology of Late Antiquity," *Catholic Historical Review* 80, no. 2 (1994): 215.

[63] Ibid., 217 and 220.

[64] Luke 24:36-45

This only deepens the mystery of the Resurrection as seen in the Geese Book and similar depictions where the door to the tomb or the lid of the sarcophagus is not removed.  In the Resurrection scene included in Veit Stoß's Marian Altar in Krakow, two of the sleeping guards actually rest their arms and shoulders on the lid of the sarcophagus.[65]  The use of these soldiers or the unbroken seals in the Geese Book initial reinforces the idea that Christ emergence from the tomb was due to the supernatural power he possesses as part of the Godhead.  His ability to leave the tomb with the seals unbroken has been seen as a reminder of the Virgin birth and his ability to enter this world without his physical body being constrained by time and space.[66]  This same ability to move through physical objects is also noted in the Gospel of John when Christ suddenly appears among the disciples who were gathered together on Easter evening in a room with closed doors.[67]

In addition to serving as another reminder of Christ's divinity, the resurrection not just of the physical body, but a changed physical body, would

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[65] The Resurrection scene from this altarpiece is discussed in detail in Adam S. Labuda, "Die 'Auferstehung Christi' im Krakauer Marienaltar. Zum Problem von Körper und Bewegung in der Kunst von Veit Stoß," *Artibus et Historiae* 9, no. 18 (1998): 17-39.

[66] Ephraim the Syrian, a fourth century theologian, wrote: "in einem Augenblick ging er wie ein Blitz heraus.  Er zerstörte die Siegel des Grabes nicht, wie er die Siegel des Magdtums seiner Gebärerin nicht gelöst hatte."  Quoted in Labuda, "Die 'Auferstehung Christi'," 20.  In English, this reads: "in the blink of an eye, like a flash of lightening, he was out.  He did not break the seal of the tomb, like he had not broken the maidenly seal of his childbearer."

[67] John 20:19.  John notes a few verses later in John 20:26 that the following week when Christ appears to the disciples he again suddenly appears in a room with closed doors.

also subtly remind viewers of promised changes to the earthly flesh that would be theirs upon the resurrection of mankind on Judgment Day.[68]  While to the modern viewer this complexity of theological meaning might perhaps be lost in the sight of an all-too-familiar image of the Resurrection, the  viewers of the Geese Book initial would have understood the theological meanings behind the various iconographic elements and would have been comforted by the visual reminder of the opening words of the Mass that they sang—*RESURREXI ET ADHUC TECUM SUM* (I arose and am still with you)—and the promise of an imperishable eternal life.

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[68] The differences between earthly flesh and resurrection body are in 1 Corinthians 15:42-54.

Figure 20.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I,
folio 156r, Resurrection

Figure 21.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume I,
folio 156r (detail), Resurrection
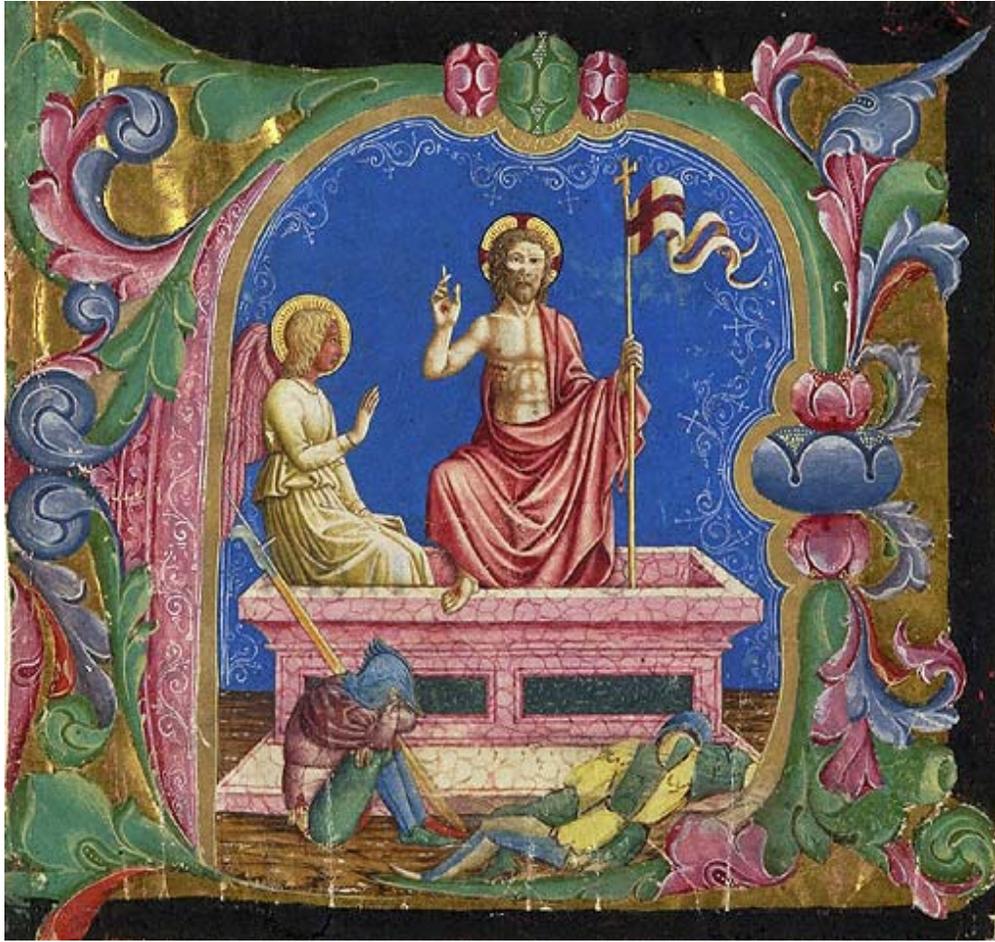
Figure 22.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.444r (detail), Resurrection

Figure 23. Morgan Library, New York, MS M.1052, folio 51v (detail), Resurrection

Figure 24.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.52, folio 146v, Resurrection

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

Volume I, Folio 186r

The introit for the Mass for Ascension is found on folio 186r of volume I and a historiated initial U (*UIRI GALIUIALEI QUID ADMIRAMINI ASPICIENTES IN CELUM*) depicting the Ascension of Christ is placed at the beginning of the third and fourth lines on the folio (Figures 25 and 26).  In the center of the scene is a grassy mount on which are the footprints of Christ, who is descending into a cloud with only the bottom edge of his blue robe and his feet, which bear the marks of the crucifixion, still visible.  Behind the cloud enveloping Christ are other clouds which form horizontal lines across the sky.  Surrounding the mount are the disciples and Mary.  On the left side of the initial are five disciples with Mary and on the right side are the other six; all of them have gold disk nimbi.

The Virgin Mary, who is the most central of the twelve figures, is dressed in blue robes and has her head covered by a white cloth.  She clasps her hands in prayer and faces the right side of the initial.  She does not gaze upward at the disappearing Christ, but instead looks at John, who is directly across from her. John, shown in profile and dressed in red, also clasps his hands in a gesture of prayer, but does not look at Mary, instead choosing to focus on the ascension. The disciple immediately behind John is dressed in blue and yellow, but there are not enough details to identify him.  One other disciple on this side of the initial has a face shown in profile, but neither he nor the other three are identifiable.  On the left side of Mary, Peter, identifiable by his gray and red dress and tonsured hair, faces into the initial, watching the scene unfolding in front of him.  Past him

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is a disciple dressed in a green robe, but he cannot be identified and the other three disciples on the left side are indicated only by their nimbi.

A brief iconographic comparison to other depictions of the Ascension from the same time period as the Geese Book will reveal that the Geese Book initial utilizes a standard iconography. A historiated initial D (*DEUS IN ADIUTORIUM MEUM INTENDE*) which begins the Versicle for None in the Hours of the Virgin found in a book of hours made in Naples in 1483 (Figure 27) depicts Christ's lower legs and feet ascending from a craggy mountain while Mary and the disciples look on from below. Rays are emanating from Christ and the attending figures all have nimbi. In a historiated initial C (*CONCEDE QUESUMUS OMNIPOTENS DEUS*) which begins the Collect of the Suffrage for the Feast of Ascension in a French Book of Hours created ca. 1490 (Figure 28) the artist has chosen to show only the lower edge of Christ's robe and his feet. The disciples and Mary, shown with thin gold nimbi, surround the mountain on which Christ's footprints are visible.[69] This iconographic type, however, has sparked debate among art historians as to the reason for it appearance.

The textual basis for the Ascension iconography is found in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The scene there is described in this way: "And when he had said these things, while they looked on, he was raised up: and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were beholding him going

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[69] Additional examples of this type of Ascension can be found in miniatures in Morgan Library MS M.292 on folio 21v and Morgan Library MS M.1003 on folio 18v. The footprints on the mount are visible in MS M.292 and in MS M.1003 a cloud is included which obscures the upper body of Christ.

up to heaven, behold two men stood by them in white garments."[70]  As will be

seen, art historians who have closely examined the iconographic development of

the Ascension agree on the importance of this narrative, and the homilies of early

Christian theologians.  These authors are more concerned, however, with the

dramatic iconographic shift that happened at the beginning of the eleventh

century, and it is necessary to first discuss the iconographic variations that

developed beginning in the fourth century.

Ernest T. Dewald's 1915 article on the iconography of the Ascension

remains the definitive overview of the topic.[71]  Using multiples examples he

tracks the development of the Ascension iconography from what he terms the

Hellenistic type to the Gothic type.  In the Hellenistic type, a beardless Christ

shown in profile steps from a mountaintop into heaven, assisted by the hand of

God, while several (not all) of the disciples are pictured in various poses.  This

type, found in the earliest Western examples, differs from what Dewald terms the

Oriental or Syro-Palestinian type, of which there are several subtypes.  The basic

iconography of the Oriental or Syro-Palestinian type is this: a frontal, bearded

Christ in a mandorla is accompanied by angels as he ascends.  The disciples,

separated into two neatly organized groups, frame the Virgin who is shown with

her hands touching each other in prayer.  The positioning of Christ and inclusion

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[70] Acts 1:9-12.  Additional references to the Ascension can be found in Mark
16:19 and the Luke 24:50-53.

[71] Ernest T. Dewald, "The Iconography of the Ascension," *American Journal of
Archaeology* 19, no. 3 (1915): 227-319.  As will be shown, this article's only
failing is in the attribution of a national origin for the initial development of the so-
called Gothic type.

of the Virgin and angels in the Eastern examples are the two most significant

differences between the Hellenistic and Oriental iconographies and the

assimilation and uses of these figures are useful in tracing the further

development of the Ascension iconography.[72]

The next phase in the iconographic development of the Ascension came

during the eighth or ninth century in the Eastern Church when the artists who

"inherited most of the Syro-Palestinian types…modified them in the direction of

greater realism."[73]  Christ is still bearded and enclosed in a mandorla supported

by angels while Mary is flanked by additional angels and surrounded by the

disciples.  Gone, however, are the wheels, mythical animals and other more

illusionistic elements found in the later Syro-Palestinian iconography.  The

Byzantine type also spread, as the Syro-Palestinian type had, to Italy, although

not, at this point, to the rest of Europe.  It was not until the Carolingian period that

the Syro-Palestinian type began to influence the iconography in the West outside

of Italy.

Carolingian depictions of the Ascension show the assimilation of various

Syro-Palestinian or Oriental elements, such as the inclusion of angels and the

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[72] An example of the Hellenistic Ascension is a ca. 400 ivory panel in the
Bayerische Nationalmuseum in Munich.  The lower portion of this ivory panel
shows the women at the tomb, while in the upper register Christ strides across a
mountaintop clutching the hand of God.  Two disciples, one cowering and the
other gazing up in fear and amazement are on the right hand side.  Perhaps the
most famous example of the Oriental or Syro-Palestinian type is found on folio
13v of the late sixth century Rabbula Gospels.  The frontal, bearded Christ is in a
mandorla surrounded by four angels while Mary stands directly below with the
disciples and other figures placed in two symmetrical groups on either side.

[73] Dewald, "Ascension," 291.

appearance of the Virgin Mary as a central figure among the observers.  During

the Ottonian period and the tenth century, further amplification of the Syro-

Palestinian influence can be seen in the order that is imposed on the observers

and the addition of a mandorla in most representations.  Despite the mandorla

Christ is still represented in profile.  A frontal Christ is introduced in the eleventh

century, but the mandorla disappears in many representations.  One new

inclusion is the addition of a horizontal line creating an upper register.  Christ is

portrayed across this line—partially on earth and partially in heaven.  Half-length

angels typically appear above the line on either side of Christ.[74]

The last step in the development of the iconography of the Ascension

made during the Middle Ages is the "Gothic" type.  This iconography of the

Ascension depicts only the lower legs and feet of Christ as he ascends out of

view of the disciples and the Virgin Mary who are gathered around a mountain.

In various representations, as seen above, a cloud may be used to obscure the

upper half of Christ and his final footprints may be visible on the Mount of Olives.

As Ernest T. Dewald notes, angels are only included in two of the

representations of this type that he found.[75]  Ernest T. Dewald attributes the

development of this type to "the French school of Gothic art," and there was

undoubtedly later influence on the iconography, but as will be seen the first

examples of this type are found in late tenth-century England.

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[74] Examples of all of the various types and subtypes are included in Ernest T. Dewald's article.

[75] Dewald, "Ascension," 316.  In the two representations that do include angels, the angels fly down on either side of Christ and touch his feet, perhaps a reference to the angels that held the mandorla during earlier centuries.

This Gothic type as it is termed by Ernest T. Dewald, is the type of Ascension used in the Geese Book. It is this iconographic tradition that Meyer Schapiro and Robert Deshman have taken opposite sides on regarding the influences behind its initial appearance and significance, both theologically and on the viewers.[76] Both agree on the basic fact that this iconography was developed in Anglo-Saxon England in the late tenth or early eleventh century. Meyer Schapiro and Ernest T. Dewald do agree on the reasons, if not the locale and timeframe, for the development of the Gothic or disappearing Christ Ascension iconography. Dewald calls this "quaint realism" and Schapiro also comes to the conclusion that this development reflects the "emotionality and realistic perceptiveness of this art, in contrast to the more abstract and formalized styles" that were seen previously.[77]

Meyer Schapiro begins his evaluation of the disappearing Christ with a look at the Anglo-Saxon *Blickling Homilies* and the commentary on the passage from the Acts of the Apostles quoted above. The homilist seems particularly concerned with correcting either a real or perceived misconception regarding the cloud that "received him." The writer places particular emphasis on the fact that Christ did not need the cloud's assistance, and Schapiro deduces that the image

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[76] Meyer Schapiro presents his arguments in "The Image of the Disappearing Christ: the Ascension in English Art Around the Year 1000," *Late Antique, Early Christian and Mediaeval Art: Selected Papers* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1979), 267-287. Robert Deshman presents his arguments in "Another Look at the Disappearing Christ: Corporeal and Spiritual Vision in early Medieval Images" *Art Bulletin* 79, no. 3 (1997): 518-546.

[77] Dewald, "The Ascension," 317, and Schapiro, "Disappearing Christ," 285.

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of the Ascension, which showed Christ with a cloud under his feet or potentially

supported by angels, had become problematic.[78] However, Schapiro does not

consider this enough of an impetus for a new iconography and looks to other

Anglo-Saxon vernacular sources for the iconographic inspiration.

Andrea Worm examines the accounts of pilgrims who saw the footprints of

Christ, beginning with an early fifth century account by Bishop Paulinus of Nola

found in a letter to his friend Sulpicius Severus where Paulinus relates his

journey to the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives and the footprints

that were visible dents in the dust that made up the church floor.[79] Several

written accounts included in manuscripts about sacred places that described the

Church of the Ascension included diagrammatic plans that would help the reader

visualize the arrangement of the various openings (such as the eight windows

Bishop Arculf noted in his late seventh century description).[80] The sheer number

of accounts still extant is evidence of the extreme interest in the footprints of

Christ during the first millennium of Christianity and it is, therefore, unsurprising

that the later iconography was consistent in including this detail.

[78] The passage from the *Blickling Homilies* quoted in Schapiro reads as follows: "The cloud did not make its appearance there, because our Lord had need of the cloud's aid at the Ascension; nor did the cloud raise him up, but he took the cloud before him…." Quoted in Schapiro, "Disappearing Christ," 270.

[79] Andrea Worm, "Steine und Fußspuren Christi auf dem Ölberg. Zu zwei ungewöhnlichen Motiven bei Darstellungen der Himmelfahrt Christi," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 66, no. 3 (2003): 307. It is interesting to note that the early accounts discussed in this article refer to Christ's footprints being visible in dust or sand, while the later accounts from the eleventh and twelfth centuries refer to footprints left on a stone surface.

[80] Ibid., 308-309.

This iconography recreated the viewpoint more similar to the one Mary and the disciples had of the ascending Christ and, as Shapiro discusses, placed the image-viewer as a spectator to the event. Schapiro then moves into a discussion of what he sees as the overall radical nature of Anglo-Saxon art around the year 1000 and small, naturalistic details that, to him, "denote a real emancipation of art."[81] It is these details (i.e. the footprints of Christ and the view from below), reasons Schapiro, that allowed viewers to have an emotional experience such as the one those fortunate enough to visit the actual localities would have had. For English artists around 1000 the Ascension was not about showing the risen, triumphant Christ ascending to his throne, but picturing the scene as it would have been experienced by those left behind to continue the work of spreading Christianity.

Robert Deshman, on the other hand, argues that the real impetus for the new Ascension iconography is found in the theological arguments of the time and that Meyer Schapiro's argument that this development rests on artists' desire for optical realism is too narrow. He posits that there are important variations in the iconography which have been overlooked by previous studies and that are integral to understanding the underlying theological importance that influenced the "disappearing Christ" iconography and that medieval liturgy, devotional practice and concepts of vision are more important than artistic individualism.[82]

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[81] Schapiro, "Disappearing Christ," 281.

[82] Deshman, "Disappearing Christ," 519-520.

He begins the defense of his theory by examining Christ's Ascension with the ascensions of two Old Testament figures: Enoch and Elijah.

Enoch and Elijah, the only two other individuals recorded in the Bible as departing from earth to heaven without dying, both required assistance in order to ascend.[83]  Contrasting that with Christ, Deshman reasons that this is why the angels which supported the mandorla, and could have been seen to be assisting Christ with his ascension as they assisted Enoch and Elijah were replaced by a cloud in later representations of the Ascension.  He also proposes that this explains the change from positioning the cloud below Christ, where it could be read as assisting him, to partially obscuring him was made.  As the *Blickling Homilies* states, Christ did not require assistance because he was the omnipotent God.  In addition to the importance of depicting Christ because of his Godhead not needing assistance in order to ascend to heaven, the artistic representation was possibly altered to place additional emphasis on Christ's dual nature.[84]  The inclusion of the Virgin as the iconography developed, although her presence was not indicated in any of the Biblical or early apocryphal texts, directly under Christ is a reminder that although he rises unassisted, Christ was human, and what viewers were seeing were his final physical moments on earth.

A representation of Christ as both God and man, the iconography of "Gothic" type can also be read in a less literal, but no less important manner.  As

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[83] Enoch's (spelled Henoch in the Douay-Rheims translation of the Bible) ascension is recorded in Genesis 5:22-24 and Hebrews 11:5.  The account of Elijah's ascension is found in 4 Kings 2:1-18.

[84] Deshman, "Disappearing Christ," 523.

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Robert Deshman points out, Christ is often figured as the head of the church, and the earthly members of the church as the body (members).[85] One potential reading of the iconography, therefore, is that as the head returns to heaven, the members remain on earth to continue the work begun by the head. This meaning, therefore, could also connect this iconography to the Ascension account in Mark's gospel, where Christ commissions his disciples to go into the world and spread his message of salvation immediately before his ascension (this commission was also often depicted as a separate event).[86] Deshman concludes that the realism identified by Schapiro was actually a set of complex dogmatic and theological ideas visualized in a concise iconographic scheme. This concise iconographic scheme that presents a viewer's perspective and a series of dogmatic and theological ideas thus informed the creation of historiated initials such as the one in the Geese Book.

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[85] Deshman, "Disappearing Christ," 528-529.

[86] Mark 16:15-19

Figure 25.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, folio 186r, Ascension

Figure 26.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, folio 186r (detail), Ascension

Figure 27.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.1052, folio 55v (detail), Ascension
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Figure 28.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.380, folio 98v (detail), Ascension

CHRIST CALLING ANDREW AND PETER

Volume II, Folio 1r

On folio 1r of volume II is the Vigil for the Feast of Saint Andrew which opens with a historiated initial D (*DOMINUS SECUS MARE GALILEE UIDIT DUOS FRATRES PETRUM ET ANDREAM*) depicting Christ calling Andrew and Peter to be his first two disciples (Figures 29 and 30).[87]  Christ stands on the grass-covered shoreline and wears a simple blue robe, which he gathers in his left hand and lifts to reveal his right foot.  His right arm is bent slightly at the elbow and extended as if to balance him.  He has a thin gold band for a nimbus and there appears to be a small cross between the top of his head and the edge of the nimbus.  Christ does not look at either Andrew or Peter, but glances downward.  This combination of gestures suggests that he is preparing to take a step forward, perhaps to step into the boat, to allow him to view the contents of the net, or to engage in conversation with Andrew and Peter.

Andrew, depicted as an older man with thinning gray hair and a long gray beard, wears a full-length red robe that has a seam down the center of the chest and is gathered at the waist by a brown belt.  He is standing in the boat with his knees and back bent slightly.  His left hand rests on the crosspiece that is at the top of the pole while his right hand grasps the pole further down.  Because of the

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[87] In his catalogue entry for the Geese Book William D. Wixom identifies the scene contained in this initial as Saint Peter's Miraculous Draft of Fishes.  William D. Wixom, "Gradual (in Latin)", 186.  However, the Morgan Library has classified it as Christ calling Peter and Andrew, and examination of the initial shows that is a more accurate classification.  The Morgan Library catalogue record can be viewed by searching for the manuscript on their website: http://www.themorgan.org.

position of Christ the viewer cannot see where the pole ends, but it appears he is using it to steady the boat or perhaps hold the boat in place near the shoreline. Andrew's attention is not focused on Christ, but he is instead occupied with monitoring his task of steadying or holding the boat in place.

Peter, who kneels in the boat, is also depicted as an older man, completely bald on the top of his head, and with a neatly trimmed gray beard. His blue robe, belted at the waist, has the sleeves pushed up to just below his elbow. Peter's forearms rest on the edge of the boat and in his hands he holds the edge of a small net which is placed in the water. The front edge of the net has cork floats spaced at intervals and a catch of three fish is visible. Peter, like Christ and Andrew, looks down, in his case gazing at the fish in his net.

Behind the boat and the figures of Christ, Andrew and Peter lies the Sea of Galilee. Stretching into the distance, the sea and the mountains and clouds on the far side are covered with an atmospheric haze. Boats are visible on the water, most of them closer to the opposite shore and buildings are also barely visible on the far side of the Sea of Galilee. Clouds float across the sky at the top of the initial, completing the naturalistic landscape.

Despite being listed in all four Gospels as one of the first two disciples of Christ, Andrew did not play an important role later in the Gospel narratives.[88] The only other places where he is an active participant and not just a member of the larger group occur during the Miraculous Feeding of the Five Thousand and in a scene with Peter, James and John where they inquire, apart from the other

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[88] The Gospel accounts of Christ calling Andrew and Peter can be found in Matthew 4:19-20, Mark 1:16-18, Luke 6:13-16, and John 1:35-42.

disciples, as to when the events Christ was speaking about would occur.[89]  He is

also included in Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*, where his ministry and

martyrdom are detailed, and an apocryphal Acts of the Apostle Andrew, which

was banned by the late fifth century *Decretum Gelasianum* (Gelasian Decree)

and today does not survive in its entirety.[90]  The iconography of Andrew is drawn

from these sources and generally falls into one of three categories: the portrait-

type, incidents from the life of Saint Andrew, and Saint Andrew as a member of

the twelve disciples.  This study will examine the first two categories as they are

most relevant to the iconographic choice made for the Geese Book initial.

General attributes, such as the scroll or book, are sometimes assigned to

Saint Andrew to indicate his role as an apostle while his individual attributes are

fish, a fisherman's net, and the crossed staff or decussate cross (the x-shaped

cross, also referred to as the saltire cross or Saint Andrew's cross).[91]  The

decussate cross is Saint Andrew's best-known attribute and it almost always

accompanies the portrait-type iconography.  An excellent example of the portrait-

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[89] The Miraculous Feeding of the Five Thousand is recorded in John 6:1-15; the other incident is recorded beginning with Mark 13:3.

[90] The Gelasian Decree is traditionally attributed to Pope Gelasius I, bishop of Rome 492-496AD.  It laid out the canon of the New Testament and listed those books that were considered apocryphal and anathema.  The Acts of the Apostle Andrew falls into the latter category and was to be avoided by devout Catholics. The contents of the Acts of the Apostle Andrew are summarized and analyzed in François Bovon, "The Words of Life in the 'Acts of the Apostle Andrew'," *The Harvard Theological Review* 87, no. 2 (1994): 139-154.

[91] A more detailed overview of the various attributes and representations of Saint Andrew can be found in the article "Andreas (Apostel)," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. 5, Ikonographie der Heiligen, Aaron-Crescentianus von Rom, ed. Wolfgang Braunfels (Herder: Rome, 1968), 138-145.

type is the wooden Saint Andrew statue made by Veit Stoss for the Carthusian Monastery and later moved to the Church of St. Sebald in Nuremberg. This statue is dated to 1500-1520, approximately the same time as the Geese Book was being created for the Church of St. Lorenz.[92] Rainer Kahsnitz describes the sculpture in his essay "Sculpture in Stone, Terracotta, and Wood" in *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg 1300-1550*.[93] It is larger than life-size, with the weight of the figure supported by an extended left leg. The expressive drapery, which creates the majority of the sculptural form, is gathered in Saint Andrew's left hand. He holds a book between his hands and his right arm is wrapped around the decussate cross that stands at his side.

Additional examples of the portrait-type of Saint Andrew include a historiated initial D (*DOMINUS SECUS MARE GALILEE UIDIT DUOS FRATRES PETRUM ET ANDREAM*) that accompanies the same Mass, the Vigil for the Feast of Saint Andrew, as the Geese Book initial does. This initial (Figure 31) from a late fifteenth-century Italian missal shows Saint Andrew as a gray-haired older man, wearing a red robe and a green cloak. His nimbus is a solid gold disk and he gazes out of the initial with his head shown in a three-quarter profile. His

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[92] Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors*, 272. The sculpture was moved from the Carthusian Monastery to their family chapel at the Church of St. Sebald by the Tucher family in 1657. Baxandall dates the sculpture to 1510-1520, while Kahsnitz dates the sculpture to 1500-1510.

[93] Rainer Kahsnitz, "Sculpture in Stone, Terracotta, and Wood," in *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg 1300-1550* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 73. For other discussions of Saint Andrew statues see Sara Jane Pearman, "A Netherlandish Saint Andrew from Cleves," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 67, no. 10 (1980): 310-326 and Justus Bier, "St. Andrew in the Work of Tilmann Riemenschneider," *Art Bulletin* 38, no. 4 (1956): 215-223.

left hand supports the bottom of a book that is shown unbound side out with a clasp in the middle.  His right arm is wrapped around a decussate cross and his right hand rests on the top edge of the book.  The background is blue with a gold decorative motif.  A final example can be found in a miniature from a Flemish book of hours that accompanies the Antiphon for the Suffrage to Apostle Andrew (Figure 32) that also leads into the next category of Saint Andrew images to be discussed.  In this miniature, the portrait-type Saint Andrew scene dominates the foreground.  He stands in a contrapposto position with his feet perpendicular to each other.  His right arm grasps his yellow clock and his left arm supports the decussate cross.  On the right-hand side of the initial there is visible a walled city, and outside the city the martyrdom of Saint Andrew is taking place—he is bound to a decussate cross and encircled by a group of figures.

As mentioned above, the second category of Saint Andrew imagery that this study will examine is images from the life of Saint Andrew, including images of his martyrdom.  The variety of these scenes, which range from illustrations of his actions in the Bible to his post-Biblical ministry and martyrdom, can be shown with three examples.  The first of these is found in a marginal medallion of a mid-fifteenth century French book of hours.  This historiated medallion (Figure 33) depicts Andrew bringing the two fish and five loaves that Christ used to feed the five thousand.[94]  Andrew stands on the left-hand side of the initial, facing right, and wears a red robe.  He has gray hair, a gray beard, and a gold line representing his nimbus.  In his left hand he holds the two fish and in his right

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[94] John 6:1-15.  In verse 9 Andrew comes to Jesus and tells him that there is a boy with five barley loaves and two fish.

hand he carries a basket containing the five loaves of bread.  His decussate

cross leans against his right side, with the top of one cross piece under his right

elbow.  Christ stands across from him, wearing a simple blue robe and with a

solid gold crossed nimbus.  With his left hand he reaches for the basket of loaves

and he has his right hand raised in a gesture of blessing.

The second example of an artist choosing scenes from the life of Saint

Andrew is found in a stained glass design by Hans Leonhard Schäufelein created

between 1505 and 1510.[95]  This round design, which has an unidentified coat of

arms in the center, has four vignettes from the life of Saint Andrew.  These

vignettes are identified by Timothy Husband as follows, beginning at the top and

moving clockwise: "a bishop, who honored Saint Andrew, is seated at a table and

being seduced by a woman;" "Saint Andrew, in the guise of a pilgrim, calls at the

bishop's door to warn the porter that the woman is the devil in disguise, thus

saving the bishop from temptation;" the martyrdom of Saint Andrew;"a woman

appears before a judge to accuse her son, prostrate before them, as a devil in

the form of a dragon whispers into the judge's ear."[96]

The final example that will be discussed here is a miniature from a mid-

fourteenth century French breviary that accompanies the Collect for the first

Vespers of the Feast of Saint Andrew and depicts the martyrdom of Saint

Andrew (Figure 34).  A gold-patterned background creates a stark contrast with

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[95] This stained glass design is catalogue number 168 in *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg 1300-1550* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986).

[96] Timothy Husband, "Design for Stained Glass: Four Scenes from the Life of Saint Andrew," in *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg 1300-1550* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 352.

what is taking place as two men bind Saint Andrew's wrists to the decussate

cross.  The cross is placed at an angle with the quatrefoil frame of the miniature,

so the body of Saint Andrew is almost parallel to the bottom of the initial.  He

wears a pale reddish-pink robe and has a gold disk as a nimbus.  He gazes

upward and across at the man who stands behind the cross tying Andrew's left

wrist to the beam.  The second man kneels on one knee below Andrew's body

and works on tying his right arm to the opposite beam.  Based on these

examples of the portrait-type and selected scenes from the life of Saint Andrew,

the conclusion can be drawn that the creators of the Geese Book had several

iconographic options available to them and chose to use Christ calling Andrew

and Peter.

A brief examination of the introit of the Mass for the Vigil of Saint Andrew

perhaps reveals the reason behind the artist's decision to use Christ calling

Andrew and Peter and not either the portrait-type of Andrew or an image of his

martyrdom.  The introit reads: *DOMINUS SECUS MARE GALILAEA VIDIT*

*DUOS FRATRES, PETER ET ANDREAM, ET VOCATIT EOS: VENITE POST*

*ME, FACIAM VOS FIERI PISCATORES HOMINUM* (Next to the Sea of Galilee

the Lord saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew, and he called to them: come

follow me, and I will make you fishers of men).[97]  This short sentence describes

the contents of the historiated initial in an abbreviated fashion listing the figures

present (Christ, Andrew and Peter) as well as the setting (the Sea of Galilee),

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[97] This is a paraphrase of the account of Christ calling Andrew and Peter that is found in Matthew 4:18-19.  Mark 1:16-17 contains a very similar version of the narrative.

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giving those who chose the content of the illuminations a logical reason to choose the Calling of Andrew and Peter to fill the initial D and the need to only supply a few additional details, such as the catch of fish in the net (the importance of fish and fisherman motifs in early Christian art will be discussed later). Comparison of the Geese Book initial to other depictions of the same scene reveals that the Geese Book has a standard iconographic version of Christ calling Andrew and Peter. The earliest extant version of this iconography is found in the mosaics of the Church of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, Italy (Figure 35).[98] In this mosaic Christ, with a young man behind him, stands on the shore on the right side of the image. He faces the viewer frontally and does not look at Andrew and Peter who are a little ways out from shore in their boat. Peter stands at the front edge, with the net in the water and Peter sits in the back holding an oar.

One of the back panels from Duccio's *Maestá* altarpiece (Figure 36) now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., depicts this event as follows: Christ, standing on the shoreline on the left side of the initial, lifts his robes up with his left hand and gestures toward the boat on the water with his right. Peter is dressed in blue and has his right hand raised in a gesture of surprise while in his left hand he clutches some of the strings to the net that is half full of fish. Andrew is dressed in red and holds the oar in his right hand and strings for the net in both hands. The background of the composition is gold leaf, with no

[98] Gertrud Schiller, "The Calling of the Apostles," in *Lexikon der christlichen Kunst*, trans. by Janet Seligman (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1971), 154.

indication of a shoreline or mountains, except the foreground shoreline Christ is standing on.[99]

Another Italian example from Museo di San Marco MS 558, the San Domenico Missal, folio 9r, is a historiated initial D (*DOMINUS SECUS MARE GALILEE UIDIT DUOS FRATRES PETRUM ET ANDREAM*) that begins the introit for the Vigil of the Feast of Apostle Andrew and was painted by Fra Angelico (Figure 37). Created ca. 1430, this initial is the only example that depicts the event as taking place pre-dawn. In fact, a crescent moon is visible in just above the distant horizon line. The ground-plane of the initial is tilted so Christ stands upright while the ground underneath his feet and the islands in the background are sharply tilted up on the right side. Christ is wearing a red robe with a blue cloak lined with red and trimmed with gold wrapped under his right arm and draped over his left shoulder. He has a gold disk nimbus with a red cross inside and short blond hair. His left arm is raised in a gesture toward Andrew and Peter in the boat. Andrew and Peter do not look at Christ, instead focusing on their tasks at hand. Peter, standing at the front edge of the boat is wearing a short red robe and has a gold disk nimbus. In his hands he clutches at the strings of the net. Andrew stands at the front end of the boat and wears a short green robe that is drawn up at the center. He also has a gold disk nimbus. His hands grasp a pole that extends into the water and he seems to be straining to keep the boat in place.

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[99] The placement of this panel within the scheme of the *Maestá* altarpiece is discussed in Ruth Wilkins Sullivan, "The Anointing in Bethany and Other Affirmations of Christ's Divinity on Duccio's Back Predella," *Art Bulletin* 67, no. 1 (1985): 32-50.

An initial U (*UNUS EX DUOBUS QUI SECUIT SUNT DOMINUM ERAT ANDREAS FRATER SIMONIS PETRI*) begins the Magnificat Antiphon from the first Vespers of the Feast of Apostle Andrew in a French antiphoner (Figure 38) created ca. 1400 depicts Christ standing on the shore on the right side of the initial, holding a book in his left hand and with his right hand raised in greeting. Peter, dressed in a red robe, is stepping out of the boat in reaction to Christ's call.  Andrew stands behind Peter clutching the net of fish in his right hand and with his left hand raised in response to the call.  In an initial I (*IN ILLO TEMPORE*) that begins the Gospel reading for the Feast of Apostle Andrew in a late fifteenth-century French missal (Figure 39), Christ stands on the shore looking back at the Peter and Andrew who are in their boat near the shore.  The viewpoint in this particular representation of Christ calling Peter and Andrew is from the lake, with the shoreline on which Christ is standing extending back into the distance with clouds.  A distant portion of the lake wraps around on the right side of the initial.

Each of these representations of Christ calling Andrew and Peter corresponds iconographically with the Geese Book initial and, although they include the same net of fish, are not Christ calling Andrew and Peter.  It would appear that Wixom's identification of the Geese Book initial as a representation of Peter's Miraculous Draft of Fishes was in error.  A simple explanation might be that this reminded people of Andrew and Peter's vocation.  They were not merely men who happened to be in a boat on the Sea of Galilee when Christ called them, but they were fishermen.  In addition, in the context of the words spoken by

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Christ when he called them to be his disciples, it would appear that the concept of the disciples as "fishers of men" not merely former fishermen, merits attention, especially as these words are the introit to the Mass.

Lois Drewer examines the Christian metaphors surrounding fish and fishermen in her article "Fisherman and Fish Pond: From the Sea of Sin to the Living Waters."[100]  Christ himself was the author of the first fish metaphor when he told the disciples "the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kind of fishes.  Which, when it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth.  So shall it be at the end of the world."[101]  This parable referred to Judgment Day, when Christ would judge mankind.  The fisherman, therefore, became a symbol of salvation, much like the shepherd, because those fish who were caught and not released were the ones who would be saved from eternal damnation.  As Drewer states, "The fish, caught on the hook of the fisherman, is a type of the Christian soul who suffers symbolic death in the baptismal waters in order to be 'reborn' into the faith."[102]  In view of this metaphor and Christ's parable, the fish in Peter's net are likely meant to be viewed as symbolic of the souls he and the other disciples would be charged with gathering.

The decision of the creators of the Geese Book to choose Christ calling Andrew and Peter over a portrait-type of Andrew or a depiction of his martyrdom

[100] Lois Drewer, "Fisherman and Fish Pond: From the Sea of Sin to the Living Waters," *Art Bulletin* 63, no. 4 (1981): 533-547.

[101] Matthew 13:47-49.

[102] Drewer, "Fisherman," 535.

allowed them both to illustrate the accompanying mass and to create an image with multiple layers of meaning.  Those fortunate enough to view this historiated initial would be reminded not only of Andrew and Peter's transformation from lowly fishermen to disciples of Christ who would carry out his mission after his Ascension, but also of the need for contemporary "fishers of men" and the ongoing need to rescue those "fish" still in the sea of sin.

Figure 29.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume II, folio 1r, Christ Calling Andrew and Peter
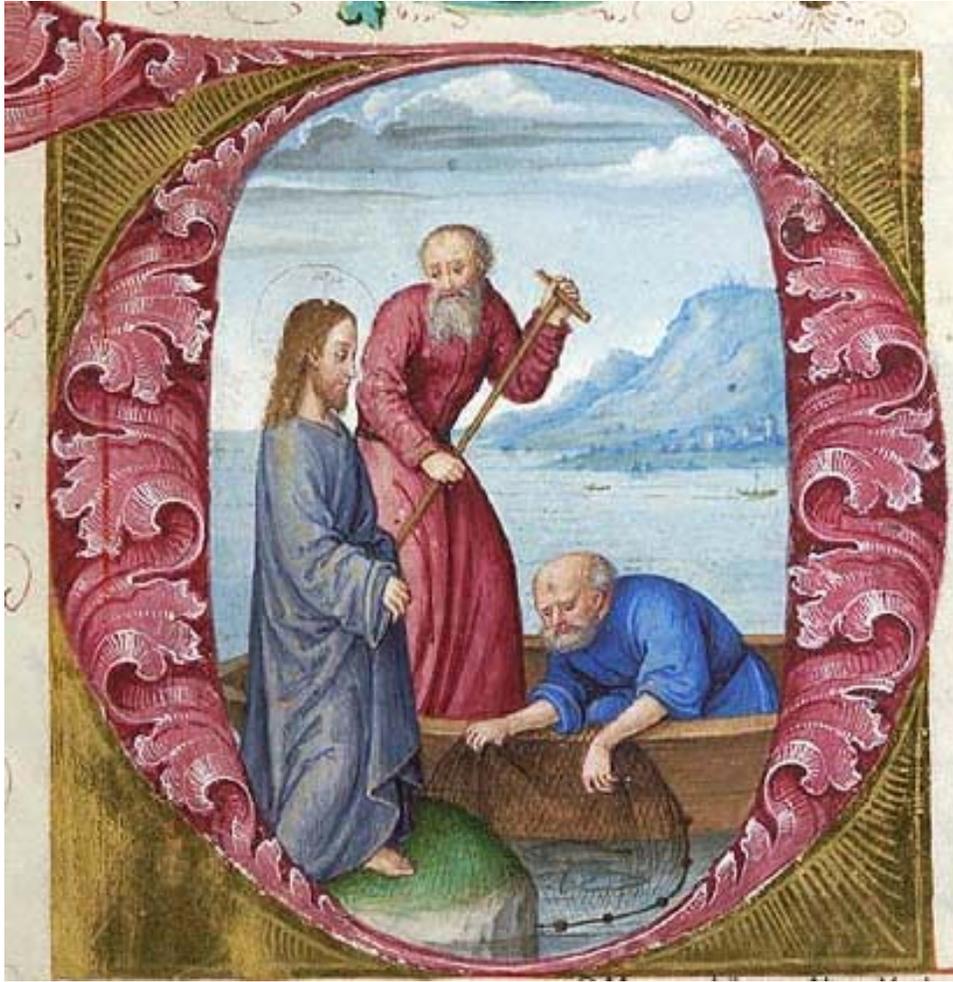
Figure 30.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume II, folio 1r (detail),
Christ Calling Andrew and Peter

Figure 31.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.472, folio 185r, Apostle Andrew

Figure 32.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.491, folio 57v,
Portrait and Crucifixion of Apostle Andrew

Figure 33.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.359, folio 65r,
Andrew Presenting the Loaves and Fishes to Christ

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Figure 34.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.75, folio 386v,
Crucifixion of Apostle Andrew

Figure 35.  Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy,
Christ Calling Andrew and Peter



Figure 36.  Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*, 1308-1311.  Tempera on panel.  Samuel H. Kress Collection. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Figure 37.  Museo di San Marco, Florence, MS 558, folio 9r (detail),
The Calling of Peter and Andrew

Figure 38.   Morgan Library, New York, MS G.3, folio 1r,
Christ Calling Andrew and Peter

Figure 39.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.306, folio 27r,
Christ Calling Andrew and Peter

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

Volume II, Folio 21v

At the front of the bottom two lines of folio 21v of volume II is a historiated

initial S (*SUSCEPIMUS DEUS MISERICORDIAM TUAM*) that begins the introit

for the Mass of the Purification of Mary and depicts the Presentation of Christ in

the Temple (Figures 40 and 41).[103]  Christ is in the center of the initial.  Depicted

as a small child, he has a translucent crossed nimbus— the only figure with a

nimbus in this initial.  He lies unclothed in the draped arms of Simeon and

glances back at Mary.  His left arm hangs straight down toward the two doves

placed on the altar.  The altar, covered with a white cloth, stands between

Simeon and Mary.

Simeon, depicted as an older man with a gray beard, stands on the left

side of the initial.  He is dressed in a voluminous white robe with sleeves that

completely cover his hands.  Over this he wears a gold-colored garment and on

his head is a gold-embroidered headdress with a crescent moon attached to the

front.  He gazes intently at the child in his arms and his finely modeled face is

one of the most realistic in form and shadow of the Geese Book.  Behind

Simeon, with his face partially obscured by Simeon's headdress, stands a blond

temple attendant dressed in an orange-red robe.  His face looks into the center of

the initial, but his expression seems detached from the scene happening in front

of him.

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[103] The story of the Presentation in the Temple occurs only in Luke 2:22-39.

Mary, standing on the right side of the initial, gazes downward with her hands clasped in prayer.  As mentioned above, she does not have a nimbus. Her head is covered by the gold-edged blue cloak that she wears.  Behind Mary are two additional figures.  The first is probably Joseph, a gray-haired man dressed in a dark red robe and flat-topped hat of the same color, who looks with interest at the scene in front of him.  In his unseen hands he holds a long, lit taper that extends almost to the top of the initial.  Behind him, her face partially obscured, is a woman dressed in a green robe with her head covered by a white cloth.  This is likely the Prophetess Anna.

The interior architectural elements other than the altar do not in themselves suggest a temple setting.  On the lower left side of the initial it is possible to see where the smooth stone floor and wall join.  This smooth stone wall is bisected by a solid green curtain that dominates the center portion of the initial above the figures.  The altar appears to extend as far as this curtain. Contrasted with the fine modeling of Simeon's face and the drapery folds of the Virgin's cloak, this architectural setting seems sparse and undeveloped.

During the centuries between the life of Christ and the creation of the Geese Book, the iconography of the Presentation in the Temple and the Purification of Mary took many different forms.  These iconographic differences form two major groups: differences in the architectural setting and differences in the figural groups and their gestures.  The iconographic differences of the first group (the architectural setting of the Presentation) are integrally connected with the development of the Feast itself.

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple was first celebrated in Jerusalem as the *Hypapante* (Simeon's meeting) at the end of the fourth century. In the middle of the sixth century it was established by Justinian in Constantinople and was celebrated 40 days after January 6 (the date on which Christ's birth was celebrated).[104] Because of the focus of the *Hypapante* was on the meeting between Simeon and the Virgin Mary and Christ, the earliest depictions of this scene such as the fifth-century mosaic at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome do not include an altar, which would indicate a rite of presentation or purification, and often took place outside of the Temple. In this mosaic, the rite of Purification is implied only by the birds on the Temple steps.

The Feast of the *Hypapante* was adopted in the west during the fifth or sixth centuries, about the same time as the Purification of Mary was instituted in Rome, possibly to replace the pagan festival of *Lupercalia* which occurred on February 14 as well and had been a festival for ritual purification.[105] During the next few centuries these two feasts were conflated, with the Western emphasis shifting to the Presentation and Purification.[106] It is believed that in the seventh

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[104] Gertrud Schiller, "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple," in *Lexikon der christlichen Kunst*, vol. 1, trans. by Janet Seligman (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1971), 90. Justinian was also instrumental in moving the Feast from February 14 (40 days after January 6) to February 2 (40 days after December 25, the date to which the celebration of the Nativity was moved).

[105] Dorothy C. Shorr discusses this development in detail in her article "The Iconographic Development of the Presentation in the Temple," *Art Bulletin* 28, no. 1 (1946): 17-32.

[106] Both Schiller and Shorr discuss the development of the Presentation and Purification from the *Hypapante* and draw the same conclusions regarding the

century in Rome Pope Sergius I created a procession with candles on the Feast

of the Purification and by the tenth century the Feast included a special

ceremony for the blessing of candles from which the Feast gradually took the

name Candlemas.  Also important was Charlemagne, who made observation of

the Feast of the Purification of Mary obligatory throughout the Frankish empire.

As Western celebrations of the feast began to focus on the Presentation

and Purification, the architectural setting of the scene shifted to the interior of the

Temple and the altar became an integral part.  The role of Simeon also

developed from the elderly man with no identifiable role in the Temple described

in the Gospel of Luke to a priestly figure who actively participates in the

Presentation.  There are apparently no extant depictions of the Presentation in

the Temple and Purification of Mary from before the eighth century other than

those utilizing the *Hypapante* form.[107]  The ninth century Utrecht Psalter and

tenth century Codex Egberti, however, both depict the Presentation and

Purification as occurring inside the Temple, across an altar, and this architectural

setting for the Presentation and Purification dominated Western depictions of the

scene from that time.[108]

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influence of this change in emphasis on the iconography and artistic
representations of the scene.

[107] Schiller, "The Presentation," 92.  See also the catalogue of images included in
Louis Réau, "La Présentation de Jésus au Temple ou La Purification de la
Vierge"  in *Iconographie de L'Art Chrétien, Iconographie de la Bible*, vol. 2 (Paris:
Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), 264-265.

[108] There are depictions of the Presentation in the Temple such as the one on
folio 50r of Morgan Library MS M.238 that place the altar outside with the Temple
in the background.

The second set of major iconographic differences relates to the figures and their gestures, mainly the positioning of Christ between other participants. To this end, Dorothy Shorr identifies six iconographic types for the Presentation and Purification, each of which will be briefly outlined here.[109]  In the first, the Virgin Mary holds the forward-seated Christ in her arms; a sub-variant shows Christ leaning toward Simeon, instead of passively waiting in Mary's arms.  The second type depicts the transfer of Christ from Mary to Simeon, with them holding Christ jointly—Mary typically supports Christ's upper body while Simeon grasps his feet.  In the third variation of type Christ actually stands on the altar between Mary and Simeon.[110]

The fourth iconographic type depicts the completed transfer of Christ from Mary's arms to Simeon.  Simeon holds Christ, his hands usually draped, in his arms.   The Geese Book initial falls into this category.  In the fifth iconographic variation, Simeon is in the process of handing Christ back to Mary the ceremony completed.  In some representations of this type Christ looks back towards Simeon as Mary holds out her hands for him.  The rarest of the iconographic types relating to the position of Christ is the sixth.  In this version, Joseph, who isn't even included in some representations of the Presentation and Purification,

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[109] For more detailed analysis of the six variations and examples of each, see Shorr, "Iconographic Development," 23-25.

[110] A survey of representations of the Presentation in the Temple reveals that the age of Christ varies from an infant to a child three or four years of age.  This does not, however, appear to be connected to the iconographic type of the representation as determined by Shorr, who is concerned with the positioning of Christ.

holds Christ.  Dorothy Shorr hypothesizes that perhaps this unusual iconographic choice "reflects some knowledge of the Jewish ritual…in which the first-born son is presented by his father."[111]

In addition to choosing which moment of the Presentation and Purification to represent, artists also had many choices when it came to who, in addition to Christ, Mary and Simeon, would be included and various other details such as the sacrificial doves or the inclusion of candles.  An examination of initials from other manuscripts shows that this was the case even in representations in limited amounts of space.  An initial D (*DEUS IN ADIUTORIUM MEUM INTENDE*) which begins the Versicle for None in an Italian Hours of the Virgin (Figure 42) from the late fifteenth century depicts Mary and Simeon kneeling on opposite sides of an altar with Christ held between them—an example of Shorr's second iconographic type.  Behind Mary is Joseph and behind Simeon is the prophetess Anna.  The Temple is more elaborately depicted with a tiled floor, three arches behind the altar and a row of molding above the arches.  All of the figures except Anna have simple gold nimbi and Christ is depicted as a blond toddler.  There are no additional iconographic elements, however.

This is not the case in the initial G (*GOT WILT DENCKEN IN MIJN HULPE*) that begins the Versicle for Terce in the Hours of the Virgin from the Croesinck Hours (Figure 43), a Netherlandish book of hours from the end of the fifteenth century.  The placement of the figures is somewhat unusual: the altar is at the right edge of the initial with all of the figures to the left of it.  Simeon kneels

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[111] Shorr, "Iconographic Development," 25.

before Mary, who is holding a nude Christ with closed eyes and crossed arms.

Joseph kneels also and holds a woven basket with two doves.  Anna stands

behind the rest of them holding a lit taper.  Finally, an initial S (*SUSCEPIMUS*

*DEUS MISERICORDIAM TUAM*) that begins the introit for the Mass of the

Purification of the Virgin in a late fourteenth century German missal (Figure 44)

depicts Mary and Simeon facing each other across the altar while Christ,

standing on the altar, turns back toward Mary and reaches out his arms.  Behind

Mary stands Anna, holding a lit taper in one hand and a small basket with two

doves in the other.  Another female attendant with a nimbus stands at the very

left of the initial.  The interior of the Temple is indicated only by the altar and a tile

floor.

Discussed briefly above, the development of Candlemas, as the Feast of

the Purification of Mary came to be called, will be further explored at this point.

In the late fifth century, Pope Gelasius I convinced the Roman Senate and

patricians to abandon Lupercalia, which had devolved from a rite of purification

into licentiousness.  As William M. Green writes in his article on Lupercalia in the

fifth century, although worship of other gods had been forbidden after Christianity

was declared the official state religion and the last organized resistance by the

non-Christians occurred at the end of the fourth century after severe penalties

were prescribed, the celebration of Lupercalia managed to remain in a nominally

Christian society.[112]  Pope Gelasius I, however, prevailed in presenting his

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[112] William M. Green, "The Lupercalia in the Fifth Century," *Classical Philology*
26, no. 1 (1931): 61-62.  In this article, William M. Green examines in detail the

arguments to the Senate and the celebration of Lupercalia and the concepts of

purification originally associated with it were replaced by the Feast of the

Purification of the Virgin, which, according to the Old Testament timeline, would

have taken place in early February.

In the *Golden Legend*, Jacobus de Voragine gives an account of the Feast

of the Purification and writes that the Romans celebrated during the month of

February a feast in honor of Pluto, who had carried Prosperine to the underworld.

He wrote that because it is difficult to erase long-standing customs and because

the feast celebrated by the Romans had included a candlelight procession, Pope

Sergius decided to place a Christian meaning over the original pagan meaning

and dedicate on that same day a feast for the Virgin that included candles.[113]  As

Dorothy Shorr recounts, however, there are no accounts of such a celebration by

the Romans during February.   Instead, the inclusion of a procession with

candles likely comes from a Greek festival, similar to the festival described by

Jacobus de Voragine, which may have been celebrated by many Romans.[114]

The blessing of candles to be used throughout the year became an important

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different arguments used by Pope Gelasius I to convince the Senate to stop
celebrating Lupercalia.

[113] *The Golden Legend of Jacobus of Voragine*, trans. by Granger Ryan
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 150.  The Gospel account of
Simeon's song of praise includes the following line: "A light to the revelation of
the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Luke 2:32.  This could possibly
have been used as a justification for a procession with candles as well.

[114] Shorr, "Iconographic Development," 18-19.

part of the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin and would have been the most recognizable and important portion of the feast for the average citizen.

By the thirteenth century, the inclusion of a candle in the hand of one or more of the attendants, or Joseph if he is included, was commonplace in northern depictions of the Presentation and Purification, although rare in Italy.[115] As has been shown by this analysis, the Geese Book contains a variation of the standard iconography for the Presentation and Purification which developed over the centuries from the Eastern *Hypapante* version that places the emphasis on the meeting between Simeon and Christ without any particular references to the Purification of the Virgin, to the dual emphasis of Presentation and Purification as depicted in the Geese Book.

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[115] Shorr, "Iconographic Development," 27.

Figure 40.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume II, folio 21v,
Presentation in the Temple

Figure 41.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume II, folio 21v (detail),
Presentation in the Temple

Figure 42.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.56, folio 69r (detail),
Presentation in the Temple

Figure 43.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.1078, folio 21v (detail),
Presentation in the Temple

Figure 44.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.892, folio 3r (detail),
Presentation in the Temple

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THE ANNUNCIATION

Volume II, Folio 31v

Folio 31v of the second volume of the Geese Book marks the beginning of

the Mass of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary.  The initial R (*RORATE*

*CELI DESUPER ET NUBES PLUANT IUSTUM*) that begins the introit for this

Mass is a historiated initial containing an illustration of the Annunciation (Figures

45 and 46).[116]  The Virgin Mary, with a simple band around her long blond hair

and with a thin gold circle as a nimbus, is dressed in blue robes.  She is seated

behind a prie-dieu covered with an embroidered red and gold cloth, has her arms

crossed over her chest and glances down demurely.   The angel Gabriel enters

from the left side of the initial, his right knee is bent slightly as if he has just

landed, and he looks at the Virgin.  Dressed in a white robe, he holds a cross-

topped scepter in his left hand and raises his right hand in blessing.  His brilliantly

colored red and blue wings extended behind him and out of the frame of the

initial.

The Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove with a gold circle for a nimbus,

hovers above the Virgin Mary and Gabriel.  Rays emanate downward from its

wings and body.  Behind the dove is a red canopy held up by two cords that

extend to the top of the initial.  The curtain on the right side of the initial is pulled

back toward the edge of the initial.  Across the top of the canopy NOMINE

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[116] The story of the Annunciation accepted as part of the Catholic Bible is found
in Luke 1:26-38.  A detailed analysis of Luke's narrative structure and the
potential interpretations of the dialogue is David T. Landry, "Narrative Logic in the
Annunciation to Mary (Luke 1:26-38)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114, no. 1
(1995): 65-79.

DOMINI is embroidered in gold and there are gold threads in the fringe below the letters.  On the left edge, above Gabriel, is an open archway of smooth masonry with blue sky and white clouds visible beyond it.

As David Robb states in his article "The Iconography of the Annunciation in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," the majority of Annunciations draw their iconography from the account of the event found the Gospel of St. Luke.[117] However, there were many aspects an artist could adjust to personalize a scene of the Annunciation to fulfill a variety of roles.  These include the positions and gestures of the figures, the setting, and additional elements drawn from the Apocryphal Gospels or other writings and sermons that were widely known.  Two of these elements: the gestures of Mary and the setting of the Annunciation have been expounded upon by Michael Baxandall and David Robb respectively and merit further investigation in regard to the choice of their use in the Geese Book initial.

In his book *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, Michael Baxandall provides a translation of one of the sermons of Fra Roberto Caracciolo da Lecce, a popular preacher in fifteenth century Italy.  In this sermon, Fra Roberto expounds on the Annunciation, dividing the account found in the Gospel of St. Luke into three main sections: "(1) the Angelic Mission, (2) the Angelic Salutation, and (3) the

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[117] David Robb, "The Iconography of the Annunciation in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *Art Bulletin* 18, no. 4 (1936): 480.

Angelic Colloquy."[118]  It is in his discussion of the Angelic Colloquy, where Fra

Roberto engages his listeners by dividing the account of the Virgin's reaction to

the proclamation of Gabriel into five separate emotions (he refers to them as

"Laudable Conditions"), beginning with her state of mind when she hears the

angel's greeting and concluding after the departure of the angel.

These five emotions, or states of mind, are: *conturbatio* (disquiet),

*cogitatio* (reflection), *interrogatio* (inquiry), *humiliatio* (submission), and *meritatio*

(merit).[119]  As Baxandall states, "The last of the five Laudable

Conditions…belongs with representations of the Virgin on her own…; the other

four…were divisions within the sublime narrative of Mary's response to the

Annuncication that very exactly fit the painted representations."[120]  The Geese

Book initial depicts the Virgin in the fourth of these laudable conditions,

*humiliatio*.  Fra Roberto connected this condition with Mary's words, "Behold the

handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word."[121]  Submission, or

the more literal translation humility, is depicted by kneeling with the arms crossed

over the chest and a downcast head, gestures which Fra Roberto used in

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[118] Quoted in Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 49-50.

[119] Ibid., 51.

[120] Ibid., 55.

[121] Luke 1:38

creating the verbal description of this fourth condition in his sermon.  Painters then illustrated this posture in their visual depictions of the Annunciation.[122]

This fourth laudable condition, the Virgin's acceptance of the will of God and her role as the mother of God, serves as the climax of the Annunciation, that moment when Christ became incarnate and entered the world to begin his mission of salvation.  As a gesture, it not only speaks to the incarnation of Christ, but also to the Virgin as an example or model for others.  She accepted the will of God, not questioning his ability to carry out the miracle of a virgin birth, just as the contemporary who viewed the Geese Book should be reminded to accept the will of God unquestioningly.

In addition to the Virgin's gesture, the spatial relationship between the Virgin and Gabriel also merits attention.  In the Geese Book initial, Gabriel enters from the left side of the image.  Although the figures face each other, this places Gabriel on the Virgin's proper right.  Since the earliest Annunciation depictions placed the Virgin to the archangel's proper right (Gabriel entered from the right), the development and meanings behind the Annunciation from the right or from the left require some thoughtful examination.  The differences between these two

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[122] Quoted in Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 51-55.  "The fourth laudable condition is called *Humiliatio*.  What tongue could ever describe, indeed, what mind could contemplate the movement and style with which she set on the ground her holy knees?  Lowering her head she spoke: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord*.  She did not say 'Lady'; she did not say 'Queen'.  Oh profound humility! oh extraordinary gentleness! 'Behold', she said, 'the slave and servant of my Lord.'  And then, lifting her eyes to heaven, and bringing up her hands with her arms in the form of a cross, she ended as God, the Angels, and the Holy Fathers desired: *Be it unto me according to thy word.*"

are discussed by Don Denny's dissertation, *The Annunciation from the Right from Early Christian Times to the Sixteenth Century.*[123]

Denny focuses on the Annunciation from the right, as the Annunciation from the left represents the more common representation of the Annunciation during the Medieval and Renaissance eras.  As he states, "…the Annunciation from the right, considered in broad historical view, indicates a tendency to emphasize the subservience of the Annunciate to the will of God, to minimize her prestige, authority, and glamour within the mystery of the Incarnation."[124]  The Annunciation from the right, therefore, is most common during those times in which attempts were made to minimize the importance of the Virgin, while the rise of the Annunciation from the left follows the rise of the cult of the Virgin.

By the early sixteenth century, however, the theological differences between the Annunciation from the right and that from the left had become less obvious than in earlier centuries, particularly the fifteenth.[125]  Therefore, it becomes more difficult to attribute any particular meaning to an artist's choosing to have the archangel Gabriel approach the Virgin from the left or the right.  The possibility exists that the illuminator of the Geese Book wanted to bestow on the Virgin special distinction, but he may have been merely illuminating the scene using the dominant iconographic positioning of the figures as it had developed

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[123] Don Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right from Early Christian Times to the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977)

[124] Ibid., 1.

[125] Ibid., 118.

over time. The extremely reduced depiction and lack of additional attributes for the Virgin add to the difficulty of determining the particular motive of the Geese Book illuminator in choosing to create an Annunciation from the left.

The second major element of any depiction of the Annunciation is the setting in which the scene is placed. It is this aspect of the Annunciation that David Robb focuses on in his article on fourteenth and fifteenth century depictions of the Annunciation. He outlines in this study three different settings for the Annunciation: the exterior portico, an ecclesiastical structure and the domestic interior (which could vary dramatically based on region, with the most complex found in Flemish art).[126] The setting of the Annunciation, which the writers of the Apocryphal Gospels usually mentioned in their narratives, was mostly ignored in the various artistic traditions before the fourteenth century.[127] David Robb argues that the setting in which the Annunciation took place became "the touchstone…the conception of the subject as a whole…which became more important than the arrangement of the figures."[128] He points first to Giotto and Duccio and their interests in settings in paintings of the Annunciation and other Biblical and apocryphal stories. In their representations of the Annunciation and those of other Italian artists who followed them, the Virgin and Gabriel are

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[126] Robb, "Annunciation," 480.

[127] The Protoevangelium of James is one such apocryphal source and will be discussed later in relationship to the choice of interior setting made in the Geese Book.

[128] Robb, "Annunciation," 485.

depicted within a series of columns, exterior porticos or arcades of columns that both defined the space and separated the figures from each other.

It is not until the later part of the fourteenth century that artists working in Northern Italy began attempts to create a sense of a unified and possibly interior space.[129] The earliest depiction of the Annunciation identified by David Robb as occurring in a defined domestic interior is a panel painting by Giovanni da Milano in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome. In this and other early examples resided "the embryo…from which the realistic bourgeois interiors imagined by the Flemish painters were to develop."[130] Despite the apparent increasing desire in Northern Europe to show the Annunciation as taking place in a domestic scene, illuminators were challenged by available space. As seen from the following comparison of the Geese Book initial to other historiated initials, a simplification of the background elements in order to keep the focus on the miraculous event depicted was often employed by manuscript illuminators tasked with depicting the Annunciation.

In an initial D (*DOMINE LABIA MEA APERIES*) that begins the Versicle of Matins for the Hours of the Virgin in an English book of hours created ca. 1480 (Figure 47), Gabriel, clutching a scepter in his left hand and with his right hand raised in blessing, has entered from the left side of the initial. The Virgin Mary, shown kneeling behind a draped prie-dieu, raises one hand to her chest while the other stays on the book placed on the prie-dieu. She gazes downward as the

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[129] Robb, "Annunciation," 489.

[130] Ibid., 490.

dove of the Holy Spirit, rays emanating in its path, flies toward her.  The architectural elements are a smooth masonry floor wall, with no other indications of what type of building Mary is in or how the angel may have arrived.

A book of hours from the early sixteenth-century Netherlands has a historiated initial E (*ET INTROIBO AD ALTARE DEI AD DEUM IUUENTUTEM MEAM*) that begins the Mass of the Virgin and depicts the Annunciation (Figure 48).  The Virgin Mary kneels on the floor with a book in her lap.  She has a nimbus indicated by a series of rays and glances downward.  The Angel Gabriel again holds a scepter in his left hand and has entered from the left side of the initial.  The dove of the Holy Spirit, with trailing rays of light extending to a small window, hovers between the Gabriel and the Virgin Mary.  Behind Mary is a canopy bed with a pillow, and a low bookcase with three shelves is placed on the back wall below the window.  In both of these initials the background elements have been simplified.

Although the depiction of the Annunciation occurring in a domestic setting was the most common iconography in Germany and the Low Countries, it is perhaps interesting to consider the potential subtext of this setting in comparison to the French use of an ecclesiastical setting.  The textual basis for this is found in the Protoevangelium of James, where Anna and Joachim dedicated Mary to God for service in the Temple at the age of three, where she remained until the priests of the Temple placed her under the protection and care of Joseph at age twelve.  Based on the timeline of events specified in the Protoevangelium, the Annunciation can be assumed to have happened during the end of Mary's time at

the Temple.[131]  In the same way that artists modernized the city of Jerusalem

and the dress of various participants in the scenes from the life of Christ

examined in this thesis, they also modernized the setting of the Temple to reflect

contemporary church architecture.

Because the vast majority of the illuminations depict the setting of the

Annunciation as a church, Carol J. Purtle studied the development of a fully-

realized ecclesiastical setting for the Annunciation in regard not only to its

antecedents, but also its connection with the rise of personal patronage in the

form of books of hours, particularly that of Jean of Berry.[132]  She examines the

depiction of Mary kneeling behind her *prie-dieu*, which is placed near an altar or

in a chapel, in comparison to that of Jean of Berry who is depicted in the same

pose many times in the manuscripts he commissioned.  The conclusion is that

the representation of the Annunciation in an ecclesiastical setting reinforced the

piety of the Virgin and also served as an example for the viewer to imitate in his

or her prayer life.[133]

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[131] The Protoevangelium of James is the subject of a detailed examination in
Timothy J. Horner, "Jewish Aspects of the Protoevangelium of James," *Journal of
Early Christian Studies* 12, no. 3 (2004): 313-335.

[132] Carol J. Purtle, "The Iconography of Prayer, Jean de Berry, and the Origin of
the Annunciation in a Church," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of
Art* 20, no. 4 (1990-1991): 227-239.

[133] An interesting study that is not relevant to the Geese Book initial, but
strengthens Purtle's argument for the use of the Annunciation scene as a model
for the Christian is Ann van Dijk, "The Angelic Salutation in Early Byzantine and
Medieval Annunciation Imagery," *Art Bulletin* 81, no. 3 (1999): 420-436, in which
author explores the potential depiction of the angelic salutation and its placement
in connection with the reverence owed to the Virgin.

The realization of the domestic setting favored by Flemish and German book illuminators varies greatly from altarpieces to manuscript illuminations, but regardless of its completeness it also places Mary in a context where she serves as an example to the viewer.  The use of a domestic setting recalls to the viewer's mind the narrative of the Annunciation as presented in the Gospel of Luke where both Mary's situation in life at the time of the Annunciation (betrothed to Joseph and living at her parents' home in Nazareth) and the implied role of women that it promotes.

There were many options available to the illuminator of the Geese Book with a variety of compositional techniques and elements that were considered standardized Annunciation iconography.  The Geese Book illuminator chose to reduce the setting to three elements: the archway through which the outdoors is visible and Gabriel has entered, the canopy bed that dominates the background behind the Virgin, and the *prie-dieu* behind which she kneels.  An examination of these options in regards to each of the various elements found in the Geese Book demonstrates the illuminator's ability to create a succinct yet meaningful illustration of one of the most important events in Christian theology.

Figure 45. Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume II,
folio 31v, Annunciation

Figure 46.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.905, volume II,
folio 31v (detail), Annunciation

Figure 47.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.238, folio 13r, Annunciation

Figure 48.  Morgan Library, New York, MS M.166, folio 14r, Annunciation

CONCLUSION

 As this examination of selected historiated initials has shown, the creators

of the Geese Book were very interested in using iconographic elements and

theological accents that reflected the current thinking of the day and would be

familiar to the people who would be viewing and using the gradual.  Those

fortunate enough to view the Geese Book would feel a closer connection to the

images because they were presented in ways that they were able to recognize

and understand, which in turn allowed them to feel as if they could actually

participate in the scenes that were being depicted.  Therefore, combined with the

ritual enactment common in the church at this time, the Geese Book allows us

not only to appreciate the artistic talents of the illuminators, but also allows to

understand the ways in which these scenes from salvation history were seen and

experienced by the viewers and how this may have affected their lives and their

worship.

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