The Gospel in the *Regula Benedicti*

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Abstract

The word "Gospel," or *evangelium* in Latin, has been a dynamic and ever changing word from the moment it was adopted by Christianity. This study examines the ways that the *Regula Benedicti* uses *evangelium* as a metonym, a reference to a text, and a physical object. It employs an interdisciplinary methodology, drawing on textual analysis informed by two closely related material sources. The first is a codicological analysis of the author's immediate temporal and geographic context, which allows us to imagine in an informed way the Gospels as they would have been held and handled by the author of this text. The second is an artistic analysis of visual representations of the Gospel Codex from around the Mediterranean during Late Antiquity, which helps us expand our understanding of the intellectual categories expressed visually in connection with the term during this period. The result is a complex and deeply intertwined set of categories bound together by their relationship to the texts of the Gospels, and the ways they are translated into the physical reality of the monastery, through the performance of good works and the enactment of the liturgy. The results produced by this textual and material methodology open up exciting potential for further examinations of the term *evangelium* in Late Antquity, followed by subsequent investigations into other key terms in religious texts from this era.

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Acknowledgements

Chapter 1
Introduction

    The Gospel, or *evangelium* in Latin, is among the oldest terms appropriated by Christians to serve a unique theological purpose. However, it is not always immediately clear what it refers to. Even as early as the New Testament texts, different authors utilize divergent definitions for this seemingly all encompassing term. The Synoptic authors seem to use it in reference to the teachings of Jesus and his proclamations, while Paul uses the same term to describe the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as a sort of cosmic event (Kittel, 1974, pp. 727-735). In Late Antique texts, it is sometimes unclear exactly what the author is referring to, although like the Synoptic authors and Paul, they usually seem to use the term as if their audience is clear on its meaning and an explicit definition is not required. This leaves us to ask the essential question: What does "the Gospel" mean in Late Antique Latin Christianity? While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to answer this question on the whole, it may be possible to address it within a single text which is both diverse in its employment of *evangelium* and largely representative of the literature of its time.

    One text which meets these qualifications acutely is the *Regula Benedicti*, or Rule of St. Benedict, a sixth century monastic text which masterfully draws on an enormous range of other textual works, and would later become one of the most influential documents of the monastic movement in the West. *Evangelium* is used seven times in the *Regula Benedicti* (*RB*), and every time is at a key juncture. It can be found at the crux of the Prologue, setting the direction for the rest of the text (Prologue: 21, 33), at the final step of the Ladder of Humility, describing the goal of the monastic life (7:65-66), and at the height of the liturgy, bringing the worship of the monk to a climax (11:9, 12:4, 13:11, 17:8). Yet for how crucial this term is, it can be easily misunderstood, in part because of the variety of ways it is used, and the flexibility with which the author employs it. Nearly every appearance is a matter of some level of academic controversy, precisely because it means so many things simultaneously.

    In one moment, *evangelium* is a concept, standing for something larger than itself. But what is that concept? Adalbert De Vogue defines it as a conceptual summation of the teaching of Christ (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973), while Aqinata Bockmann boils it down to a reference to his person (Bockmann, 1992). Which, if either, of these definitions would make sense to the author of

this sixth century text? A few verses later the same word may not carry wider conceptual overtones at all, but simply directs us to the corpus of texts commonly referred to as the Gospels. Does the concept connect to the text, or do they have separate things in mind? Several short chapters later we move from the conceptual and textual world into the concrete realities of directions for the monastery, and still the same term comes up again bearing a new meaning. If there is something that ties these concepts and texts to the physical process of the liturgy, what is that link? For Albert Blaise it should be understood as the moment when the words of the text are read (Blaise, 1975), while for Georg Holzherr it is more likely the physical codex that they are read from (Holzherr & Abbey, 1994). Can we distinguish between the two?

With only seven appearances of *evangelium* in the *RB*, the text alone is not sufficient to help us answer these questions satisfactorily.   Therefore, in this study we will utilize an interdisciplinary methodology drawing on material and visual sources to examine the intellectual categories which shape the ways the author of the *RB* would have understood the term *evangelium*. With input from the physical realities which shaped the thoughts of the author and of his original readers, we will be better equipped to grapple with the questions which seem so elusive to us today. The two material sources which bear on this term most during this era are the Gospel Codex, and the visual representation of the Gospel Codex in art. In other words, the Gospel as the *RB* author would have held it and the Gospel as he would have seen it. After examining these angles thoroughly we will be able to approach these questions of meaning afresh, informed by the material world that the text was written in.

As a first step in this study we will look into the formation and early history of this text. Given the differences of opinion that have arisen, especially in recent years, around its origins, authorship, and transmission, it is important for us to establish a common frame of reference through which we can read the modern editions we now work with. This will include a survey of the other literary works which most impacted its formation, including the *Regula Magistri*, and the works of Pachomius, Basil, Augustine, and Cassian, as well as other rules written contemporarily to the *RB*. This will also require some commentary on the role of the monastic rule in the sixth century, which is in many ways drastically different than our modern conception, more shaped by the medieval period. Another dynamic that will be necessary to explore is that between this work and Gregory's *Dialogues* which give an account of the life of St. Benedict of Nursia, the combination of which would later come to make up the core of the Benedictine tradition. Finally, we will discuss the most important

early manuscripts, the critical editions that they have come to inform, and the ways in which they will be used in this study.

Having come to some basic conclusions about the nature of the text itself, we can also take some time to look into the history of research on this text, especially in the last few decades. The twentieth century saw a great deal of renewed interest in this text from a historical perspective, especially among Benedictine scholars, who worked to create new critical editions and fit the central text of their tradition into the quickly developing field of textual analysis. Following their work came a wave of fresh analysis from Late Antique scholars, who have found this text as a valuable starting point for understanding monasticism in the sixth century, as well as the transitions it would undergo heading into the medieval era. Combined with the integration of some recent historiographical developments, we will be able to situate our study within the framework of other scholars who have thoroughly examined this text, and more clearly define the value of the particular methodology of this study.

At this point we can begin to examine the material sources which are related most closely to the use of *evangelium* during this era by examining Gospel manuscripts that relate closely to the geographic and temporal context of the author. More specifically, we will look at the reader's experience of the Gospel during this era by choosing several key samples, and examining them in light of their compactness, comprehensiveness, convenience, ease of reference, and the technological transitions the codex underwent during Late Antiquity in Italy. Additionally, it is also relevant to remark on the kind of library that a monastery would have kept which will also influence our understanding of how the author of the *RB* would have used texts in general, and the Gospel texts in particular. All of these angles together will give us an understanding of the Gospel as it was held and used by the *RB* author.

Following up on the examination of the codex itself during this time, the next step will be a look into the ways the Gospel Codex is represented visually during this era. While studying the object itself gives us a glimpse of the apparent physical reality associated with the term Gospel, this part of the study will help us expand our understanding of the symbolic use, or rather uses of the Gospel Codex. The symbol itself is used as broadly, or perhaps more broadly than the term it is associated with, and charting those uses categorically will provide a framework through which we can reexamine the text. Where it is found, who is holding it, and the purpose it is serving in art all bear directly on the understanding of the Gospel Codex during this era, which is deeply linked to the wider understanding of the Gospel in the *RB*.

At long last, with a foundation made up of historical and historiographical groundwork, and a material understanding shaped by the Gospel as it would have been held and seen, it

will be possible to examine the *RB* itself and interpret it with fresh eyes, while engaging with past literature related to its interpretation. By the end of the study it will be possible to make some crucial conclusions about the diverse ways the term *evangelium* is used in this text, as well as the commonalities between those terms that bind them together. Many of the controversies introduced briefly already are in fact disputes over the degree of separation or relatedness between the different facets of this dynamic term. To form an opinion on them, we must first examine each category of use individually, but then also critically examine how they fit together to form a whole.

   After this investigation, we will have a more informed understanding of the use of *evangelium* in this single text. However, studying this text is only the first step towards answering the larger question of the meaning of *evangelium* in Late Antique Christianity. It is likely that this will both provide insights into how to pursue the question further, and raise a whole new set of questions concerning its use in other texts during the same era. Will what we learn about the term here compel us to reexamine other texts with the same degree of thoroughness? How widely will these findings be applicable to other Latin works from the same era? In concluding this study, we will focus both on bringing together the findings of this study, as well as its implications for future research, and the potential for this methodology to further explore those questions.

Part One:

Preparing to Examine the *Regula Benedicti*

Chapter 2
Methodology

There are a few key points of methodology which underpin this thesis that must be explored before proceeding. Each of them revolves around key intersections. One is the intersection between the tangible and the conceptual, or the Gospels as they are held and as they are understood. The next is the intersection between the visual and the textual, or the Gospels as they are expressed in images and in the written word. And the last is the intersection between the book and the symbol, or the Gospels as a corpus of texts and as a symbol that joins together a matrix of related ideas. Each of these intersections provides us with a new vantage point from which we can approach the multiple dynamic meanings of *evangelium* in the *RB*. Providing this sort of multidimensional context for the text allows us to avoid the temptation of isolating this term from its context, or isolating its different uses from one another. In the final analysis of this text it will become clear that this tendency towards isolation in one form or another is often used to simplify *evangelium*, allowing for interpretations that better suit the modern reader. The hope here is that an interdisciplinary methodology will better allow us to maintain multiple angles of interpretation simultaneously, and so understand this complex term more holistically.

A: The Tangible and the Conceptual

One of the pioneers of modern codicology is T.C. Skeat, whose work laid the foundation for understanding the physical use of codices, both as a factor in their production and popularity, as well the impact of the adoption of the codex on Christian literature transmission (Skeat & Elliot, 2004). His work puts in place several of the fundamental categories to be used for analysis here. Most important among these is his contribution of new questions posed to the manuscript. Ralph Mathisen states that the main purpose of fields like paleography and codicology which work with ancient manuscripts is to help establish the earliest and more authoritative version of ancient texts (Mathisen, 2008, p. 160). While this is still the predominant purpose, scholars like Skeat have continued to look into what other questions we might be able to pose to these material sources.

In a 2016 investigation, Kathryn Rudy took understanding the relationship between the physical qualities of a codex and the conceptual understanding of its owner to a new level. Her study examined the ways in which owners have made changes to codices, the physical

means by which those changes would need to be made, and the desires that they reflect on the part of those that commissioned them. While her particular focus was on 15th century Netherlandic prayer books, her approach is still highly relevant for the present study because it considers the tangible object itself and its active use a means by which we can understand something about its owners and the world it was produced in (Rudy, 2016).

In this case, by examining New Testament codices which were in use in temporal and geographic proximity to the writing of the *RB* we can get a better idea of how its author physically used the Scriptures himself and how he envisioned others using them in the future. The questions which we pose to the codex have less to do with its contents than its fabric. The object itself is an inherently valuable source of information capable of addressing a great number of mysteries, if only we are able to ask well. Another project which similarly works to incorporate material sources into a field traditionally dominated by the textual realm is *Western Monasticism Ante Litteram* which compiles articles written on monasticism in the West before it became dominated by the written rule (Dey & Fentress, 2011). Some of the work from this compilation will be integrated in establishing the background for the *RB*, but it is just as important conceptually as a work which examines monasticism in light of material sources.

B: The Visual and the Textual

The credit for the theoretical groundwork for examining the intersection between visual culture and textual expression belongs in large part to Mary Carruthers and Robin Jensen. In her concluding chapter of *The Book of Memory*, Carruthers explores the ways that pictures and other visual stimuli themselves act in an essentially textual manner because they assist us in calling content to mind the same way that words do. Similarly, words and texts come together to help form images in our minds, using the material of our memories that they provoke. While letters bring to mind sounds, which in turn help us recollect words and concepts, strung together to form phantasms or images in our mind, pictures similarly do not merely represent content, but assist us in recalling conceptual and narrative content in a specific way. This understanding of the essential textual nature of visual sources goes back at least to the year 600, demonstrated in the letter of Gregory the Great to bishop Serenus of Marseilles concerning the use of images (Carruthers, 2008, pp. 274-281). While this is a starting point chronologically for Carruthers, who focuses on the medieval use of memory, she also demonstrates that the building blocks for this conception of imagery predate that time considerably.

Robin Jensen similarly contributes by advocating for a methodological approach which does not grant privilege to visual or textual sources, but rather seeks for them to be investigated alongside each other "parallel forms of communication and comparable modes of interpretation" (Jensen, 2008, p. 106). In other words, visual and textual sources are deeply interrelated, but you cannot treat one as if it is reliant on the other. However, independent examinations into each of these methods of communication which are informed by each other can produce an understanding of a culture which is more reflective than either would be alone.

With this conceptual framework in mind, looking at images not only as representational, but also as textual sources meant to bring to mind a whole range of concepts and mental images, we will be able to look at the intellectual categories represented in visual sources and use them to inform our understanding of the categories in the *RB* text. For this study in particular that will mean looking into the use of the Gospel Codex as an image that is not merely representational of an object, but which also serves to stimulate the recollection of an entire set of concepts ranging from the performance of the liturgy to the presence and attributes of Christ himself. The functions of this particular image is as key a player in the world of thought surrounding the author of the *RB* as any other textual source which may be cited to inform our understanding of him. It has the advantage in this case of not yet having been incorporated in this way, and is ready to provide fresh insight.

C: The Book and the Symbol

Essential to the premise of this investigation is the idea that a single word can bring together multiple related categories simultaneously, that it can function in a symbolic fashion and mean more than its primary definition. Brian Cummings elaborates on this notion, specifically in the way that it relates to books, in *The Book as Symbol*. According to Cummings, books as physical objects bridge a sort of gap between the author and the reader, as well as one between the physical and conceptual worlds, and are capable of representing multiple different facets of a work at the same time. The most immediate symbolic function of a book is to represent its contents. However, it also represents the meaning of those contents, their implication, the sum total or the highlights of the book. That meaning is highly subjective, and so the symbol of the book also comes to reflect the thoughts, emotions, and values that a person or group attribute to it. So the range of categories which a book can tie together, especially when the book is at the center of religious devotion, is almost without limit (Cummings, 2010).

In the case of our key term, *evangelium*, this capacity to bring categories together is extremely relevant. Many of the disputes surrounding its use in the *RB* are fundamentally discussions about divisions between categories of meaning. If this is a word which is only capable of meaning one thing at a time, then these are sensible arguments; but if it is this word is also a symbol, or a metonym, then it can bring many related categories into view at once. When examining this text it may be more important to ask exactly how *evangelium* bridges the categories it fits within rather than which static definition it is using in a specific verse.

D: Conclusion

In short, this study brings together three major disciplines (codicology, artistic analysis, and textual analysis) in order to examine intersections between related concepts which all come to bear in their own way on one central term: *evangelium*. The end result will be both an examination of each specific appearance of *evangelium* in the *RB*, categorized according to its different uses and forms, and also a synthesis of the ways that those categories and uses relate to each other. This approach is fundamentally concerned with using external sources to create an intellectual context which will allow us to read this Late Antique text in a chronologically appropriate way. The way the *RB* uses *evangelium* as if the reader is clear on his meaning, and does not feel the need to define or clarify it, has left a great deal of room for filling in the gaps in ways that fit a twentieth century mindset but which are inapplicable to the sixth century. Hopefully by stepping into the world of its author in a material and visual way, we can also engage with him in a more historically appropriate intellectual way.

Chapter 3

The Formation and Early History of the *Regula Benedicti*

Before analyzing the *Regula Benedicti* it is first necessary to give a basic outline of its formation and early history. This is needed especially in order to establish a common framework around which the questions raised in this project will be answered. There are several key controversies surrounding this document, its formation, and its transmission and use. Making decisions regarding these issues is essential in order to move forward in a cohesive manner, and establish a reliable vantage point from which to view the text. After this is completed Chapter 4 will be devoted to the recent research history of the *RB* and especially those authors whose points are most in question in the present work. Together these two sections lay the groundwork for a critical analysis of the text in light of the most recent scholarship. To clarify, this is a history of the text of the *RB*, not of the character Benedict of Nursia; but their relationship will also be discussed in depth, as well as the way in which they came to form a cohesive tradition. Ultimately, though, the focus is on this sixth century text and the thought demonstrated within it, rather than the many ways in which it was later used.

A: Literary Sources of the *Regula Benedicti*

To understand the *RB* we must first make a survey of the texts incorporated within it. Doing so will serve the additional purpose of giving a picture of the state of monasticism as it had developed by the time that we arrive in sixth century Italy, giving us a context for understanding the author of the *RB* more clearly. In many ways the *RB*, which became "the definitive monastic text of medieval Europe," is based upon traditional categories that had already taken shape through the circulation of normative literature on the topic (Caner, 2009, p. 590). It was not particularly innovative when it came to the development of monasticism, but it brought what had been firmly established in the preceding centuries together in a way which was accessible and popular. The *RB*, as well as the closely related *Regula Magistri* (*RM*), both seek to present monasticism as an ancient craft like medicine or law, and each anonymous work understands itself simply as a handbook of traditional methods to master this technique of spiritual life. While later authors who promoted the *RB* and contributed to the formation of the Benedictine Tradition gave it a reputation as a masterpiece, the *RB* itself is humble about its own position, presenting itself only as an introductory text for beginners

(Leyser, 2009, pp. 37-38). If we are to consider it a masterpiece, its mastery is to be found less in any significant original contribution of its own, and more in the way it brings old ideas and works together. It brought many varying points of monastic literature together within a single work which helped carry an entire tradition forward into the medieval era.

The *Regula Magistri*

One of the most significant sources for the *Regula Benedicti (RB)* is the aforementioned *Regula Magistri (RM)*. The *RM* is another rule, most likely also originating in sixth century Italy, which the *RB* draws on heavily. In fact, it probably represents the single largest influence upon this text aside from the Christian Scriptures, and its discovery instigated a miniature renaissance in research on this document (Green, 2000, p. 132). Although they originate from around the same time, close textual analysis makes it clear that the *RB* is dependent on the *RM* and not the other way around (Fry, 1980, pp. 79-83). Vital sections of the *RB*, including the Prologue and the first seven chapters, are largely drawn from the *RM*. However, it is difficult to identify a specific pattern through which it is incorporated, and the author of the *RB* demonstrates consistently a unique vision for monasticism, especially in regards to the authority and pastoral role of the abbot, the form of daily offices, the purpose of discipline in the monastery, and the admission of new members (Green, 2000, pp. 130-131).

In short, many of the ways in which the *RB* diverges from the *RM* make it more flexible, adaptable, attainable, and communal than the *RM*. Although to the modern reader, the *RB* may seem to present high expectations, reading the *RM* makes it obvious just how lenient and manageable the *RB* is by comparison. Additionally, it has been noted that the Latin which the *RB* uses is more precise and organized than that of the *RM*, which represents a stylistic improvement. It includes less irrelevant detail, and is more accommodating to communal decisions and human weakness (Lawrence, 2001, pp. 23-24). So although it would be difficult to overstate the extent to with the *RB* draws upon the *RM* for its basic understanding of the ascetic life and theoretical foundations, its future popularity and widespread use was well deserved in its own right, and it can definitely still be treated as a unique document.

Secondhand Sources

Here it should also be noted that the *RB* may inadvertently cite several sources through its relationship to the *RM*. This is evidenced by the fact that many of these citations are less precise than they are in the *RM*, and include the citation of some apocryphal sources such as the *Passion of Sebastian* and the *Sentences of Sextus*, which there is no evidence the author of

the *RB* had independent access to (Fry, 1980, pp. 80-81). However, not all of the sources which they mutually cite in parallel material can be considered merely a product of borrowing. This is especially true in regards to more widely circulated literature. For example, John Fortin demonstrates that for Augustine's *Letter 211* the *RB* demonstrates an independent use and interpretation even when used in material in common with the *RM* (Fortin, 2006). So while there is some influence on the *RB* via the *RM* which the author may not have himself been aware of, he was by no means uncritical in his use of sources. Even work that was directly incorporated seems to bear marks of independent analysis and understanding, rather than simple copying. This will be an essential point later as we examine key passages which the *RB* shares in common with the *RM*.

Rules of Major Authors: Pachomius, Basil, Augustine, and Casssian

Other significant sources which influence the entire Western monastic tradition heavily, and the *RB* particularly, are Pachomius (ca. 292-348, Thebes, Egypt), Basil (ca. 330-379, Cappadocia, Asia Minor), Augustine (ca. 354-430, Hippo, North Africa), and Cassian (360-435, Gaul). Although it is unlikely that the author of the *RB* was able to read Greek, he is obviously very well versed in the Latin Fathers, and those Eastern sources which had been translated into Latin by his lifetime. The works of Pachomius (translated by Jerome), Basil (translated by Rufinus), and Augustine, were all formed independently of one another and arrived in the West at the beginning of the fifth century (Fry, 1980, pp. 86-89). Cassian's work also likely came to the region from the beginning of the fifth century and bore heavy influence upon the *RB*. We will examine these four major authors chronologically in order to try to see them together as a set of unique streams of thought which the *RB* brings together.

The very idea that monasticism should be regulated by a rule can be attributed to Pachomius (Knowles, 1969, pp. 13-14). Although there was probably very little time between when the anchoritic movement began in Egypt and when monks and nuns began to become organized into structured communities, Pachomius is said to have been the innovator behind this development. Several other key aspects of the *RB* find their earliest form in Pachomius' work, including the role of the abbot as the head of the community, centralized buildings and services which brought the community together for worship and a common meal, the provision of housing for guests, and the importance of manual labor (Lawrence, 2001, pp. 7-8). The *RB* references or quotes Pachomius approximately 28 times (Fry, 1980, p. 599).

Of all of the authors who influenced this document, Basil of Caesarea is the only author mentioned by name. The first lines of the Prologue are also taken from Basil's work.

Together these may be an attempt to place this rule under Basil's patronage. His influence runs through this document, notably his belief in the value of community and sense of proportion (Holzherr, 1994, p. 5). The combination of work and prayer which became one of the hallmarks of the Benedictine tradition finds its roots in the daily routines framed by Basil (Knowles, 1969, p. 22). Additionally, the author of the *RB* takes after Basil in a more tamed sense of asceticism than Pachomius, as well as an emphasis on the vitality of the social nature of man and of the commandments in the monastic life (Lawrence, 2001, p. 9). Although Basil was not the author of a "rule" as much as an exposition of the Scriptures in reply to specific questions regarding monastic communities in Cappadocia, his *Asceticon* was later renamed and reunderstood as a *Regula Basilii*, and became among the most fundamental documents for monasticism both in the East and in the West (Vogue, 1971, p. 33). The influence of Basil on the *RB* is profound, and even if his works do not appear as prominently as a text like the *RM*, it can be argued that they lay the foundation for its essential vision of the monastic community and vocation. The *RB* references or quotes Basil approximately 30 times (Fry, 1980, p. 595).

When we say that the *RB* draws on Augustine it is important to clarify that this means it draws upon an anonymous compilation of eight legislative texts and one letter that were compiled to form what became known as the *Regula Sancti Augustini* (Lawless, 1987, p. 65). The first time this group of texts is attributed to Augustine of Hippo is in the *Rule of Eugippius*, described in greater depth below, around 100 years after his death. A single scribe from the late sixth or early seventh century also attributed these texts to Augustine, which he includes as two collections within a larger compilation of early monastic works (Lawless, 1987, p. 124). However, the authorship of the individual documents, as well as the collection as a whole, has been contested for hundreds of years and is immensely complex (Lawless, 1987, p. 125). George Lawless thoroughly examines claims in both directions, and with the assistance of some extensive textual analysis, makes a strong claim for their authenticity as Augustinian works (Lawless, 1987, pp. 127-135). Whether he is correct is not as crucial for this investigation as establishing these works as a corpus which represents a distinct strain of the Western monastic tradition which was in circulation in Italy by the time the *RB* was written, and that its author follows the *Rule of Eguippius* in incorporating it. The *RB* draws upon these works approximately 52 times (Fry, 1980, pp. 594-595).

John Cassian's writings represent still another major stream of early Western monasticism which influenced the *RB*, but one which is heavily dependent upon Eastern thought and attempts to contextualize it for a Gallic audience. Fry notes that Cassian shows some

awareness of Basil, seems to be ignorant of Augustine, and bears similarity to Pachomius by virtue of drawing on a similar tradition (Fry, 1980, pp. 86-89). Steven Driver goes into greater depth on Cassian, especially regarding the controversies surrounding just how Eastern Cassian's thought may be. Although his *Conferences* and *Institutes* were both commissioned to bring the "pure" teachings of Egyptian monasticism to Gaul, a recent surge in knowledge regarding Egyptian monasticism has brought with it no end of difficulty reconciling his writing with the current historical account. Although Cassian claims to be recounting only his personal experience in Egypt, even some of his contemporaries like Jerome saw major conflicts between what he taught and the realities there. However, Driver effectively frames Cassian's task as one shaped by three major challenges: the diversity and experiential nature of Eastern monasticism, the lack of knowledge and misconception of his Gallic audience concerning Eastern spirituality, and the need to preserve fundamental Eastern principles while avoiding at all costs the hostility in the West towards Origin, one of its most important figures (Driver, 2002, pp. 1-20). These challenges account for many of the choices Cassian makes which could be described as discrepancies, or perhaps deliberate attempts to overcome serious obstacles to his commission. So while Cassian's work should not be thought of as an Eastern monastic mindset imported directly into a Western setting, we can still regard it as an attempt to incorporate Egyptian monasticism in a contextualized way which ultimately became another major component of the tradition that flowed into the *RB*. The *RB* references or quotes Cassian approximately 146 times (Fry, 1980, pp. 595-597).

Rules of Minor Authors: Rule of the Four Fathers, Second Rule of the Fathers, Rule of Eguippius

During the same period in which Cassian wrote, or the beginning of the fifth century, the *Rule of the Four Father's* came into being, although little can be said about it in regards to the *RB* except that it is the only known work which influenced the brief *Second Rule of the Fathers*, which the *RB* takes some inspiration from. While it is not necessarily significant to note in and of itself, it does serve to illuminate in some small way the tradition of monastic literature which the author of the *RB* drew on so thoroughly and contributed to so substantially.

Later, only slightly later than the *Regula Magistri*, the *Rule of Eugippius* emerged, and it seems to be the first attempt to make use of a comprehensive range of different traditions encompassing the *Regula Magistri*, Cassian, Basil, Pachomius, Jerome, and substantial borrowings from Augustine. However, the *Rule of Eugippius* seems to simply list these

variant sources beside each other rather than incorporating them into a single work as the *RB* does. So while the *Rule of Eguippius* could be seen as a precursor to the *RB* in its efforts to bring these authors together, the author of the *RB* still remains the first true synthesis of these sources into a single stream. In this way, the *RB* completed a synthesis that had begun two centuries earlier by bringing these strands together into not only a single unit, but a comprehensive system (Fry, 1980, pp. 86-89).

The Christian Canon

Finally, we must note the *RB*'s reliance on the Christian Scriptures to an extraordinary degree. As heavily influenced as this text is by previous authors, it owes its greatest dependence to the canon. While this investigation will narrow its focus onto the *RB's* use of one section of the canon in particular, that of the four Gospels, as a whole it is notable for its expansive use of Scripture, weaving it in and out of the tapestry of its own language fluidly and constantly. Adalbert de Vogue notes that, "Holy Scripture, especially the example and teaching of the Apostles, is then at once the historical origin and first theological foundation of the rules for monks" (Vogue, 1971, p. 35). In other words, it is both the starting point of the tradition from which all other monastic writings draw their authority, as well as the theological backbone of the monastic idea itself. Upon reading the *RB*, Biblical scholar Kathryn Sullivan remarked that "Monks…should not be called monks- a more accurate title would be 'men of the Bible'" (Sullivan, 1971, p. 73). She then counts the biblical quotations with the *RB* at no less than 288. This number varies according to the parameters and the one counting, but the most important point to stress is that if there is a single source which influences the *RB* the most, and indeed influences each of its other notable sources the most, it is the Christian canon of Scripture.

Conclusion

By this point is should be clear that the genius and appeal of the *RB* in the era of its authorship and initial reception lay less in its own contributions to the forming tradition of Western monasticism, and more to its ability to bring together existing works from across the known spectrum of the time to create a consolidated and congruent philosophy and method. While the diversity of monasticism in sixth century Italy is impossible to dismiss, it only makes more impressive what was accomplished in this text. As one of the *RB*'s future champions, Benedict of Aniane, would say, it gathered "into a single sheaf the sheaves of his predecessors" (Leyser, 2009, p. 38). This method of total reliance on tradition, which may

strike us today as a factor detracting from this document's importance or brilliance, is in fact its greatest appeal to authority as well as its greatest accomplishment (Vogue, 1971, p. 29).

B: The Scope of the Monastic Rule in the Sixth Century

When we consider monasticism at the time the *RB* was written, it is imperative that we clarify exactly what its intended role would have been. Often we project back onto this text the idea that it was meant to exist as the sole governing document of a monastery; but as we will see, it is incredibly unlikely that a sixth century author would have had this kind of use in mind. As a result, we will need to gear our investigation to see this document as one that intended to exist alongside others, as well as alongside physical objects and spaces which would dictate its implementation.

In a 1971 conference, Adalbert de Vogue presented a paper concerning the rise of referring to documents governing monastic life as "rules." He makes a few notes in particular which are worth bearing in mind when examining the *RB*. Of those perhaps the most important is that none of the major works which precede the *RB* envisioned themselves as "rules," no less as "rules for monks;" rather they considered the precepts of the Gospels and the Apostles to be the rule for all Christians, and their own works to be modest commentaries on these in regards to monastic life. This is of particular importance when combined with a shift in language that occurred between the time that John Cassian wrote (c. 420) and when the *RB* and *RM* were written, approximately a century later. In Cassian's description of cenobites, lived *sub unius disciplina patris, sub abbatis imperio*, without mention of being *sub regula*. The term *sub regula* first comes into the mix in a biography of Fulgentius of Ruspe written at approximately the same time as the *RB* and *RM*, but it seems to refer only to the tradition of monasticism as it has been passed down to the abbot, rather that the *regula* as a text. The authors of the *RB* and *RM* take this a step further in describing cenobites as monks who live *sub regula vel abbate*. The abbot and the rule are placed alongside one another as centers of authority in the monastery (Vogue, 1971, pp. 22-29). When the *RB* was written, it was a recent innovation that it would have considered itself as a center of authority which monks would submit to, rather than as the tool for understanding the precepts of the Gospels and Apostles in regards to monastic life or the collective, oral, informal tradition of the active abbot. While many future rules would follow suit in this understanding of their purpose, it is possible that the *RB* is almost a prototype in this regard. The author certainly would not have

envisioned the kind of obedience and prestige which it came to enjoy following its ninth century Frankish adoption.

This leads to another vital point, which is that most monasteries from the time in which the *RB* was written do not seem to be dictated by a single rule or document. In particular, the *RB* was only very rarely referenced independently for centuries, but instead was referenced in conjunction with the *Regula Columbani*, which may have been a text, but was more likely the summation of the practices developed by the Columbian monastic trend (Diem, 2011, pp. 64-65). Caesarius of Arles (c. 470-542) may have been one of the first monastic legislators to attempt to have a *regula sancta*, or single rule considered ultimately authoritative within a monastery. It may have been his work that inspired Benedict of Aniane and his fellow reformers to begin using the *RB* in this exclusive regard at the beginning of the ninth century (Diem, 2011, pp. 58-64). Examples of monasteries employing two or three traditions are plentiful in the time period in which the *RB* was written, and even though the *RB* may have been innovative in considering itself a *regula*, it was certainly not far enough ahead of its time to regard itself as a *regula sancta*. When we reconstruct the aims of the *RB*, it is vital to remember that its author would have envisioned it being used alongside other key works rather than as a comprehensive rule for monastic life.

The pressing need to begin understanding monasticism in the era which gave birth to the *RB* in light of sources outside of the usual textual analysis of monastic legislation is the main concern of the 2011 collection, *Western Monasticism Ante Litteram*, compiled with the express purpose of exploring the physical spaces of monasticism before the synod of Aachen (Dey, 2011, p. 20). While this work is invaluable, the material analyses which will follow later in this examination spawn from the same basic idea that monasticism, especially from this early era, cannot be understood solely in terms of the legislation which framed it, but also in terms of the physical materials and surroundings which those rules interacted with.

C: Gregory's Dialogues, His Benedict Character, and the Authorship of the *RB*

A key question which must be answered as a prerequisite to an examination of the *RB* is whether the Benedict character described within Gregory's *Dialogues* has any actual relationship to this text. This is important because many examinations of the *RB* draw heavily on the *Dialogues* to provide essential context for understanding the author and his intentions. Whether or not the *Dialogues* are a suitable source for contextual information to be included in this kind of study is a matter which must be thoughtfully decided upon. The spectrum of opinion in this discussion can be broken down in the following way: first, there is no

compelling reason to separate them and Gregory can generally be trusted; second, they are probably related, but it may be difficult to sort out the difference between the Benedict behind the *RB* and that of Gregory's hagiography; third, there are inherent controversies between the *RB* and Gregory's Benedict and we must divorce them entirely to understand them correctly. For each of these we will look at a current author who expresses their respective point of view and their argument before landing on a position to use as a point of reference throughout the current work.

Bernard Green is an example of an author who does not see a compelling reason to differentiate between the author of the *RB* and the Benedict in Gregory's *Dialogues* (Green, 2000). In part this may be due to the brevity of his writing on the subject, but the fact that he does not find it to be at least a necessary footnote, and unflinchingly writes about St. Benedict of Nursia and the *RB* as one inseparable unit speaks volumes. He does not present a particular argument for this approach, but perhaps he can be considered representative of the belief that it is ultimately not an important debate. However, this position seems to be in the minority of modern scholarship.

C.H. Lawrence represents an approach which is more critical, but ultimately trusts in the connection between the *RB* and Gregory's Benedict. He acknowledges that there is very little that can be known about figures of this era because of a particular lack of written sources, and that it is less than ideal to rely entirely on Gregory's *Dialogues* to provide us with an accurate description. He also outlines in depth the didactic purposes of the *Dialogues*, the necessity of the miracles for that purpose, and also touches briefly upon Gregory's own goals in the image of the Benedict character that he creates. However, he finds it unnecessary to disregard the context which sets the stage for the miracles of the *Dialogues* as fictitious. This is primarily based on the argument that the *Dialogues* were written around 45 years after Benedict's death, which is not distant enough from Benedict's life for Gregory to be free to create an entirely fabricated character. While it was acceptable for him to choose Benedict as the catalyst for his own story, it's unreasonable to suppose he had any need to significantly alter the details of his life as "there were still living those who could remember the life at Cassino before the Lombards burnt it, and who had known the founder" (Lawrence, 2001, pp. 18-21).

This is a reasonable approach, understanding the *Dialogues* as literary works with their own rhetorical and didactic purposes, while reining back the total skepticism which is tempting in a case like this. The one link which is not reinforced strongly enough is whether this Benedict is the author of the *RB*. Gregory only refers to a monastic rule associated with Benedict once, as follows:

> "He wrote a Rule of monks remarkable for its discretion and the lucidity of its
> language. If anyone wishes to know more about his life and conversation, he can find
> all the facts of the master's teaching in this same institution of the Rule, for the holy
> man could not teach otherwise than he lived" (Lawrence, 2001, pp. 20-21).

There is nothing in this excerpt, or any other part of the *Dialogues*, to indicate a direct link between Gregory's Benedict and the author of the *RB*. It is merely a reference to a rule, which seems to have been of strangely little importance to Gregory, was in circulation and available to Gregory's readers, but may or may not have been the anonymous document which came to bear his name. The argument is strong that this Benedict character did live and that many of the details of his life are as Gregory described them. However, Lawrence's argument of proximity to Benedict's lifetime and believability of the narrative ultimately does not help reinforce the connection of the *Dialogues* and the *RB*.

Timothy Fry works very hard to reinforce the link between the two texts by two arguments of his own. The first is that Gregory was certainly acquainted with the *RB*, as he seems to cite it in his *Commentary on 1 Kings*. The second is that every manuscript which attributes the *RB* to an author does so to Benedict. Such manuscripts come from about two centuries after Benedict's death, but the fact remains that no manuscripts seem to suggest any author other than Benedict, no matter how early (Fry, 1980, pp. 78-79). While these may be considered strong arguments for the longstanding continuity of the Benedictine Tradition, they are still incomplete and do not address very recent concerns brought up by Conrad Leyser.

Leyser, in his 2009 work, represents well the position that the *RB* and Gregory's Benedict are not only to be taken separately, but actually at odds with one another. Not only is the connection between them weak, but "the *Rule of St. Benedict* and the account of Benedict in the *Dialogues* are at cross purposes, and their conjunction to form 'the Benedictine tradition' was by no means a self-evident or self-explanatory process" (Leyser, 2009, p. 37). In fact, there is substantial tension between the "institutional Benedict of the *Rule*" on the one hand and "the charismatic figure of Gregory's making" on the other, which he claims was evident well into the ninth century (Leyser, 2009, p. 38) After all, the prologue to the *RB* warns precisely against pursuing the kind of charismatic life shown in the *Dialogues*. In Gregory's words used above, "the holy man could not teach otherwise than he lived" (Lawrence, 2001, p. 21). Although Lawrence notes that attempts at reconstructing a character out of the *RB* has ultimately been an unfruitful exercise (Lawrence, 2001, p. 19), it is not necessary to reconstruct the author to assert confidently that he would not readily approve of the life described in the *Dialogues*. The tension is definitely present, and substantial enough continue

to give us pause about tying the two works together too readily and justifies a degree of ongoing skepticism.

Ultimately, the current work will choose to examine the *RB* independently of the *Dialogues*, not because it is without precedent to consider them together, but because the *Dialogues* do not necessarily pertain to the central question of the current examination, and the need to establish more fully the context of the *RB*'s formation outside of the tradition it later came to shape is well understood by each of the authors above. There is a very real tension between these two documents that has yet to be resolved, as well as a profound need to address this text using new sources, and the central question of this thesis would not gain enough from drawing on the *Dialogues* to justify their use. The *Dialogues* may contain a great deal of largely accurate information on the life of Benedict, the abbot of Subiaco and Monte Cassino, and it is not impossible that this abbot may also be the author of the *RB*. It is also very possible that in the coming years the union of these documents will be somehow reestablished. However, for the purpose of this investigation the *RB* will be treated as an anonymous document, examined apart from the tradition which it later came to dominate. Several of the scholars that will be examined more closely in the upcoming exploration of the *RB*'s research history take for granted the close interconnection of these two writings, which is an important distinction to keep in mind going forward.

With this in mind, it is important to note that the *Regula Benedicti* is a sort of shorthand for referring to this text. In reality there is simply not a more suitable name for this document, even though the authorship is contested. So although the authorship of this document will be treated as anonymous for the duration of this study, it will still be referred to by its usual name and its author may occasionally be referred to as Benedict when quoting other works, but the name should be regarded more as an abbreviation or standard convention, and less as a reflection of the assumptions of the author.

D: The Formation of the Benedictine Tradition

Assuming that the combination of the *RB* and Gregory's portrait of Benedict was by no means an instant or unavoidable process, we must spend some time outlining when and how they merged to become the singular Benedictine Tradition. Although we will be analyzing the *RB* and its formation centuries prior to, and completely independently from the later Benedictine Tradition, that tradition forms the backbone of scholarship on this document even up to the present day. Two of the scholars who will be examined in Chapter 4 are themselves products of this tradition. Also, as the following section will show, the manuscript history of

the *RB* is deeply intertwined with the formation of this tradition. We must at least have a rough sketch of this process in order to reach through it and back towards the author of the *RB* as far as it might be possible.

There are two parallel trajectories which we can follow in telling the story of the formation of the Benedictine Tradition. The first trajectory follows the merging of the author of the *RB* with the character described in Gregory's *Dialogues*. Together they eventually came to make up the matrix for monastic life as described by Leclercq. However, this does not seem to be something that happening automatically, especially considering it was not until the eighth century that authors began using the *RB* and the *Diaologues* in tandem. The first among these authors is probably be Wynfrith, otherwise known as Boniface (c. 675-754); the second may be Arbeo of Freising (c. 723-784), who used both the *Dialogues* and the *RB* in his own work, the *Life of Corbinian*; and the third would most likely be Paul the Deacon (c. 720-799), a Lombard and monk of Montecassino who wrote the first known biography of Gregory. In weaving together a narrative to solidify that which Wynfrith and Arbeo seem to have taken for granted, Leyser puts forward Paul the Deacon as the founder of the Benedictine Tradition as such (Leyser, 2009, pp. 37-38). By this trajectory, Gregory seems to be the main instigator behind combining these two threads. His work was then followed by a period of uncertainty regarding the *RB*'s status, before finally gaining acceptance, and becoming an established narrative under Paul the Deacon. Gregory and Paul the Deacon make up the bookends of this period in the *RB*'s history.

The other trajectory which can be followed is the rise of the *RB* and its adoption as the chosen rule of Carolingian monastic reform, during which the *Dialogues* became formally combined with it in order to establish a unified, authoritative tradition. The first possible mention of the *RB* is a letter from an abbot named Venerandus to bishop Constantius of Albi in 647. However, this letter bears several marks of content which make at least Albrecht Diem skeptical of its time of origin. Another external reference to the *RB*, which in Diem's opinion is more likely to be authentic, comes from a monastic founding charter dated from 638, and the *RB* is combined with a so-called *Regula Columbani*. References like this one occur in other episcopal documents, which speak of these two traditions in a combined way. It has been proposed that a separate movement of Columbian monasticism provided a basis for the initial spread and popularity of the *RB*. During this time the document in question has not yet been combined with the *Dialogues* and also does not seem to have any particular connection to Montecassino (Diem, 2011, pp. 67-76).

The first clear link between the Benedict described in Gregory's *Dialogues* and the author of the *RB* comes from Bede (c. 672-735), and his work *Historia abbatum*. Bede held Gregory in high regard, and shows strong evidence of using the *RB* in his biblical commentaries and homilies (though not for any explicitly monastic purpose), and seems to be among the first to take for granted some connection between them. It is unclear whether he did this because it had been handed down to him as a cohesive tradition, or simply because he extensively used both documents and it seemed an obvious connection to him. The *RB* as a rule for monastic life then finally saw its true rise to prominence through the synods organized by Boniface in 742 and 743, as well as the Aachen reforms of 816/817. These decisive councils serve as the thrust for the Carolingian monastic reform which gave preference to the *RB*, and used the tradition which was forming around it to strengthen its prominence (Diem, 2011, pp. 67-76). In this trajectory the author of the *RB* serves as the instigator, and Benedict of Aniane, compiler of the *Codex Regularum* in 817, serves as the final actor to bring these distinct texts between two covers in an authoritative way.

The most distinct difference between these two possible trajectories is whether the *RB* and its inherent qualities as a document were the driving force which led to its adoption and the formation of a tradition around it, which included the encompassment of Gregory's Benedict character, or whether Gregory chose to make the author of the *RB* the focus of his *Dialogues* and in so doing set them on a course to eventually come together as two sides of a single tradition. It may be impossible to clarify this question any further. However, what can be said with some degree of assurance is that by the beginning of the ninth century the ties between these two works were firmly solidified, and the Benedictine Tradition as we have come to know it became both authoritative and inseparable. After nearly three centuries, the *RB* had moved from being a collection of normative literature available in the West on monasticism, to being itself the most normative and recognized foundation of an independent Western monastic tradition.

E: Early Manuscripts and Primary Editions

As with many documents this old, it is no simple matter to suppose that the Latin editions or the translations that we work with today accurately reflect the original text in every regard. In fact, Fry notes rightly at the beginning of his short history of the editions of the *RB*, that the number of manuscripts we have left to sort through, and consequently the amount of difficulty obtaining an original reading, is comparable only to extant biblical material (Fry, 1980, p. 102). While it is probably impossible to say with total assurance that the material we have to

work with now reflects the original work of the *RB*'s first author, a basic outline of the most important manuscript strains will still provide us with some important background information.

There are two main families of manuscripts, first identified by Edmund Schmidt in 1880, which are usually termed the *ausculta* and *obsculta* strains, exemplified by the Oxford Codex Hatton 48 and the Codex Sangallensis 914 respectively. The names *ausculta* and *obsculta* were given to reflect the quality of the Latin used in these respective lineages. The *ausculta* line's Latin is highly polished and in line with classical grammar, while the *obsculta* contains many variations reflecting the so called "low Latin" of the sixth century. Consequently, *ausculta* line manuscripts open with the words, "*Ausculta, o fili*" or "Take heed, o son" in classical Latin, while *obsculta* line manuscripts open with the words, "*Obsculta, o fili*," which is a Late Antique variation of the same phrase. Although extant manuscripts of the *ausculta* strain are older, in 1898 Ludwig Traube demonstrated, through a strikingly exacting reconstruction the history of the Codex Sangallensis 914, its proximity to a hypothetical original edition of the *RB*, and consequently the originality of the *obsculta* line over the *ausculta* line. Although the *ausculta* text existed in Itay, Gaul, Germany, and England during the seventh and eighth centuries, the *obsculta* was not introduced until the late eighth or early ninth century, as a part of a larger Carlongian reforming scheme. Subsequent scholars have disputed the details the history he reconstructs, but his basic conclusion has been substantiated paleographically and philologically. The form preserved in the Codex Sangallensis 914 manuscript and those *obsculta* line manuscripts copied from it seem to reflect sixth century language more loyally than any other (Fry, 1980, pp. 103-107). As a result, most modern scholarship has primarily followed the *obsculta* line, and Codex Sangallensis 914 specifically, in compiling critical Latin versions used in English translations.

What is most striking about this development is that it seems to suggest that ninth century manuscripts which resulted from Carolingian attempts at reforms are actually more loyal than seventh century manuscripts which they sought to correct. Diem notes that the authority of the *RB* was amplified significantly after Charlemagne travelled to Monte Cassino and received a copy of the 'original' *RB*, and the subsequent council of Aachen in 803 was the first to explicitly set up the *RB* as the new monastic norm to be followed in its entirety, rather than as a repertoire of useful regulations (Diem, 2011, p. 71). Although the story of Charlemagne's reception of an 'original' copy raises no end of caveats and red flags for any critical historian, it is nonetheless during this time period that a more loyal strain of the *RB* is

introduced (or rather reintroduced, as the case may be), and its introduction contributes in a significant way to the *RB*'s authority.

The present study is entirely dependent upon the critical editions and translations of the twentieth century. Therefore the examination and results will be reflective of the *obsculta* tradition, with a reasonable degree of confidence that they reflect authentically a sixth century form of the *RB*.

F: Conclusion

What can be said at the end of this brief investigation about the text that we will be examining? First, that it self-identifies as a humble attempt to sum up the best of an ancient craft and make it attainable at the most basic level. In this task it should be considered a rousing success, given how tactfully it brings together sources from four different centuries and at least as many geographic regions. Second, it brought them together in such a compelling way that three centuries later it was the document of choice to give form to a new standardization scheme in the West. During the time it was written and in the coming centuries a myriad of different similar works were compiled, but the *RB* ultimately won out when a *regula sancti* was needed. Third, it is unlikely that Gregory's *Dialogues* can be used to provide us with a useful degree of contextual information around its authorship. In its absence there is a significant need for new sources to inform our understanding of the world in which it was formed. Finally, while little can be said about its history between the years of its authorship and its ascent to prominence, it is very likely that the editions that we use of it now reflect a sixth century edition, thanks to the efforts of early ninth century reformers. We can be confident enough that a close examination of the text today is reflective of Late Antiquity, rather than of a Carolingian Europe. With that, we are one step closer to seeing this document with a refined sense of vision.

Chapter 4
Research History of the *Regula Benedicti*

The *Regula Benedicti (RB)* is a text which has never gone out of circulation in Western society. It has never been lost and rediscovered, and it has a long and proud history of being read, examined and used repeatedly by generation after generation of men and women. In these ways it has received more attention than any of the other monastic texts already mentioned. Why then is it still a relevant source for fresh examination? In this section we will examine some of the key periods and authors of the last century whose work on the *RB* laid the groundwork for our understanding of the text today, as well as the space that still exists for new perspectives and questions. Many of these authors have already been mentioned in examining the history of the *RB*. In fact some of them, such as Adalbert de Vogue and Timothy Fry, would be almost impossible to go without mentioning in any thorough investigation of the text. There are others, however, who are important to note less for their overarching contributions than for their specific writings on the key phrase of the present study, Prologue v. 21, *per ducatum evangelii*. After gaining a firm grasp of the research history of the *RB* it is also important to review some of the advances in the field of history which have not yet been fully applied to this text. This will provide us with a better idea of what work remains to be done, rather than simply reiterated. By the end of this section it will be possible to use several key sources more critically, and develop a sound methodology for a thoroughly up to date investigation.

A: A Century of Renewed Benedictine Scholarship

Establishing a Critical Edition and Translation

Leopold von Ranke is the figure most often used to act as a landmark for the beginning of the modern concept of history as a scientific field. Most importantly for our purposes, he firmly established the importance of written sources for understanding any historical phenomenon. In the wake of his work a great number of historians in different fields were compelled to re-examine the sources available to them, and create new critical translations and editions of the most important texts in their respective areas of study (Clark, 2004, pp. 9-13). This was no less true within the realm of Benedictine scholarship, and the quest for an

authoritative edition of the *RB* from which to work became a century long project, beginning in 1880 and slowing down only around 1972.

Daniel Hanber of Munich first initiated this work by collecting *RB* manuscripts to serve as a basis for his own translation. However, he was prevented from personally finishing out the project and turned it over to Edmund Schimidt of Metten, who published the first critical edition in 1880. The next edition came from Eduard Wolfflin, who had a primarily linguistic interest in the text, and released his own edition in 1895. Wolfflin also supported the superiority of the *ausculata* line of manuscripts, and used them primarily. (See Chapter 3, Section E) Shortly later in 1898 Ludwig Traube made a significant contribution by arguing for the superiority of the *obsculta* line of manuscripts, overturning Wolfflin's work. While he did not produce a translation of his own he did dramatically affect those after him. Twentieth century translators who followed his work were Cuthbert Butler, who released a translation in 1912; Bruno Linderbauer, who released one in 1922; Anselmo Lentini, who released his own in 1947; Justin McCann, who included a translation into English in 1952; Gregorio Peno, who first indicated the *RM* parallels within his edition; Heribert Plenkers, himself a student of Traube, began an edition which was completed by one of his pupils, Rudolph Hanslik in 1960. Additionally, two English translations based on Butler's work are worth noting, by Leonard Dobyle in 1948 and Basil Bolton in 1970. Things began to settle on the matter with the edition of Jean Neufville with French translations and commentary by Adalbert de Vogue in 1972 (Fry, 1980, pp. 102-112). This is not to say that translation work has not continued up to the present day, but that the work of textual criticism to bring together authoritative editions and translations of the *RB* had generally come to a sense of consensus around this time. Translations and commentaries from the decades that followed were largely directed at lay readers rather than the academic sphere, and therefore somewhat less necessary to examine in depth here (Green, 2000, p. 132).

In 1974 the combined Benedictine organizations of North America commissioned a massive work to commemorate the 1500th anniversary of the traditional date of birth of Benedict of Nursia in 1980. The result was a comprehensive overview of the document, combined with an English translation and parallel Latin text, based on the critical edition developed by Jean Neufville and Adalbert de Vogue in 1972 (Fry, 1980, pp. v-x). The work of 18 scholars and 5 editors, this volume is in many ways the culmination of a century of Benedictine reinvestigations of this text. All of the contributors are themselves members of Benedictine orders, and the work is written with such an audience in mind. However, it is not a commentary on the *RB*, but rather a powerful study tool which is equally valuable to

scholars outside of the Benedictine ranks (Walker Bynum, 1982). The chief editor is Timothy Fry, and while this is a massively collaborative work, references in this thesis appear under his name.

Adalbert de Vogue

   Adalbert de Vogue was born in 1924 from a French noble family, entered into the monastic life at the abbey of Pierre qui Vire in 1944, and obtained his Doctorate of Theology in 1959. In 1960 he published *Community and Abbot in the Rule of St. Benedict*, beginning what would become to be a remarkable career of research concerning the *RB* and other Late Antique monastic writings. He also served as an instructor at the Pontifical Athenæum Sant'Anselmo in Rome, until becoming a hermit in 1974. However, he continued to research and publish for years to come. Most notably, his work *The Rule of St. Benedict: A Doctrinal and Spiritual Commentary* still functions as a baseline for understanding the *RB* and was published in 1983 (Vogue, The Rule of Saint Benedict: A Doctrinal and Spritual Commentary, 1983). Among the most notable hallmarks of his legacy is the distinction of conclusively establishing the dependence of the *RB* on the *Regula Magistri*. It would be difficult to overestimate the dependence of every scholar and student of Western monasticism since 1960 upon his work. One of Vogue's minor works, *Per Ducatum Evangelii,* published in 1973, will be a major point of dispute in this investigation (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973). Although in many ways it could be considered foolish to challenge the conclusion of someone who has so singlehandedly transformed the field of research in this area, it will be done in this thesis nonetheless. (Adalbert de Vogue) (New City Press of the Focolare, 2014).

Aquinata Bockmann

   Aquinata Bockmann is another Benedictine scholar whose work will be thoroughly engaged in this investigation. She is a missionary Benedictine nun from the Tutzing monastery in Germany. Her publishing career began in 1973 when she came on as the first female professor at Pontifical Athenæum Sant'Anselmo in Rome, where she is still a member of the faculty as a professor emerita (The Order of St. Benedict, 2012). Since the beginning of her career she has published a wide range of popular and scholastic commentaries on the *RB*, with her most recent work having been released in 2011. Some of her most notable works include *Perspectives on the Rule of St. Benedict*, first published in German in 1990 and translated into English in 2005, and *Around the Monastic Table*, written in English in 2009

(The Order of St. Benedict, 2016). The work which will be addressed most directly in the present study is her article *Per Ducatum Evangelii*, published in 1992. (Bockmann, 1992).

B: Revived Attention from Late Antique Scholars

Following on the work of these generations of Benedictine scholars are the contemporary historians of Late Antiquity who have found their own unique interest in the *RB*. In her book, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn*, Elizabeth Clark makes special note of late ancient Christian studies as a field whose development has gone through an irregular process compared to other historical fields. As a result, many Christian texts from Late Antiquity were tossed rather quickly from the department of confessional theology to that of social history and theory without being adequately explored as texts. That is to say, even though the Christian works of Late Antiquity have been mined thoroughly for their theology and the social information they contain, many have not been properly understood as texts open to linguistic and literary interpretation. But as Clark persuasively puts forward, there is great potential for the study of Christian writings from Late Antiquity to be reinvestigated as literary productions within the sphere of intellectual history (Clark, 2004, pp. 158-161). The *RB* represents perfectly the type of text within late ancient Christian studies which Clark describes. Despite decades of intensive focus and study on this text, there is still ample room to revisit it with new questions.

It would be nearly impossible to mention every current author whose work pertains to early Western monasticism in some fashion. Instead we will look at two recent compilations encompassing the works of a wide range of authors which have already proven invaluable resources, and give us an idea of the type of work going on today regarding this text. One fascinating project which has already been introduced in Chapter 2, but which deserves fuller recognition here, is the volume titled *Western Monasticism Ante Litteram: The Spaces of Monastic Observance in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, compiled by Hendrik Dey and Elizabeth Fentress. This work stems out of a 2007 conference hosted by the American Academy in Rome, and represents and innovative effort to bring together scholars whose focus is on the texts of monastic rules and the lives of saints, and put them in direct dialogue with experts on archaeology and material culture of monasticism. These two fields have developed in recent years largely separately from one another, with the ideal of monasticism in the textual sphere and the reality of monasticism in the physical sphere being discussed in different categories (Dey, 2011, pp. 19-21). The methodological approach behind this work

represents a shift in the study of early Western monasticism, which this thesis will in many ways follow up on.

Another noteworthy compilation is *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, edited by Philip Rousseau and Jutta Raithel in 2009. What makes this work worth pointing out in a historiography of work on the *RB* is that it firmly places the study of this document as a subset of Late Antique studies, putting it under the umbrella of a field of research which only began around the time that Benedictine scholarship on the document began to taper off. In several ways it can be used to represent the completion of a shift of interest in the *RB* which began in the late 1970's, and is now representative of most of the active scholarship connected to it. Among the articles which related to the *RB* specifically in one way or another, most of them include efforts to dislodge the *RB* from its setting within the Benedictine tradition and resituate it as one of many moving pieces in Late Antiquity (Rousseau & Raithel, 2009). This shift in perspective carries with it essential questions about how work on this text is being done, especially in regards to the insider/outsider paradigm.

C: The Insider/Outsider Implications of Benedictine Scholarship

Understandably, and perhaps obviously, almost all of the groundwork of note concerning the *RB* has been conducted by people who live according to it. It is only the most recent scholars who have been cited in this work who do not share this common background. Although the Benedictine tradition is both expansive and diverse, we must ask what unique assumptions and implications that fact has infused into scholarship surrounding the *RB*, and what contributions authors from outside of that tradition are making.

Many scholars have noted the virtual impossibility of objective study, especially in the department of religion. As David Hufford puts it,

> Disinterest is urged on scholars of religion, but disinterest is impossible in religious issues. Common academic definitions of religion designate it as people's 'ultimate concerns,' that is, the most important things in their world. At the same time, the general demand for impartiality in scholarship is applied with special stringency to the study of spiritual matters. So much so that it is often assumed that believers cannot be competent scholars of belief traditions (Hufford, 1999).

This tension is an essential part of researching the *RB* today, because most of the foundational scholarship on which the field depends is from authors whose very lives are framed by adherence to the Benedictine tradition in its modern form. For them, the meaning of this text

and the implications of that meaning are matters of ultimate personal concern. Not only this, but most of these authors wrote with a Benedictine audience in mind, with the dual purpose of being both academic and devotional.

While it is impossible to ask these authors to be disinterested when studying the *RB*, they are also uniquely equipped to work inside the mindset of a monastic text. Eleanor Nesbit argues persuasively in a paper on Quaker Ethnographers the ways in which being "insiders" to a religious context can enable a scholar to have significantly deeper insights in regard to the study of religions (Nesbitt, 2002). In several key regards ranging from the use of a monastic rule to the practical implications of theoretical monastic concepts, Benedictine scholars are uniquely equipped to understand the *RB* and other similar texts. It could be argued that "outsiders," or scholars of religious studies who do not belong to a monastic tradition, will be hard pressed to understand monastic texts as thoroughly as someone who follows one.

In more specific terms, we must make an effort to identify the ways in which Benedictine scholars are especially empowered and especially challenged when understanding the primary text of their own tradition. So far in this study we can already begin to pick out some of these nuances. One example which shows the advantages of an "outsider" perspective is the debate over the connection between the author of the *RB* and the Benedict character in Gregory's *Dialogues*. None of the scholars referred to so far in this study who support treating the two separately belong to Benedictine traditions. Conrad Leyser and Albrecth Diem are both Late Antique historians, and neither have an "insider" connection to Benedictine monasticism which would compel them to see these two pieces as a coherent whole. Timothy Fry's compilation comes close to treating them separately, but ultimately makes what seems to be a desperate attempt to hold the two together. It is plausible this is due to the inescapable "insider" connection which the authors of this work share. The result of the "outsider" perspective of Leyser and Diem is an ability to study the *RB* and its appearances in the first few centuries of its history as an independent document. From a historical perspective, this has provided room to analyze the text independently, which in turn has yielded important insights into its development.

However, it is just as easy to find examples of ways in which the "insider" perspective of monastic scholars has been an invaluable asset. One of substantial importance is the comparison of the *RB* and the *RM*, which Adalbert de Vogue can be considered one of the pioneering scholars of. His perspectives focus on the practical use of a monastic rule in ways that would be purely theoretical, and arguably ungrounded, for someone who has never lived under such a rule before. Most of the reasons that are considered academic consensus today

for the rise of the *RB* and decline of the *RM* revolve around the differences in the practical use of the respective texts. This kind of approach may never have even occurred to an "outsider," and is indispensable.

However, the dichotomy between "insider" and "outsider" can only be drawn so far, especially in regards to studying Christianity as a religion from primarily Western scholars. Martin Stringer notes the predominance of scholars from theological backgrounds when studying these sorts of texts, even if they work within the social sciences. Anyone with some level of Christian background or theological training, something rather common among scholars of antique Christianity, can be considered to have some amount of "insider" information or perspective (Stringer, 2002, p. 1). Conversely, someone from a monastic background, even a Benedictine one, is still studying a text which is far removed from them in key ways. In some ways it may belong to the group to which they belong, but in others it is still a text which belongs to a different century, a different language, a different geography, etc. Thus even a Benedictine scholar comes to the *RB* as someone set apart from it by significant barriers.

D: Recent Historiographical Developments

In addition to what has already been mentioned above, there are a few key developments within fields related to studying the *RB*, and in particular the present study, which need to be more fully examined. Many of these have come to the foreground after particular interested in the *RB* tapered off near the end of the 1980's. While most of the recent Late Antique scholars mentioned above are familiar with these developments, it seems that the implications of these developments have not been applied with full force to the *RB*.

Among the most fascinating studies which will bear on this thesis is Mary Carruthers' work *The Book of Memory* (Carruthers, 2008). Carruthers work has already been mentioned as a key component of Chapter 2, but is worth repeating here because of the sweeping impact it has had on this field in a more generally way. Most pertinent for this study is her work on the relationship between written text, memorized text, and physical images. Although her work focuses primarily on later methods of trained memorization, the implications for her work range far beyond the original parameters (Irvine, 1993). Her remarkably innovative approach to this relationship will heavily impact the intersection between the material world which will be explored in Part Two of this thesis and the textual world which will be explored in Part Three. Memory is an indispensable aspect of the tradition with the *RB* both draws together and perpetuates, and exploring it in depth will add a fascinating element.

Another important development worth mentioning is one which Robin Osborne notes, which in her words is, "a willingness to ask of antiquity our questions, not simply to ask again the questions which the ancients themselves asked" (Osborne, 2010, p. 37). This represents a major change since the 1970's, and has led to an increase in research questions focused on underlying dynamic behind the evidence available to historians. While the corpus of evidence available to us is small and expands slowly, especially in regards to a text which has already been so thoroughly explored, the greatest amount of discovery has been made by the shifting agendas of researchers rather than by groundbreaking new evidence (Osborne, 2010, p. 35). The present study is itself an example of the trend which Osborne describes. The level of its contribution will lie more in its ability to pose a new question and answer it from a new angle, rather than its ability to present new data.

Finally, the treatment of manuscripts as items which not only transmit words to us, but contain within their very fabric valuable information, is a recent development and foundational to the methodology of this paper. Although T.C. Skeat began publishing in 1938, his lengthy and notable career took on a new level of importance when he began examining the physical aspects of the roll and codex in 1990 (Skeat & Elliot, 2004). Again, Skeat's work was mentioned in Chapter 2, but demands recognition not only for its impact on this paper but the historical disciplines as a whole. From his work in 1990 onwards, his claims and those who questioned them laid the foundations for a whole new field of analysis, looking for information, especially on early Christianity, not within the text written on parchment or papyrus, but within the parchment and papyrus themselves. While the long line of scholars who brought us our modern critical editions of the *RB* were well versed in textual transmission and criticism, and paid close attention to the content of the manuscripts they used, those manuscripts themselves and many others are now able to be understood in a myriad of new ways.

E: Conclusion

Beginning with Daniel Hanber in 1880 and spanning until the present time, it is clear that any contemporary examination of the *RB* stands deeply indebted to generations of committed scholars. This thesis is no exception, and while it will only engage a small handful of these scholars in depth, this study is done on top of a mountain of other scholars who have laid the groundwork to make this discussion possible. The text of the *RB* itself which will be used is the product of decades of Benedictine devotion to establishing an authoritative working text, and the angle from which it will be approached has been pioneered by Late Antique historians

for many years. Over the course of the *RB*'s history it is probably the exception rather than the norm for it to be read with such scrutiny by people who are such outsiders to it, rather than by insiders living according to it. While it may be a bit of an historical oddity to pay such close attention to this text as an outsider, it does present the opportunity to approach a well known text with new questions, and so gain fresh insight into the era of its authorship.

Part Two:

Integrating the Material Sources

Chapter 5
The Gospel Codex as Manuscript

Now that we have created a historical foundation, and fleshed out some of the historiographical concerns, we are prepared to begin getting to the heart of this multidisciplinary investigation by looking into the nature of codices, and especially Gospel codices, related most closely to context of the *Regula Benedicti* author. Within the *RB* there are a myriad of questions related to the author's interaction with other textual works. Huge swaths the *RB* are devoted to prescribing reading, both in liturgical and individual contexts. The *RB* itself draws heavily upon multiple other works, most notably Scripture, with remarkable breadth and frequency (Fry, 1980, pp. 467-477, 587-593). Clearly it is important to be able to critically and accurately imagine the physical codices which the author of the *RB* had in mind when writing about their use, and those which he himself used in constructing it. Understanding how he used codices and how he expected others to use them is vital to understanding the *RB* itself, and the term *evangelium* within it. However, the kind of information which could inform our imaginations in this way is surprisingly difficult to come by. Most of the research relating to Late Antique Scripture codices lies firmly within the realm of textual criticism. Work which relates to the physical qualities of codices is almost exclusively devoted to its relationship to the roll, and its rise to prominence. In this study we will attempt to use the best of both of those fields in an interdisciplinary manner to construct a properly informed codex context for Benedict.

A: Manuscript Selection and Description

As this thesis focuses primarily on how the author of the *RB* interacts with the Gospels, this chapter will focus on manuscripts of the New Testament texts. Those manuscripts which might best represent his specific experience will be the ones under review here, which gives us a time frame ranging from the fourth through the sixth centuries, and a geography limited to manuscripts believed to have originated in Italy. While a wider examination is possible, this scope of material should be enough to reconstruct the immediate context of the author of *RB*.

As noted above, textual criticism's contribution to understanding these codices is undeniable and difficult to overstate. One major contributions is the compilation of comprehensive manuscript lists, which this study draws on. They include those found in *The*

Translations of the New Testament into Latin by J.K. Elliot, *The Early Versions of the New Testament* by Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* by Bruce Metzger and Bart Ehrman, and *The Text of the New Testament* by Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland. However, some manuscripts from their lists have been excluded from in this examination, such as MS. 86, which probably represents a fourth century form of Old Latin, but was not created until the beginning of the tenth century (Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, 1977, pp. 316-317). *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis* was also considered, but the amount of controversy around its origins makes it difficult to draw conclusions from (Parker, Codex Bezae, 1992). The result is six manuscripts which together should give us a snapshot of Biblical manuscripts in Late Antique Italy. Because the time frame given represents a crucial turning point between the use of the Old Latin Versions (or *Vetus Latina*) and the Vulgate, and both are evident in the *RB* author's use of Scripture, they are both highly relevant and manuscripts are listed within these categories (Parker, An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts, 2008, pp. 57-64).

As far as it is possible given the sources, the descriptions below will reflect the qualities of these manuscripts which relate most directly to the reader's experience, as discussed below. For this reason, some information which would normally be included in a codicological analysis pertaining to things like the style of the script, the details of its construction, etc., have been left out. This will allow us to focus on the most immediately important elements. Additionally, it should be noted that over time all of these codices have been separated from their original bindings and covers. While many of them are today bound in a similar manner as they would have been originally, it is not possible to say anything here about the original covers of the manuscripts below. There is also an obvious discrepancy between the amount of information which is available on each manuscript because of the literature on the topic, the publishing programs of the libraries which house them, and which manuscripts have been observed personally by the author. Some of those issues will be addressed in greater depth below. With these things in mind, let us take a look at the manuscripts as far as is possible, and analyze them in light of the way they would be used by the *RB* author.

Vetus Latina

   Codex Vercellensis (a)

Ca. 371 CE, Vercelli

This codex contains Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark in that order, otherwise known as the "Western order." The end of Mark has been damaged, but probably contained the shorter

version. This is probably the oldest European manuscript of the Gospels. It is currently kept in Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare.

(Elliot, Translations of the New Testament into Latin, 1992, p. 204) (Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, 1977, pp. 312-313) (Metzger & Ehrman, The Text of the New Testament, 2005, p. 102) (Aland & Aland, 1987, p. 105) (Parker, An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts, 2008, p. 25)

   The opening page of this codex can be seen below. The pages have been badly damaged, and the codex itself is currently disassembled and stored in the form of individual leaves. Because of this is was impossible to obtain the dimensions of the whole codex, but each individual page measures at 250 mm high x 155 mm wide, broken down into two columns which are each 160 mm high x 45 mm wide, separated by a 20 mm center margin. In this picture it is still possible to discern the initial beginning the book of Matthew. The beginning of each book is marked by an embellished initial, with the rest of the first line written in red.
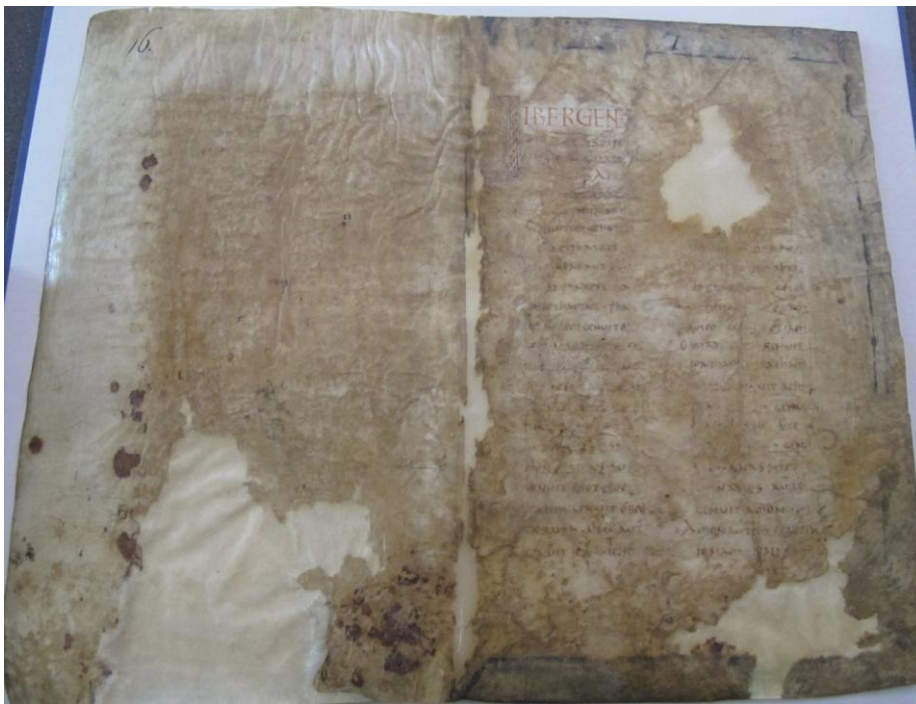
Figure 1- Codex Vercellensis, 371, Vercelli, Opening Page

Below you can see a more typical leaf from the center of the codex. Although it is badly decayed, most of the text is still discernible. At the top of the left page is the word *secundum*, and at the top of the right the word *lucanum*, indicating the place of this leaf in the book of Luke. This kind of heading is typical of the codices examined. Most pages also contained page numbers at the foot of the page, but these do not match stylistically and appear to have been added later.

Figure 2- Codex Vercellensis, 371, Vercelli, Typical Center Page

Here is a clearer look from near the end of the book of Mark. This photo clearly captures the system used here to mark section headings with a large, red initial, as well as the Eusebian referencing system which will be discussed in greater depth below. This particular manuscript also includes spaces between each word, and larger spaces with dots centered in the line, otherwise known as medial points, at the end of each sentence.
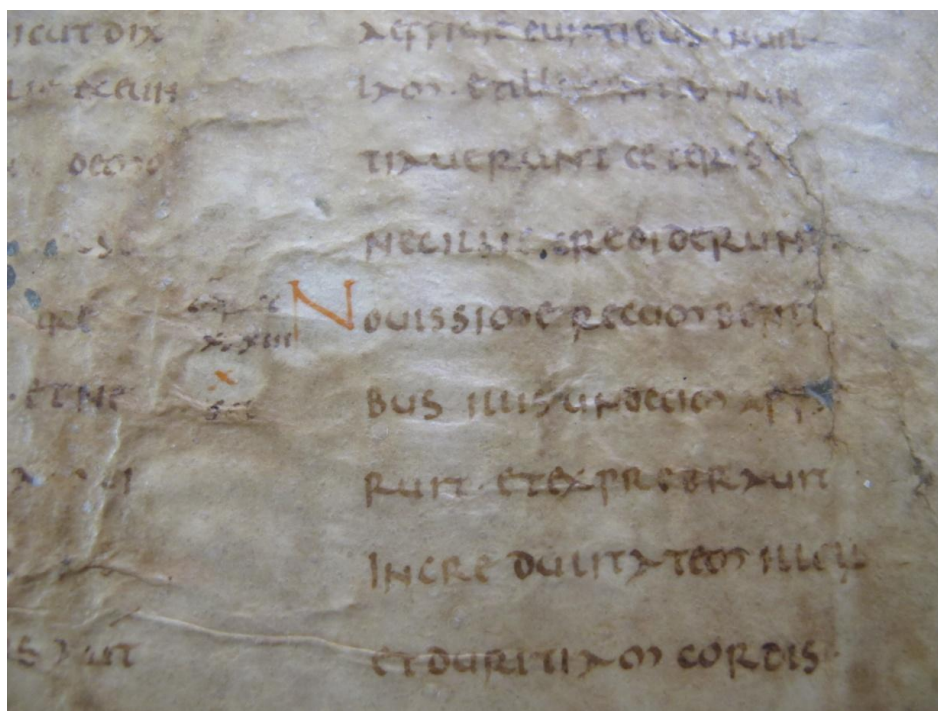
Figure 3- Codex Vercellensis, 371, Vercelli, Section Heading

Below you can see the final page of the codex, ending the book of Mark. The end of each book includes a final line like this one, which reads *explicit evangelium secundum marcum.*
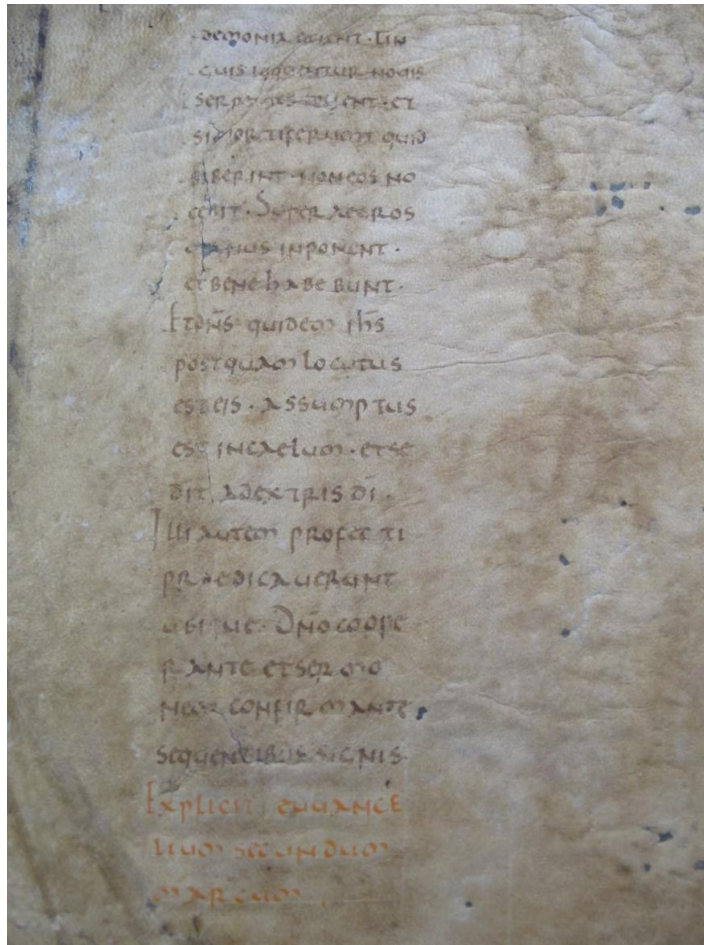
Figure 4- Codex Vercellensis, 371, Vercelli, Final Page

Photographs and observations were taken by the author on the 30th of March, 2017.

Codex Veronensis (b)

5th Century, CE, Verona.

This codex contains the four Gospels in the Western order. It has been written on purple parchment with silver ink for the main text and gold ink for the initials. Currently it is in the possession of the Chapter Library of the Cathedral at Verona.

(Metzger & Ehrman, The Text of the New Testament, 2005, p. 102) (Elliot, Translations of the New Testament into Latin, 1992, p. 205) (Aland & Aland, 1987, p. 185)

Much of this codex is particularly difficult to read, in part because of the lack of contrast between silver ink and purple vellum, and in part because of a glaze which has been applied to the written portions of the text to prevent them from decaying further. In many areas the silver ink has worn away at the vellum leaving holes where there had previously been writing.

However, below is an excellent example of a section heading. Instead of an enlarged initial like in the *Codex Vercellensis* it uses a gold outline above the top left corner of the first letter, accompanied by the numerical referencing system with lines above and below in gold. The end of each section is also marked by a single gold medial point.
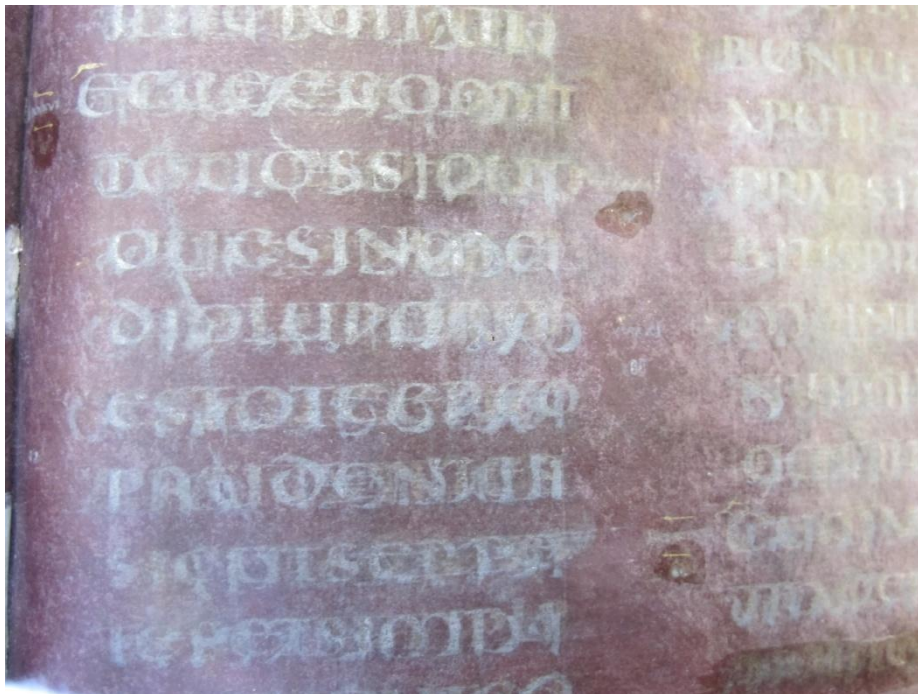
Figure 5- Codex Veronensis, 5th Century, Verona, Section Heading

Below is a typical center page. The upper, outer corners of the codex have been largely dissolved through the codex, and have been bound to other parchment sections in order to preserve them. There are also signs of water damage, especially at the beginning of the codex.
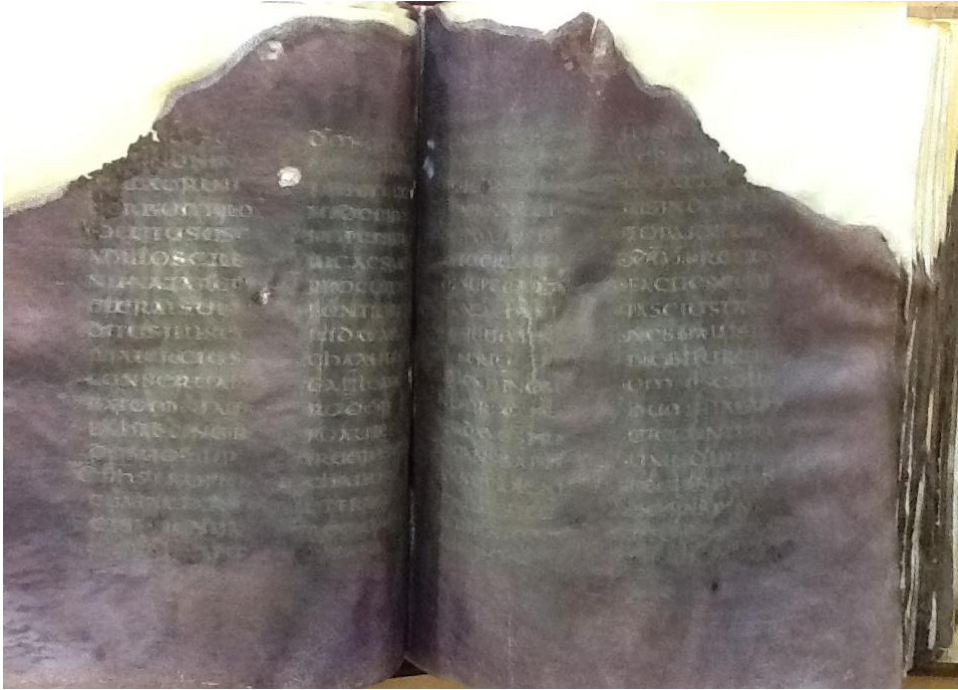
Figure 6- Codex Veronensis, 5th Century, Verona, Typical Center Page

The *nomina sacra* are also written in gold throughout this manuscript, as in the example below.
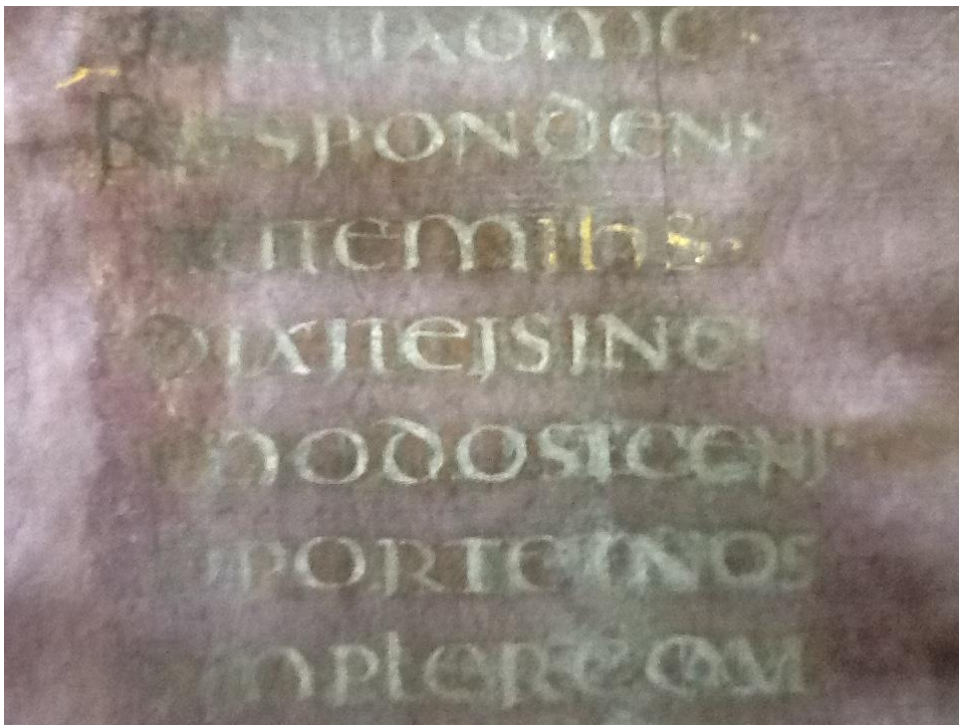
Figure 7- Codex Veronensis, 5th Century, Verona, Nomina Sacra Example

Unlike the *Codex Vercellensis* which has been disassembled, this manuscript is bound in a style much like its original binding, with the exception that it has now been placed between new wooden covers as a part of its preservation. Even after centuries of use and decay, the

visual effect of the purple parchment and the silver and gold ink is breathtaking. It is exceptional now, and was equally exceptional at the time of its production. This codex is made up of 34 quires of 12 pages each. In total it is 275 mm high, 225 mm wide, and 75 mm deep, with each page broken down into two columns, each measuring 170 mm high by 50 mm wide, with a 25 mm central column.
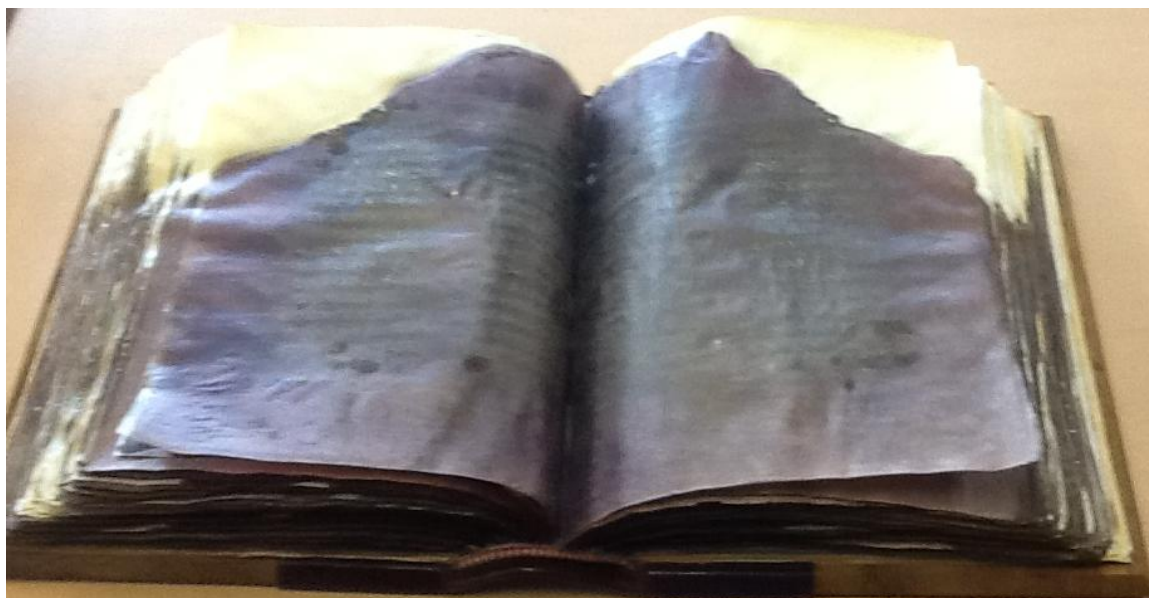
Figure 8- Codex Veronensis, 5th Century, Verona, Open and Showing Binding

Photographs and observations were taken by the author on the 28th of March, 2017.

Latin Vulgate

Codex Sangallensis (∑)

5th Century CE, Verona

Although this codex has been largely disassembled, about half of the text of the four Gospels survives. This is also likely the oldest known copy of the Vulgate. It can be found at the Abbey of St. Gallen, Convent Library.

(Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, 1977, p. 335) (Elliot, Translations of the New Testament into Latin, 1992, p. 228) (Metzger & Ehrman, The Text of the New Testament, 2005, p. 108) (Aland & Aland, 1987, p. 188)

Fortunately, St. Gallen has digitalized most of their extensive manuscript collection. The codex which contains this manuscript (along with a myriad of other material) can be viewed using the link provided in the List of Figures, Examples, and Manuscripts, with the portion of the Gospels located between pages 3 and 327. Pictured below is a picture of page 18, from the book of Matthew. It demonstrates a style similar to the *Codex Vercellensis* in most

respects, but without the use of red ink. Sections are marked by enlarged initials accompanied by section numbers, and page headings include the name of the book.
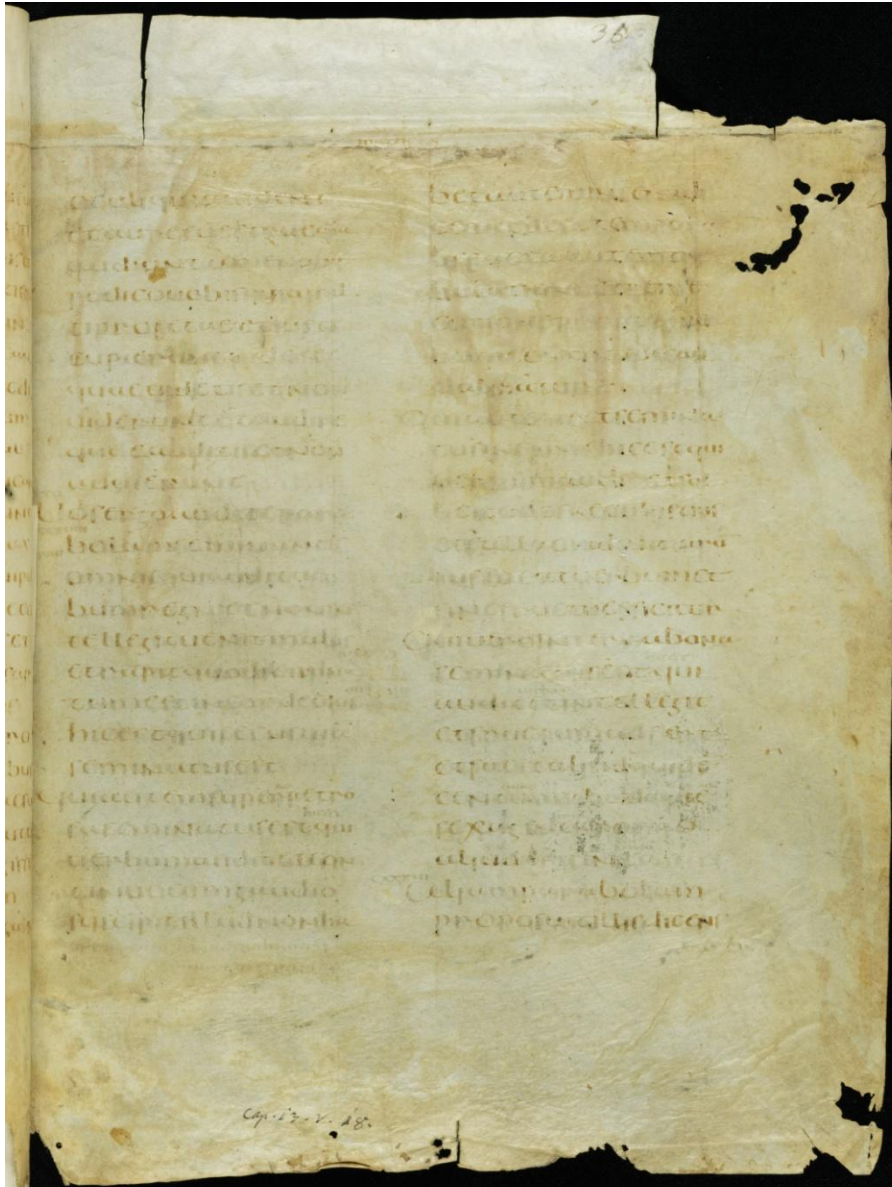
Figure 9- Codex Sangallensis, 5th Century, Verona, Page 18 from the Digitalized Collection of St. Gallen Convent Library

Codex Fuldensis (F)

541-546 CE, Capua

Unlike the Gospel books listed here, this codex contains the entire New Testament, plus the Epistle to the Laodiceans. Additionally, the Gospels are in the form of a harmony derived from Tatian's Diatessaron. Surrounding the primary text are the personal corrections of Victor, bishop of Capua. This can be found in the Landesbibliothek at Fulda, Germany.
 (Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, 1977, p. 335) (Metzger & Ehrman, The Text of the New Testament, 2005, p. 108) (Elliot, Translations of the New Testament into Latin, 1992, p. 226) (Aland & Aland, 1987, p. 188)

Codex Foro-Juliens (J)

6th Century CE, Italy

This codex originally contained the four Gospels. Now Matthew, Luke, and John are in Cividale del Friuli Archaeological Museum, while Mark is split between the Biblioteca Marciana at Venice, and Prague. No photographs or measurement of this manuscript are currently available without consulting the manuscript in person.

(Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, 1977, pp. 335-336) (Elliot, Translations of the New Testament into Latin, 1992, p. 226)

Codex Mediolanensis (Me)

Early 6th Century CE, Milan

This codex also contains the Gospels, and is housed at the Ambrosian Library in Milan.

(Metzger & Ehrman, The Text of the New Testament, 2005, p. 108) (Elliot, Translations of the New Testament into Latin, 1992, p. 227)

It is forbidden to photograph this manuscript. However, in style it is very similar to the *Codex Vercellensis* pictured above, with some important exceptions. The first is that it has undergone substantial editing, and even contains an entire quire which contains John 13:1-18:37a, on pages 278-285, which seems to be taken from a much later manuscript to replace a lost or damaged section here. There is also water and sun damage to the beginning of Matthew, and water damage to the end of John. The second is that in addition to the page headings and initials seen above, it contains a much larger degree of ornamentation. This increases dramatically from the beginning to the end of this manuscript, so that while the beginning of the first book is rather plain, by the end of the last book the drawing around the concluding words is remarkably intricate. The third is that in addition to each book having an ornamented ending, it contains an entire page which provides an ending to the whole Gospel Codex reading, "*Explicit Inno / Minedninihn/ XPI Evangelia / Quattvor / Secundum/ Mattheum / Secundum Marcum / Secundum Lucan / Secundum Iohannem*." Below is a detailed sketch of the initial letter of the book of John, as well as a rough sketch of the ending decoration to the book of Luke.
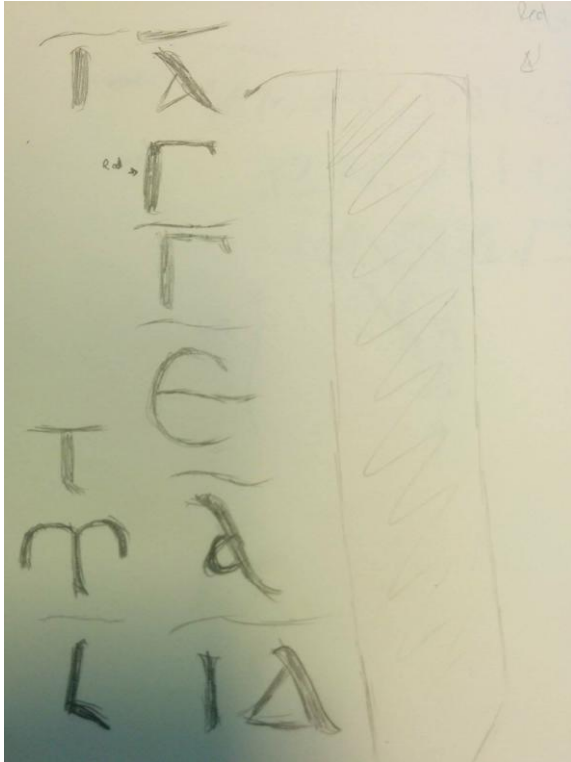
Figure 10- Codex Mediolanensis, Early 6th Century, Milan, Sketch of Initial of John
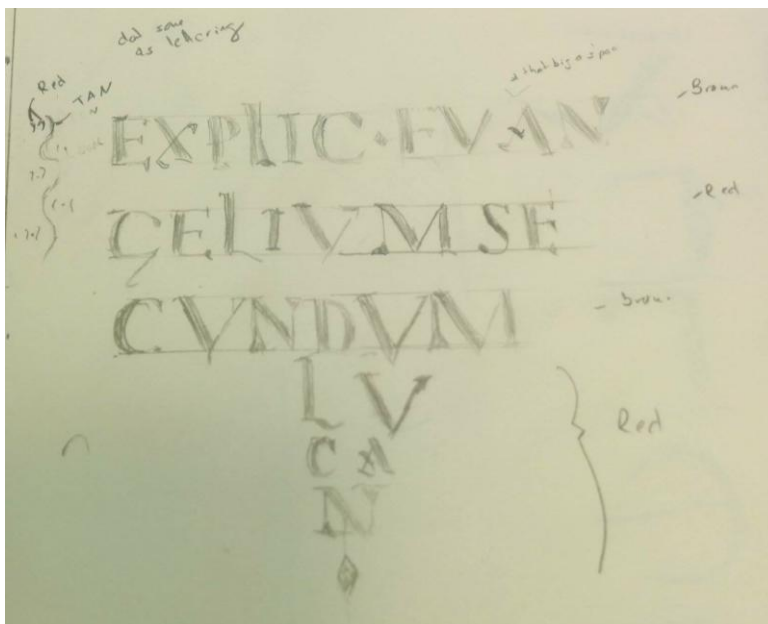
Figure 11- Codex Mediolanensis, Early 6th Century, Milan, Sketch of Ending Decoration of Luke

In most other respects which pertain to this study, it is essentially similar to the *Codex Vercellensis*. It measures 270 mm high x 175 mm wide x 65 mm deep, and rather than being broken down into two columns contains only a single column which is 185 mm high x 125 wide. It contains 36 quires, made up of roughly 10 pages each, although some have had pages added or removed to accommodate the beginning and end of books. It is currently bound between wooden covers very similar to the *Codex Veronesis*.

Sketches and observations were taken by the author on the 29th of March, 2017.

B: The Reader's Experience and the Codex

Now that we have a group of manuscripts, we have to establish a framework within which we can analyze them. In their seminal work, *The Birth of the Codex*, C.H. Roberts and T.C. Skeat go into depth about the physical characteristics of the codex (Roberts & Skeat, 1983). Their work relates specifically to its adoption as a technology, but many of the same practical factors which they list slowly and subtly changed the ways texts were used. Below we will describe Roberts' and Skeat's categories and then use them as a lens for understanding our own manuscript list. The factors which Roberts and Skeat list are economical advantages, compactness, comprehensiveness, convenience, and ease of reference (Roberts & Skeat, 1983). The only category that will be excluded from this study is the economical advantages, because in a later work Skeat effectively shows that it is of marginal importance, and little information is available on the economic value of the texts in this list (Skeat & Elliot, The Collected Biblical Writings of T.C. Skeat, 2004, p. 82). All that can be assuredly said about the manuscripts above is that the Codex Veronesis is exceptionally valuable, and it would have been made at extreme cost compared to the other examples.

"Compactness" is the term that Roberts and Skeat use to refer to the way that the codex made it possible to bring a library worth of work into a single, manageable unit. Although the compacting potential of the codex was not realized right away, by Late Antiquity it certainly had been. The *Codices Vaticanus, Sinaiticus,* and *Alexandrinus* ambitiously include the entire Old and New Testaments, and Gregory the Great mentions being able to compress 35 rolls into 6 codices (Roberts & Skeat, 1983, pp. 47-48). Effectively, the compact nature of a codex means that how comprehensive a codex is should be regarded first as a deliberate choice, rather than an obviously technological limitation, as might very well be the case with a roll.

By "comprehensiveness," Roberts and Skeat are referring to the ability to "bring together within two covers texts which had hitherto circulated separately" (Roberts & Skeat, 1983, pp. 48-49). The effect for the individual reader of putting multiple works between two covers would be difficult to overestimate, and will make up a great deal of the inquiry below. Which books are contained within a codex is not only the easiest aspect to determine about it, but the factor which could tell us the most about how these works were perceived by the reader.

"Convenience of use," in Roberts' and Skeat's work, relates directly to how easy it is to use a single codex as compared to a single roll. They disregard this category because many arguments made in this regard are anachronistic, shaped primarily by the difficulty modern

authors experience with rolls (Roberts & Skeat, 1983, pp. 49-50). However, Lionel Casson takes a different approach to the same idea, thinking of convenience of use in regard to the ability to use multiple codices compared to using multiple rolls. He believes that in the long run, "The replacement of the roll by the codex…had a profound effect upon the ease and speed of research comparable perhaps to that of the introduction of the xerox copier in our own day" (Casson, 2001, pp. 133-134). (It is possible his comparison should be updated to reference the digital search engine instead.) He bases this off of a comparison between the research methods of Pliny the Elder and Jerome, who both describe in depth their own research processes, which makes for a compelling argument (Casson, 2001, p. 133). This is, in fact, an invaluable category when understanding someone like the author of the *RB*, whose work plainly draws upon a myriad of different texts simultaneously.

The case is similar when it comes to "ease of reference," which Roberts and Skeat use to refer to how simple it is to find a specific spot in a codex as compared to a roll. Like "compactness," the technological potential for this was not realized right away, and so did not contribute to the rise of the codex (Roberts & Skeat, 1983, pp. 50-51). However, as the codex became popular, it developed new systems for finding specific spots within a codex. This is especially true for the Gospels, which as early as the second century had been broken down into sections which could be cross referenced with each other in reference to content tables used to help the reader navigate between the four Gospels easily (Clemens & Graham, 2007, p. 185). It also changed the way a codex could be referenced within a library. In that regard Casson claims that, "the coming of the codex must have effected a veritable transformation" (Casson, 2001, p. 135). Again, this is a category which was of little use to Roberts and Skeat, but which is radically helpful when constructing a framework for understanding how the author of the *RB* would have used the codices at his disposal.

<div align="center">

C: Analyzing the Manuscripts
</div>

Compactness and Comprehensiveness: The Gospels and Company

Compactness and comprehensiveness both relate to what is put between the two covers of a codex, turning separate works into a single object. One of the first things that becomes clear in this list is the dominance of the Gospel Codex. Referring back to the parameters above, these manuscripts were not selected with the intention of highlighting Gospel codices, but New Testament ones in general. Although it is particularly pronounced here, it remains true on a wider scale that the Gospels are the primary focus of this period. One count puts extant *Vetus Latina* Gospel manuscripts at 32, followed by Acts with 12, the Pauline epistles with 4,

and the Apocalypse with 1, besides smaller fragments (Metzger & Ehrman, The Text of the New Testament, 2005, p. 101). In fact, even though the entire canon can be found in Greek manuscripts by this time, prior to the Vulgate no Latin translations of the entire canon, or even the entire New Testament exist (Parker, An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts, 2008, p. 58). Within the Vulgate portion of this list only the *Codex Fuldensis* contains a full New Testament, and it is exceptional in many respects.

As noted earlier, it is technologically possible at this stage to fit the entire Christian canon within two covers. The fact that complete New Testaments are so rare and Gospel codices so plentiful signifies that the Gospels were still used and regarded in a unique way from other texts during this period. Skeat notes that the codex form gave the four canonical gospels "physical unity…right from the start, an authority and prestige which no competitor could hope to rival" (Skeat & Elliot, The Collected Biblical Writings of T.C. Skeat, 2004, p. 86). The authority and prestige clearly remains unchallenged by any other gospel material in Late Antique Italy. (The *Diatessaron* found in the *Codex Fuldensis* does not change this, as it is comprised of canonical material (Metzger & Ehrman, The Text of the New Testament, 2005, pp. 131-134).) The *Codex Fuldensis* is fascinating because in addition to the Gospels it contains the rest of the New Testament as well as the Epistle to the Laodiceans. This demonstrates that while the four Gospels still receive a particular level of unique authority and prestige, they are beginning to share those qualities with other books. However, since the *Codex Fuldensis* originates no earlier than 541 AD, if it is the beginning of a trend it is a very late one for our present purposes. Either way it is safe to say that combining other books with the Gospels, regarding them as belonging between two covers with this collection, is the exception rather than the rule in Late Antique Italy.

Convenience and Ease of Reference

As stated earlier, convenience and ease of use are useful categories both when thinking of the individual codex, and when thinking about the codex as a part of a library. On an individual level, each of the manuscripts examined above utilizes a form of referencing system, allowing the reader to find the appropriate passage in the Gospels quickly and easily. This numbering system, and the corresponding content tables, were first introduced by Ammonius of Alexandria, and then expanded by Eusebius into the form that is found throughout Late Antiqutiy and the Early Medieval period. They serve both as a way to reference content from the Gospels, as well as a way to utilize multiple Gospel versions simultaneously (Clemens & Graham, 2007, pp. 185-186). The author of the *RB* frequently

employs conflations of multiple Gospel passages, one of which (a combination of Luke 18:13 and Matthew 8:8, found in *RB* 7:65-66) will be examined in the final analysis of this paper (Chapter 7, Section B). This kind of flexibility when using material from the Gospels was largely possible for him because of the Eusebian referencing system.

In addition to the Eusebian sections and reference numbers, each of these manuscripts have a way of marking the beginning and ending of sections such as utilizing an enlarged initial and red ink, or in the case of the *Codex Veronesis* gold outlining. Book titles in the headings of each page also make it easy to know which book you are currently in, and find the one you are looking for in a matter of moments. Although the manuscripts here still represent the very beginning of the innovations with the codex would later become capable of, they nonetheless apply all of the tools available to them plentifully, and no doubt assisted the *RB* author in his use of these books.

It is now also worth taking some time to accurately picture the collections which the manuscripts listed were a part of. Lionel Casson's work, *Libraries in the Ancient World*, provides some very useful insights in regard to Late Antique Italy. The town libraries which had filled Italy in previous eras disappeared during these centuries as barbarian invasions increased (Casson, 2001, pp. 136-137). While in the East, ecclesiastical libraries acquired vast collections, the theological collections in Rome were generally restricted to only the books which were necessary for regular activities, such as liturgical manuals and Scriptures used in readings (Casson, 2001, p. 139). Other books, especially those which were considered "pagan literature" were largely excluded from these libraries (Casson, 2001, p. 140). So behind these manuscripts, especially those ranging from the third through the fifth centuries, we should not imagine vast collections which these books made up a small portion of. More accurate would be a small collection designed around ecclesiastical activity, of which these Gospel codices were presumably the honored focal point.

However, in the sixth century, monasticism began to make substantial changes in the number of books which needed to be kept in a library. Highly notable in this regard is the *RB* itself, which not only stipulates communal readings of the Gospels and Psalms, but individual readings as well. For example, in addition to reading mandated throughout the year, "At the beginning of Lent each monk [was] to be given a book from the library (*bibliotheca*) which he [was] to read straight through by the end of Lent; and on Sundays all save those who have assigned duties [were] to spend the day reading" (Casson, 2001, p. 142). This is hugely significant for two reasons: first, because the *RB* author expected these stipulations to be

feasible for a monastery; second, because as the *RB* was adopted it necessitated that monastic libraries contain enough reading material for every monk.

Transitions in Version and in Order

One of the major transitions during this time is the shift from the *Vetus Latina* to the Vulgate which we have mentioned before; but that transition brought with it another: the shift from the "Western" order of the Gospels (Matthew, John, Luke, Mark) to the current canonical order (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). Skeat, in his groundbreaking article "Irenaeus and the Four-Gospel Canon," shows the link between the "Western" order (which in fact is attested to in both the East and the West) and Irenaeus's portrayal of the Gospel authors through the imagery of Ezekiel. This order appears in the earliest Gospel manuscript, the Chester Beatty, and was not replaced by the present order until the time of Jerome (Skeat, Irenaeus and the Four-Gospel Canon, 1992, pp. 197-198). Although there is not much that can be said with certainty about the relationship between the adoption of the current canonical order and that of the Vulgate, they should be considered concurrent phenomena. This is at least true in regard to the manuscripts listed here. Our era of study encompasses this transition, with the Western order surviving at least as late as the Codex Veronensis, in the fifth century.

D: What We Can Say about the *RB* Author's Experience

In light of the discoveries made above, what can we say about the physical works which the author of the *RB* had in mind when referring to the use of codices? How can we apply the information above to specific issues raised by the *RB*?

As a start, we can assume with a high degree of confidence that he was not using a complete Scripture codex, but rather a variety of smaller codices. Additionally, the Gospels would never be found alone, but always within the four-fold canon. When he references the Gospels being used in a liturgical context (such as in chapter 11, versus 9-10) he almost undoubtedly had in mind a codex which contained only those texts. This will be addressed in greater depth later on when analyzing the *RB* and its language, especially as it relates to the relationship between text and object in the liturgy. His use of the Gospels as texts would also be aided significantly by visual tools incorporated into the manuscripts which allowed him to reference them quickly and easily. Most notably, the Eusebian numbering system would have allowed him to use parallel passages in the four Gospels simultaneously, devising conflations

of passages appropriate for his literary purposes and treating this group of texts as a unified whole.

In addition to answering specific questions about the content of the *RB*, this study also sheds some light upon which Latin translations influenced it. Timothy Fry notes that the *RB* usually follows the Vulgate, but 19 out of 132 Old Testament references and 18 out of 189 references in the New Testament are not loyal to it (Fry, 1980, pp. 468-469). As a percentage, that represents a variation of 14% in the Old Testament and 10% in the New Testament. Our sample set above seems to indicate that during the fifth century both the *Vetus Latina* and the Vulgate are being produced (represented by the *Codex Veronensis* and the *Codex Sangallensis* respectively), but by the sixth century new codices are exclusively in the Vulgate (represented by *Codices Fuldensis, Foro-Juliens,* and *Mediolanensis*). As a result we can speculate safely that the texts which Benedict had in front of him when drafting the *RB* were from the Vulgate, but that the variations can likely be attributed to older versions, still in circulation during his lifetime.

The *RB* author's use of the Vulgate should also lead us to assume that the Gospel codex he was using followed the current canonical order of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. This means that his lack of references to Mark, whom he cites only twice, compared to Matthew and Luke whom he cites fifty one times and twenty four times respectively, must be explained as a matter of preference rather than a matter of physical order (Fry, 1980, pp. 588-589). In other words, he did not utilize Mark less because it was placed last among the Gospels, but more likely because it contains less of the kind of teaching material which he relies on so heavily.

When it comes to the kind of library the author would have used himself and envisioned for a monastery, Casson's work assures us that it is highly improbable that any amount of "pagan" or secular literature would have been present (Casson, 2001, p. 140). The *RB* clearly excludes secular literature as an important source of reading for the monk. Instead, the kind of books which he has in mind to be distributed to the monks for individual reading were likely confined to a very small repertoire containing the Scriptures, and other works related closely to their monastic vocation (Casson, 2001, p. 139). In that regard, chapter 73, which recommends "the *Conferences* of the Fathers, their *Institutes* and their *Lives* [and] the rule of our holy father Basil" as additional reading is probably not a list of Benedict's personal recommendations, as much as it is a reflection of the kind of library he expected a monastery to keep (Fry, 1980, pp. 295-297). The kind of vast research library which we might otherwise envision, and which centuries later would become a hallmark of Western monasteries, should

be attributed to Cassiodorus, who had a very different understanding of what kind of knowledge was valuable for a monk (Casson, 2001, pp. 143-145). The *RB* author certainly valued literacy as a part of the monastic community, but with a narrower scope than we might otherwise assume.

E: Information Which Should be Accessible

As this chapter draws to a close it is worth including a small note about the largest obstacle to this kind of investigation, which is a lack of information. Although it is a simple matter to access research related to the textual qualities of a specific manuscript, it is far more difficult to ascertain anything about its physical characteristics. Some codices have information available on them primarily because they are unique or controversial, such as the *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis*, which has a myriad of articles and volumes dedicated to it (Cambridge University Library) (Parker, Codex Bezae, 1992). However, information about codices which are more typical and less extraordinary in nature is just as valuable for understanding a given period and should be accessible. A few libraries have begun to digitalize their collections, which has the potential to be an incredibly valuable undertaking; but out of the six manuscripts listed here only the *Codex Sangallensis* is available in this way (St. Gallen, 2009). Much of the most valuable information for this study had to be collected by visiting the manuscripts and examining them personally. Some examples of pertinent information which could easily be made available, as far as they can be determined, would be the dimensions of the original form of the codex, the estimated cost of production, and any reference aids which would change the way the codex was used. If this sort of data were as easy to access as that which is relevant for textual criticism the potential for useful analysis would grow exponentially.

F: Conclusion

By looking into the New Testament codices available to us from Late Antique Italy we have been able to imagine, in far greater detail, the codices which the author of the *Regula Benedicti* used himself, and those he intended for use in the communities that followed his rule. This information is relevant for explaining his composition, addressing anomalies in his writing, and better understanding his vision for monastic development. As the issues which will be addressed in the final analysis of this paper make clear, purely textual or theoretical explanations for the *RB* author's choices and descriptions run the risk of making unspoken assumptions about the nature of the use of texts without being grounded in the physical

realities which they are tied to. While this study has had a narrow focus, this kind of approach could be refined and used to enhance our understanding of any range of authors. Areas with more extant literary evidence would benefit to an even greater degree, making North Africa a prime candidate for study. At the very least, the codex context of Late Antique Italy reveals an image of the *RB* author as a man born in the age of the *Vetus Latina* but writing in the era of the Vulgate, surrounded by codices of the Scriptures and the Fathers, with the Gospel Codex as a treasured possession and guide.

Chapter 6
The Gospel Codex in Late Antique Art

In order to continue working to understand the concepts behind the term "Gospel" in the *Regula Benedicti*, we must look beyond the Gospel Codex as it exists physically, and look into the ways it is represented in art. The ways in which the Gospel Codex is used in artistic forms will in turn give us a much more dynamic understanding of the significance of the object itself, how it was used, and how it was understood. The previous section demonstrated that the study of the object gave us a glimpse into the apparent reality of the object, studying its depictions in art will give us insight into its symbolic significance. These representations can be broken down into two major categories: the Gospel Codex as an attribute of Christ himself, and the Gospel Codex as an object which others hold. Those categories can further by broken down by the iconographic theme of the piece they are found in, including *maiestsas domini*, *sedes sapientiae, ex voto*, and processional themes. Each of these themes serves a different function, and as a result the Gospel Codex carries a different significance within them.

A: Sample Selection Criteria

There is a substantial amount of Christian art which could be considered relevant to this study, so defining the parameters is essential. The chronological parameters are similar to those used in selecting manuscripts in the previous section, structured to reflect, as closely as possible, the context of the *RB* author. Therefore, most of the examples are dated to the sixth century, with some extending into the seventh. The geographical parameters are wider than those used for manuscripts, however, because during this time much of the extant artistic development was taking place within Byzantine culture. Even within Italy, Ravenna represents the most active center for artistic development, under the direct influence of Constantinople. Ravenna, in fact, encapusaltes in key ways an attempt to define and reconcile the theological and political status of a complexly divided Western capital of Justinian's empire (Simson, 1987, pp. 1-22). Alongside the Byzantine works there are some important Coptic examples, originating in Egypt or copied from works in Egypt. These have definite similarities to the Byzantine works, but also bring their own unique contributions. Even though many of the examples used here are distant from the *Regula Bendicti*'s immediate context in a geographic sense, together they are representative of contemporary trends on a

regional scale. The nine following examples have been chosen within this framework in accordance with secondary literature available on the topic, and with the intention of representing as much diversity as an examination of this scope can accommodate.

B: Examination of the Chosen Samples

Gospel Codex as an Attribute of Christ

Theme: Maiestas Domini

#1: Encaustic on Wood, Monastery of St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai (Figure 13)

Probably the best known of the examples utilized in this examination is the Christ Pantocrator, or Ruler of the Universe, dated to the end of the sixth century, from the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai. It falls within theme referred to as *Maiestas Domini*, or the Majesty of the Lord, in which Christ is shown ascending and reigning. This encaustic on wood was probably made as one of a series of icon panels, and remains one of the finest examples of its time. In his left hand, Christ holds a large, ornamented Gospel Codex (Snyder, 1989, pp. 126-127) (Frazer, 1978, p. 528). The Gospel Codex itself is clearly marked by four large jewels, as well as highlighted corners, and four groupings of three smaller jewels. Between them is a large cross, which dominates the center of the cover. Together these markings can be understood as a convention for identifying a Gospel Codex, and they will be discussed in greater depth at the end of this section.
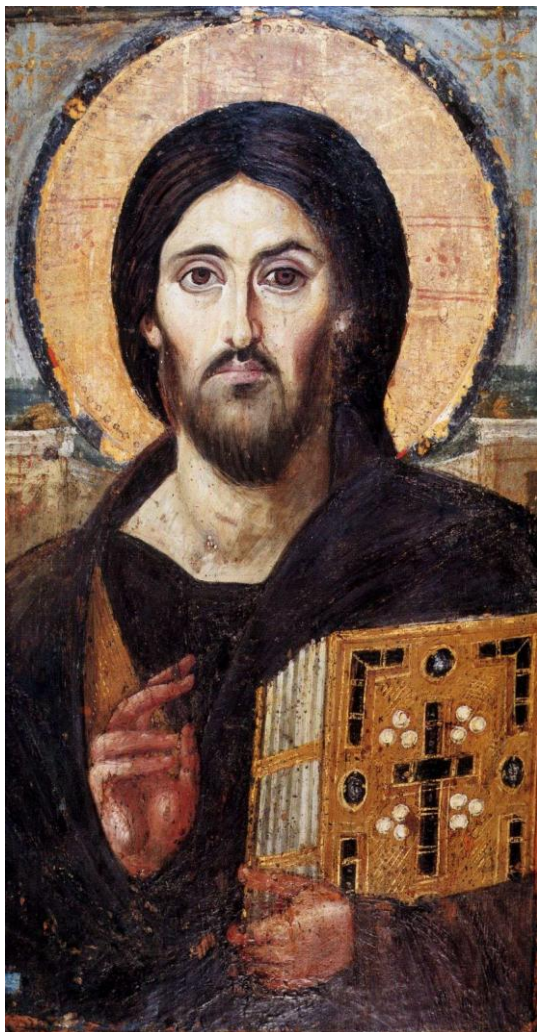
Figure 12- Example 1, Encaustic on Wood, Monastery of St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai, 6th Century

#2: Ivory Diptych, Constantinople (Figures 13-14)

This sixth century ivory diptych contains two panels, one centering on Christ and the other on the Virgin Mary. They appear to have been made for active use in the liturgy, but it is unclear with exactly what intention. Multiple marks of change, including several sets of mounting holes, and the engraved names of saints and members of the congregation which were read during the service, suggest that this was used at different times as a book cover, a decoration, and an aid for leading intercessory prayer. Christ, in his panel, is backed by Peter and Paul making himself the cornerstone joining Jews and Gentiles, with his right hand he blesses the viewer, and with his left hand holds a large, ornamented Gospel Codex, made clear by four large corner markings (Frazer, 1978, pp. 528-530) (Lowden, 1997, p. 82). In formula and pose, it strongly resembles the Pantocrator icon above.

Figure 13- Example 2, Ivory Diptych, Constantinople, Sixth Century, Whole

Figure 14- Example 2, Ivory Diptych, Constantinople, Sixth Century, Zoomed on Gospel Codex

#3: Partial Ivory Diptych, Place of Origin Disputed (Figures 15-16)

This single portion of an ivory diptych is similar to the one above in form, but with important stylistic differences. It also depicts Christ in a state of ascension, resting in a mandorla which is being brought heavenward by angels. It most closely resembles a seventh century Byzantine icon from Egypt, but differences in the methods used in its creation signify that it may be a later medieval copy of a much older original. In it, Christ blesses with his right hand, and holds a large codex in his left (Frazer, 1978, pp. 530-531). While it is not immediately apparent by markings on the codex that it is a Gospel Codex, it is very likely that this copies the same scheme as the previous two examples. The cross itself may also be considered a marker of a Gospel Codex in this case.

Figure 15- Example 3, Ivory Diptych, Place of Origin Disputed, Possible Seventh Century Origin, Whole

Figure 16- Example 3, Ivory Diptych, Place of Origin Disputed, Possible Seventh Century Origin, Zoomed on Gospel Codex

Theme: Sedes Sapientia
 # 4: Fresco, Santa Maria Antiqua, Rome (Figures 17-18)

    One of the more fascinating examples explored here is within the *Maria Regina*, or Mary the Queen, representation from the Church of Santa Maria Antiqua on Palatine Hill, dated sometime between the first half of the sixth century and the end of the seventh. This fresco is often considered among the earliest extant frescoes of Mary as the *sedes sapienta*, or the Throne of Wisdom, on which the Christ Child sits (Zarnecki, 1975, pp. 83-85). While it is difficult to date each frescoe precisely because of successive layers of work beginning with the church's founding in the sixth century and extending until the ninth, the portion shown here is likely among the earliest present and is visible along the West wall (Osborne, 1987, p. 194). While the insights and controversies surrounding this chapel are plentiful, most relevant for our study is that the Christ Child in her lap is holding a codex which is marked as an ornamented Gospel Codex, made clear by the four large jewels in the corners of the cover. While the Christ Child is holding the codex, Mary also seems to be lightly touching it with her right hand, showing her connection to it, while her left hand holds a Eucharistic wafer, which is itself another representation of Christ's physical presence. While it is difficult to separate these elements, the connection is clear between the Christ Child, the codex, and the wafer, each indicating Mary's proximity to the essence of Christ himself. While the Gospel Codex here is an attribute of Christ, it may simultaneously be interpreted as an attribute of Mary as the *sedes sapienta*, or Throne of Wisdom.

Figure 17- Example 4, Fresco, Santa Maria Antiqua, Rome, 6th Century (Left)

Figure 18- Example 4, Fresco, Santa Maria Antiqua, Rome, 6th Century, Zoomed on Gospel Codex (Right)

Theme: Ex Voto

#5: Icon of Christ and Abbot Mena, Egypt (Figures 19-20)

This encaustic on wood icon, now housed at the Louvre, originated in Egypt in the middle of the sixth century. This is an *ex voto* themed icon, meaning that it is meant to commemorate a known person by placing them under the blessing and protection of a saint or Christ, which is signified primarily by their posture. The examples below belong to the same theme, but stylistic differences indicate that it is most likely the earlier of the examples listed here. The icon was found at the Monastery of Apollo, and it is possible that this Mena was an abbot of that monastery (Frazer, 1978, pp. 552-553) (Rutschowscaya, 1998). One of the primary differences between this image and those in Thessaloniki for our present purposes is that it is Christ, not Mena, who is holding the Gospel Codex. The icon does honor to the Abbot in *ex voto* fashion, but the Gospel Codex serves as an attribute of Christ, rather than as an object bestowing honor on the Abbot.

Figure 19- Example 5, Encaustic on Wood, Monastery of Apollo, Egypt, 6th Century, Whole

Figure 20- Example 5, Encaustic on Wood, Monastery of Apollo, Egypt, 6th Century, Zoomed on Gospel Codex

Gospel Codex as an Object Held by Others

Theme: Ex Voto (Continued)

#6 and #7: Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki (Figures 21-23 and 24-26 respectively)

In the dedicatory church of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki there are two mosaics attached to the chancel pier which joins the main aisle and the transept showing benefactors of the city, identified by inscription as people who assisting in the founding or reconstruction of the church, under the protection and favor of Demetrios himself in the same *ex voto* fashion as the Abbot Menas icon above. They date from between 630 and 650 CE. In the first example here (example 6, figures 21-23) Demetrios is identified, but the other two characters, a bishop and a public official, are left anonymous, most likely because they were well known at the time and did not need to be identified by name. However, the person on the left is usually identified as a bishop by his clothing, and dated by the square halo indicating that he was alive at the time the portrait was made, leading us to believe that it represents Bishop Johannes who oversaw the reconstruction of the church. This bishop stands with veiled hands holding a Gospel Codex squarely in front of himself (Snyder, 1989, pp. 108-110) (Hutter, 1971, pp. 98-99) (Frazer, 1978, pp. 554-555) (James, 2007, pp. 144-145).

Figure 21- Example 6, Mosaic, Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki, 7th Century, Whole

Figure 22- Example 6, Mosaic, Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki, 7th Century, Zoomed

Figure 23- Example 6, Mosaic, Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki, 7th Century, Zoomed on Gospel Codex

Another portait directly adjacent to this one (example 7, figures 24-26) shows another anonymous patron, also under the saint's protection, and also bearing a Gospel Codex in his left arm, while he blesses Demetrios with his right. The hand which holds the Gospel Codex is also veiled, as in example 6 (Zarnecki, 1975, p. 75). Like the bishop in the previous example, this person seems to hold some kind of eccleasistical office, indicated by his stole. However, his is harder to narrow down. The veiling of hands in these two portraits indicates a sense of reverence towards the sacred object which they hold. In each of these portraits, holding the Gospel Codex seems to be a part of the honor being conferred upon these individuals as patrons of the church.

Figure 24- Example 7, Mosaic, Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki, 7th Century, Whole

Figure 25- Example 7, Mosaic, Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki, 7th Century, Zoomed

Figure 26- Example 7, Mosaic, Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki, 7th Century, Zoomed on Gospel Codex

Theme: Liturgical Procession

#8: Liturgical Procession, San Vitale, Ravenna (Figures 27-30)

While several of the depictions previously discussed are closely intertwined with the liturgy, either as images meant to preside over liturgical processions, especially over the Eucharist, or as objects to be used within it, this piece shows the Gospel Codex as an item in use in the liturgical procession itself. It is a mosaic of Justinian and his retinue performing the Byzantine offertory procession on the northwest wall of the main apse of San Vitale in Ravenna dating between 546 and 548 CE. This mosaic lies directly beneath that of the enthroned Christ, and parallels a similar mosaic on the opposite wall focused on Justinian's wife, Theodora, and her retinue. While Justinian and Maximianus appear to be portaits of these men, the other clerical characters and the soldiers are much more likely hypothetical people, or charicatures serving to fill out the scene but not representing individuals. Each of the men in the foreground of Justinian's mosaic holds a liturgical object, and one of the deacons who accompanies him, immediately to the left of Bishop Maximianus, or the third person in the procession, carries a clearly marked, heavily ornamented Gospel Codex. Unlike the examples from Thessaloniki, the hands which hold the codex do not appear to be veiled. Justinian and Theodora's processions seem to be in alignment with the larger theme of this apse, which show multiple representations of offerings and gifts being presented to the enthroned Christ. In this way, the Gospel Codex is being offered up to Christ along with the Eucharistic offering and the prayers of incense (Snyder, 1989, pp. 121-124) (Zarnecki, 1975, pp. 57-61) (Hutter, 1971, p. 81) (Simson, 1987, pp. 29-33). While the primary subject of this scene is Justinian himself, the codex's appearance here provides us with a snapshot that shows the Gospel Codex to be itself an honored object and symbol, alongside the presentation bowl, the cruciform, and the incense. Additionally, on the upper sides of the walls of this apse the Gospel authors with their Beast-symbols are represnted, reflecting back the heavenly reality of the sacred texts present on the altar (Nees, 2002).

Figure 27- Example 8, Liturgical Procession, San Vitale, Ravenna, 6th Century, In Context

Figure 28- Example 8, Liturgical Procession, San Vitale, Ravenna, 6th Century, Whole

Figure 29- Example 8, Liturgical Procession, San Vitale, Ravenna, 6th Century, Zoomed
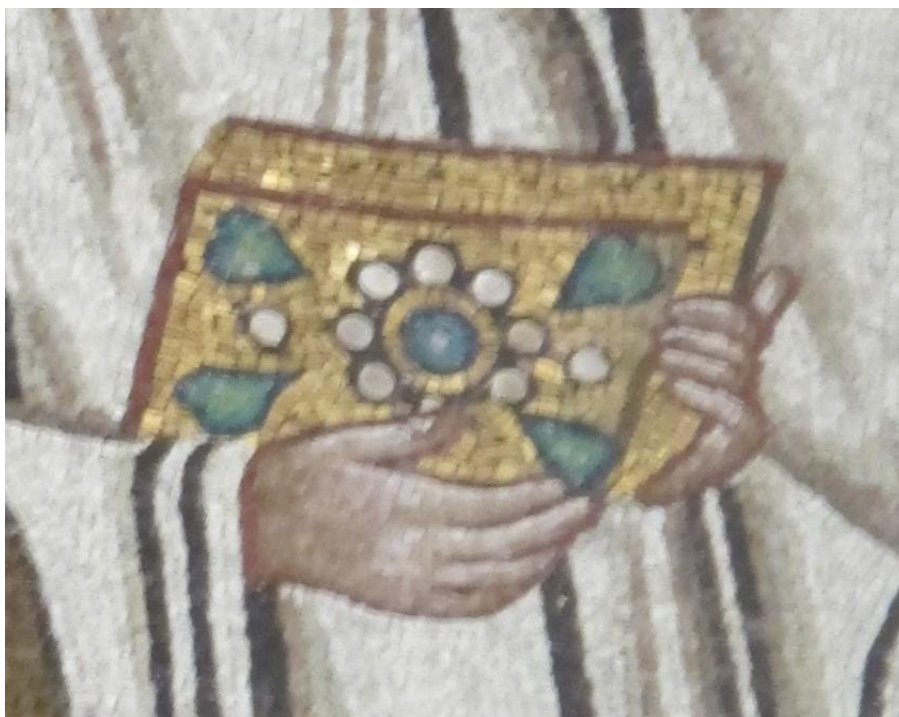
Figure 30- Example 8, Liturgical Procession, San Vitale, Ravenna, 6th Century, Zoomed on Gospel Codex

Summary of Attributes

Using the examples above we can make a few observations about conventions which mark the cover Gospel Codex in visual representations. The first is some kind of decoration in each of the four corners. The most common choice for this consists of four large jewels, which can be noted in examples 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8. An important subset of the four large corner jewels are those which are teardrop shaped with their rounded ends extending outward to the corners and their points extending inward to the center, or vice versa. This can be found in examples 2, 4, 7, and 8. Other possibilities for large corner jewels include rhombus shaped jewels as in the case of example 6, and rounded jewels as in the case of example 5. A less common choice for corner decoration is a corner outline, seen in example 1, in addition to its four large jewels. Although there is variation, the tendency to mark the four corners of the cover of the codex is extremely prevalent, with example 3 being the only exception to the trend. It is likely this serves both an aesthetic function, naturally making a pattern out of the shape of the rectangular cover, as well as a theological function, drawing on the relationship between the four Gospels held within. It is perhaps the most instinctive way to signify that a codex contains these four texts.

Another convention is a secondary set of four jewels which corresponds to the corner set, usually found on the horizontal and vertical axes, between the center and the edges. One subset of this includes examples which use single large jewels for this purpose, including examples 4, 6, and 7. Another subset encompasses those which use small groups of jewels in the same manner, although the number of small jewels in these groupings varies. This includes examples 1 and 5.

Yet another convention is the separation of pages visible along the edge of the codex into four easily visible sections. Foremost among these is example 3, which seems to unnaturally force the four sections to not only be visible, but stand out from the edge of the codex. More subtle examples include numbers 4, 5, 7, and probably 2 and 8. (Example 2 is difficult to discern because of the resolution of the picture, but seems that it most likely shows four sections of pages. Example 8 is difficult to be certain about in this case because the pages are made of a single, solid gold tone. However, close examination seems to reveal four rows of tesserae.) Examples which reveal the pages of the codex but have a number other than four are examples 1 and 6. Additional differences between these two examples and the others are described below which may shed some light on the reasons behind this distinction.

In addition to marking the corners, axes, and edges, there are also common ways of marking the center of the codex. One marking which perhaps seems the most closely related

choice to the modern viewer is a representation of a cross, as seen in examples 1, 3, and 6. It should also be noted that even in examples where the cross is not explicitly present, its shape is still outlined as a result of the space between the corner decorations, or a relationship between the secondary jewel sets described above. Examples which have a less explicit cross formation include numbers 4 and 7. Another marking which is far more common than the cross, however, is a large, central circle, as seen in examples 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8. As with the corner decoration, it is likely that this has both an aesthetic component as a very intuitive way to decorate the center of the codex cover, and a theological one as a symbol of the eternal unity between the four Gospel texts contained within.

From these examples, an important combination is repeated, forming a highly recognizable type which combines the corner teardrop shaped jewels, a central circular pattern, and four distinct sections of pages, all evident in examples 2, 4, 7, and 8. For the time being we will simply refer to it as Type 1. It is notable that each example with corner teardrop shaped jewels also has a circular center point, although it is possible for a circular center point to have varying corner markings, such as in example 5. However, the prevalence of the relationship between these markings seems to indicate that they represent a specific form rather than a coincidental grouping which occurs frequently. It is also worth noting out that these examples originate in Constantinople (example 2, sixth century), Byzantine dominated Rome (example 4, sixth century), Thessaloniki (example 7, seventh century), and Byzantine Ravenna (example 8, sixth century). Those excluded from this type are the Coptic examples (1 and 5), one probably based on a Coptic original (3), and one in Thessaloniki (6).

With the exception of example 6, it seems plausible to speak of Type 1as a Byzantine style of representing the Gospel Codex originating in the sixth century and extending into the seventh. It is difficult not to suppose that there is also an intentional Christological significance to the shape of a central circular pattern which branches out into four forms reaching into the four corners of the codex cover, forms which because of their teardrop shape simultaneously have corners and are circular. One hypothesis concerning this type may be that it is a purely symbolic way of representing the codex artistically which does not have any physical parallel. This is based on the striking similarity between examples 1, 5, and 6 with a set of heavily ornamented book covers from late sixth or early seventh century Lombard Italy known as the Book Covers of Queen Theodelinda (Figure 31) addressed in greater depth below under *The Gospel Codex as Object*. Additionally, it is difficult to envision how exactly such teardrop shaped patterns would be formed in a book cover, largely because there is not a suitable material example to compare them to. Whether this typology existed in the material

world or not, it still seems a notable form among visual representations of the Gospel Codex in need of further research.

The other major type represented in this breakdown is made up of examples 1 and 6, referred to temporarily as Type 2. Both of these examples have four large corner jewels which are not teardrop shaped, a central cross pattern, a dual set of four jewels (or small jewel groupings), and an unusual number of page sections (6 sections and 5 sections respectively). Given their separation from the Type 1 examples stylistically, preferring more materially probable formations, and bearing a striking resemblance to the Book Covers of Theodelinda described below, it is possible to speculate that if Type 1 represents a symbolic typology, these examples are visual representations of actual, material Gospel Codices. The jewel designs are more feasible, the cross markings are more explicit and less thematic than the circular centers, and the number of page sections are not made to reflect the number of Gospels. While both of these types are certainly in need of further research and substantiation, it seems tentatively possible to at least propose that in Type 1 we may see a standard Byzantine way of representing the Gospel Codex, which has the potential to be considered a purely symbolic typology, and in Type 2 we see artistic representations of actual material book covers, still with strong symbolic overtones.

Of course there are two examples which are left out of this separation, namely examples 3 and 5. Example 3 is almost entirely unique in that it has no jeweled markings of any kind, and shows both a large central cross, and four discernible page sections. The lack of detail on the cover seems to be due to a combination of style and craftsmanship, and while it does not fit into Type 1 it also does not seem to be a realistic portrait of a Gospel Codex, but a pattern of one. On the other hand, example 5 very nearly fits into Type 1 with its central circular pattern and its four clear page sections, but is excluded because its four large corner jewels and dual set of small jewel groupings much more closely resemble those in Type 2. However, it still seems a feasible design which itself has a great deal in common with the Book Covers of Theodelinda, and may be a realistic portrait of an actual Gospel Codex, only slightly embellished by having four page sections shown.

More examples would of course increase the accuracy of this analysis, and shed greater light on suitable ways to categorize them. However, given the information which is available from this specific data set it should be possible to distinctly identify Gospel codices which are represented in art, whether the attributes should be considered symbolic, realistic, or as is probably the case, both. The distinction between symbolic and realistic attributes is a thin one, as a symbolic scheme does not exclude similar codices from existing in the material

world, and realistic depiction does not exclude profound symbolic significance. Hagios Demetrios in Thessaloniki also shows us that both major types identified here can exist beside each other, as examples 6 and 7 are quite literally touching on adjacent sides of the same pillar. The things which seem to come up the most frequently in both types are the importance of finding ways to use the corners and center of the rectangular cover to draw together the fourness of the Gospels and the oneness of Christ within them. While each of these examples is unique, in a broad sense they can also be said to draw upon a similar grouping of conventions to communicate their meaning. They are different enough to each be described at length in their own right, and similar enough to justify identifying them as visual representations of the same sort of object, the enormously significant Gospel Codex.

C: The Gospel Codex as Metonym

From these examples it is clear that the Gospel Codex functions as more than a realistic portrayal of a common object. In fact, it seems to serve a variety of functions related tangentially to the texts of the Gospels and the person of Jesus Christ. In describing the book as a symbol, Brian Cummings notes that a book often serves as a mediating point between material and abstract concepts attached to the work and its use. It has the potential to reflect the contents of the book, the meaning of those contents, the object as it exists materially, and the feelings or thoughts associated with all of them simultaneously. In a word, it is a potent metonym, or a single word or symbol which stands in the place of a related category (Cummings, 2010, pp. 63-64). Here we find the Gospel Codex serving as a metonym attached to entire category of thought related to the person of Christ, and the narratives and significance of his life. While there are obviously a whole range of meanings possible in the images above, there are a few iconographical categories which we can use to examine them, including that of a personal attribute, a representation of a message, and a representation of a text. Each of these are interrelated, but we can examine them individually here.

The Codex as an Attribute

Normally in this kind of work, the most prominent way to speak about the object a person is holding is as an attribute, or a personal quality or event which encapsulates themselves and which they hold up as a central part of their own portrait. For example, Mary of Bethany may be pictured holding the perfume she used to annoint Jesus, a martyr may hold the weapon that was used to kill them to indicate the way in which they died, or someone being complimented

for their literacy may hold a stylus. Engelbert Kirschbaum notes that a book of Scripture, or a book which is more generic or unmarked, as an attribute in Early Christian art often refers to a person's teaching role, or to the doctrine of Christianity in a broad way if they were known for upholding it somehow (Kirschbaum, 1968, pp. 198-202). Charles Rufus Morey, spefically speaking about Alexandrian-Coptic iconography, additionally notes that generally biblical characters carry books which are very specifically tailored to the authors themselves. The Evangelists usually carry a codex which is marked in some way as their own, while Prophets often carry a scroll labelled with their name as a way of showing that they are ancient, and use an older form of technology in their writing (Morey, 1953, p. 95).

This seems to be true of the Gospel Codex in the case of Christ, but not applicable in the same way to the others. For example, it is possible that the teaching role of the bishop of example 6, the cleric in example 7, or the deacon of example 8 is a factor. However, there is nothing else to signify that these characters are important as teachers beyond there office. The bishop of example 8 is important because of his role in rebuilding the church, the portrait in example 7 give us very little information to make an identification on, and the deacon of example 8 does not appear to be a portrait of an actual person, but a generalized representation of a deacon. It is unlikely that all of these people are being recognized as teachers or authors, and more likely that just as in reality, only clerics of a certain office are authorized to handle the Gospel Codex (Holzherr & Abbey, 1994, pp. 122-124). So while this is true in a broader sense, it is not immediately apparent that the Gospel Codex, when held by people other than Christ, serves as an attribute or descriptor for them.

When held by Christ, the Gospel Codex does seem to signify his role as a teacher. However, it must also be more than that, because the Gospel Codex is a peculiar choice of an attribute for someone who was not himself an author, and certainly not the author of these books. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are all authors, and it is well within the norm for them to be displayed carrying their own books. There are also plenty of objects which Christ could hold to display himself and his work, and this is not the only convention which could be used to demonstrate that he is a teacher. *Traditio legis* scenes, or scenes in which Jesus is giving the law to his disciples, show Jesus as a teacher effectively, but none of the examples above can be categorized according to the usual markings of that theme. Apart from the fact that we are accustomed to seeing it, the codex is not an obvious choice to be used as an attribute of Christ. It therefore makes sense to assume it is also serving in another capacity.

The Codex as the Message

Another possibility is that the Gospel Codex can represent the message of the Gospels themselves. Cummings points out that a book can often take the place of a concept which is closely related the book in question (Cummings, 2010). Rather than representing an attribute of the person, it can represent the message of the book itself embodied. In other words, Christ is presenting the Gospel message, represented by the book as a metonym for it.

However, just like thinking of the Gospel Codex as an attribute, there is something peculiar about applying this interpretation to the examples above. The peculiarity is that Christ does not appear to be preaching. He is reigning, he is judging, he is blessing, but he does not seem to be actively sharing a message. So while it does seem to imply the message of the Gospels, it is not necessarily linked to what is happening in the rest of the scene. This is even more true of examples 6, 7, and 8, in which the Gospel Codex is held by others. They are in positions of receiving blessing and protection, or participating in the liturgy, but none of them are in the act of teaching. So again, this gives us some idea of what is happening, but is incomplete.

The Codex as Texts

In the midst of these interpretations it is important that we not overlook the fact that the Gospel Codex itself ultimately houses the texts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and that its representation in art still carries a connection to those books as texts. The sharing of the stories and saying of Jesus in communion with the Christian meal was the focal point of the earliest Christian communities, even before the four canonical Gospels were written. As early as Justin Martyr, the Gospels as a single corpus are cited as a central component of an organized liturgy in conjunction with the Eucharist, and with Irenaus we see the argument for the four-fold Gospel collection, bound within the codex, as a closed form. By Cyprian of Carthage's time, the preeminence of the Gospels as texts in the liturgy had spawned regulation about the office and rank necessary to read from them during the Eucharistic service (McGowan, 2014, pp. 83-93). By the time the Gospel Codex begins appearing distinctly in art, the importance of this object, the book which held the teachings and narratives of Jesus himself, had already been the norm for generations. While it seems to take on a life of its own in a way, it must be remembered that its importance stems from being a vessel for the texts which contain the stories and teachings of Jesus, especially as they are performed and shared in the liturgy.

The Codex as Christ Himself

So far the Gospel Codex as a metonym can be shown to stand as an attribute of Christ the teacher, as a synopsis of his message, and as a reflection of the texts which describe his life. Together these are essentially a presentation of Christ himself which he is presenting to the viewer. They are an embodiment of his life, his work, his words, and his person. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in example 4, where the Christ Child sits in the lap of the Virgin, herself the *sedes sapienta*, holding the Gospel Codex. The Virgin is also attached to the codex, though more loosely, with her right hand, and in her left she holds the wafer of the Eucharist, which is another physical embodiment of Christ. Between holding the Christ Child himself, holding the wafer which embodies him in the Eucharist, and touching the Gospel Codex which seems to serve as yet another embodiment of his person, she is virtually overcome by symbols tying her to the life of Christ and his incarnation in the physical world. In this way the Gospel Codex is not just something which is related to Christ, it is Christ in the same way that the Eucharistic wafer is.

While it might seem repetitive or disjointed for Christ to be presenting an image of himself to the viewer, or for him to be represented simultaneously by his own image and by the Gospel Codex, Erik Thunø emphasizes that Christ is frequently figured simultaneously in a variety of fashions within a single apse theme, and the way these representations interact with one another serves to create an experience for the viewer in which Christ is presented as fully God, becoming fully human as one moves downward along the vertical axis. Apse themes also serve to compel the viewer to understand that Christ himself is physically present in the sanctuary, omnipresent on earth as in heaven, on the altar as well as rising above it in the apse (Thunø, 2015, pp. 82-89). While Thunø's work is primarily on apse themes, and none of the examples of this investigation fits that category, what is important here is that Christ can be represented in multiple ways simultaneously within a single work or scheme in a way that is intentional rather than confusing. In this case,Christ, who is present in the Gospel Codex he holds in art, is tied to the physical codex object in the sanctuary, drawing a tether between the codex as a symbol, and the codex as an object, described below. It is a further means of communicating the presence of Christ into the physical world of the sanctuary.

D: The Gospel Codex as Object

In addition to the Gospel Codex serving as a symbol or metonym, this object also represents the Gospel Codex as an object in the physical, liturgical space of the church in which it is found. In this sense, it is not primarily an attribute, a message, or a text, but a

reflection of an object found in the material space of the church, on the altar, in almost immediate proximity to the frescos and mosaics in examples 4, 6, 7, and 8, and perhaps actually being physically attached to the object in examples 2 and 3. (Examples 1 and 5 also likely had a place in the sanctuary, but their original use is uncertain.) In each of these cases, the viewer sees in the hands of Christ, or the hands of other characters, the same object which sits before them on the altar. It is a reflection of a present reality in an artistic scene which creates a tether between the altar, or the codex, and Christ or the holy person who holds it. From another position, it provides a tether between the clergy holding or reading from the Gospel Codex, and Christ himself, reinforcing their proximity to Christ in the eyes of the congregants. The intention can be debated, but in any case the visual link between the physical Gospel Codex present in the sanctuary when it was either held by the clergy or resting on the altar, and the Gospel Codex as it appears in the hands of a saint, Christ, or a powerful patron of the church, provides a powerful connection between the present, tangible sanctuary and the characters depicted in art.

Comparing Object in Art and the Material Counterpart

Here it is important to ask exactly how the object depicted in art that we have examined so far compares to its material counterpart in the physical world. Most of the work here has to do with the Gospel Codex covers, so the most important comparison is between those represented above, and a physical example. However, a few words comparing the examples used in this section with the manuscripts examined previously will also be useful, though perhaps in a less visually obvious way.

Unfortunately, many of the Gospel Codex covers from manuscripts of this era have been lost, and many manuscripts from that era have been rebound over the centuries. However, there is one splendid example which bears striking resembalnce to the covers represented in the works examined here, and especially those in examples 1, 5, and 6. They are the Book Covers of Queen Theodelinda (Figure 31), given to the church of John the Baptist at Monza which she founded, dating to the end of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century. It is primarily made of gold, egraved with patterns as well as inscriptions, and set with large jewels around a quadrantal design (Nees, 2002, p. 107). Out of the conventions described above which are utilized to depict the Gospel Codex in art, these book covers display corner outlining, four large corner jewels, a dual set of large jewels as well as multiple sets of smaller jewel groupings, and a central circle, as well as a cross shaped center. It other words, it utilizes almost every visual means explored above for Gospel Codex decoration, with the

exception of showing page sections, which is not applicable here. While the manuscripts which the covers housed have been lost, or at least separated from the covers themselves, the style and degree of ornamentation strongly suggest that it originally housed a Gospel Codex.

It is difficult to say how common book covers of this style would have been at the time, but this is surely an extravagant example. In fact, it is generally regarded as the single finest extant example of Lombard metalwork. Nevertheless, it seems to give us a tangible example of the objects these artists had in mind when depicting Gospel Codices in mosaic or fresco. It is also fascinating in that both the forward and reverse covers are ornamented, and in parallel fashion. This is something that could not be conjectured from the visual representations above, which each only show one cover facing outward. It is probably one of our most valuable available tethers between the Gospel Codex covers explored in art above and the material realities to which they are tethered.

Figure 31- Book Covers of Theodelinda, Monza, Italy, Late 6th or Early 7th Century

There are a few imporant similarities between the examples above and the manuscripts examined in Chapter 5 which are not strictly related to their covers. The first is a matter of dimension. The examples above range in size proportionately to the people holding them dramatically, from those that can be held by the Christ child in a single hand (example 4) or are held lightly and easily by a cleric (example 8) to those which are nearly as large as a grown man's torso (examples 6 and 7). In reality, the manuscripts examined here have a very small margin of variation in size. They are limited by the process of making parchment leaves to approximate fractions of the hides they were made from (Mathisen, 2008, p. 147). They also generally follow given conventions concerning the size of text and the number of lines on each page. Together this means that the codices measured for this investigation only

vary in size by about 10-20 mm. The differences in size in the artistic examples above probably has more to do with the relationship of importance between the different objects and characters represented than it does with the artist's idea of how large the material codex would be in relation to the person being portrayed.

The second has to do with quires, or the sections of bound leaves which are combined to make up a codex. In discussing the visual attributes of the Gospel Codex in art, we noticed that some are clearly broken down into four sections, or quires, while others vary. In reality, these codices are around thirty five quires in length, and there is no discincernable way to tell the difference between them except by looking at the binding. Though this may seem obvious, it is worth stating that this facet of its depiction adds texture in art, but does not realistically mirror the object it represents. In short, comparing the artistic depiction of the codex to the physical realities of the manuscripts emphasizes the way that the object in the image has been shaped to suit its symbolic and stylistic purposes.

The Object as a Metonym

In the same way that the representations in art reflect the image of the Gospel Codex as it exists physically, the physical object also takes on the metonymic qualities of the artistic symbol. The physical object can be considered a symbol in the same ways that the visual representation of them can be, and the categories used earlier to describe the symbol (as attribute, message, text, and presence) are also applicable to the liturgical object. The object itself then bears the honor and significance of the presence of Christ in a unique way. When the object is depicted in art, it is capable of representing the presence of Christ the way the object does, even when somebody other than Christ holds it, enhancing the scene it is depicted in.

This is important for examples 6, 7, and 8 in which people other than Christ hold the Gospel Codex. As argued previously, it hardly makes sense to interpret the Gospel Codex as an attribute of the characters in these examples. They are not all teachers, none of them are specifically known as authors, and even if they were, this is not their book. It also seems out of place to interpret it as a message which they are bringing, because none of them are in the act of teaching or reading. And while the Gospel Codex does obviously contain the texts, the scenes depicted here have no direct relationship to content from those texts. However, as the reflection of an object which bears the presence of Christ, and holds within itself the honor and significance of that presence, the Gospel Codex functions in these pieces the same way as Christ himself would.

In examples 6 and 7 the patrons holding the Gospel Codex do so reverently, with veiled hands, receiving blessing and protection from Demetrios behind them, and honor from the object in front of them. Christ is in these pieces, but in an indirect and discrete way through the presence of the object. It is an enhancement of the *ex voto* function of these icons, rather than a descriptor of the characters who hold them. In example 8, the unidentified deacon carries the Gospel Codex in the liturgical ceremony which expresses the presence of Christ in the sanctuary, alongside the the Eucharist, the cruciform, and the incense. It does not necessarily serve to say anything about the character holding the Gospel Codex, but it does enhance the scene as a whole, to the service of Justinian and Maximianus. Christ is present in multiple ways in the liturgy which they are conducting.

E: Conclusion

So we can see that the "Gospels" as a single, unified object in the Gospel Codex, have a range of meaning that extends well beyond providing a realistic resemblance to a common tool of Christian liturgy. Instead it serves as a metonym which mediates several key aspects of the Gospels, representing them simultaneously. It is as once an attribute of Christ, the message of Christ, the texts which inform us about Christ, and the presence of Christ. At the same time it reflects a much more corporeal reality, the object used in the liturgy, which is itself a part of the sacramental presence of Christ. The object itself provides a form for the visual representation of the Gospel, and artistic depiction as a symbol confers meaning onto the object. Both as an object and as a symbol, the Gospel Codex draws its significance from the texts which is contains, the texts which bring the stories and teachings of Jesus into service. The relationship between metonym, object, and text is deeply intertwined, and is expressed differently in each of the examples above; but together they bring us closer to understanding what the author of the *Regula Benedicti* would have had in mind when he speaking about the Gospel.

Part Three:

Examining the Text

Chapter 7
Examining the Uses of *Evangelium*

Now that a new foundation has been established for reading the *RB*, we are prepared to examine the text in a way which is grounded in modern research, and informed by the physical realities and intellectual categories demonstrated in the manuscripts and visual representations of the Gospels during this era. Most importantly, the categories established concerning the Gospel Codex in art resemble closely the categories of use for *evangelium* in this text. In order as they appear in the text, the uses of *evanglium* in the *RB* occur in the following seven places: Prologue: 21, Prologue: 33-34, 7:65-66, 11:9, 12:4, 13:11, and 17:8. These can be categorized into three basic categories: the Gospel as metonym (Prologue:21), the Gospel as text (Prologue:33, 7:65), and the Gospel as object (11:9, 12:4, 13:11, and 17:8). We will now examine each of these instances, according to their category, and in comparison with their source material in the *Regula Magistri* where appropriate. This will help determine which content can rightly be attributed to the author of the *RB*, and will also bring to light some details which might otherwise be overlooked. It should also be noted that examining these occurrences by category means coincidentally also examining them in the order in which they appear in this text. This is due primarily to the different sections in which they are found and the organization of the *RB*, and was not an intentional part of the investigation.

A: *Evangelium* as Metonym

The first instance of *evangelium* in the *RB* is also probably the most controversial. It will be necessary to outline first the text itself, then the perspectives of two key authors on its interpretation, and finally the presentation of a new interpretation which is hopefully more historically appropriate to the text. This example comes from the Prologue, verse 21, and it reads:

Regula Benedicti, Prologue:21, Latin	*Regula Benedicti, Prologue:21, English*
Succintis ergo fide vel observentia bonorum actuum lumbis nostris, per ducatum **evangelii** pergamus itinera eius, ut mereamur eum qui nos vocavit in regnum suum videre.	Clothed then with faith and the performance of good works, let us set out on this way, with **the Gospel** for our guide, that we may deserve to see him who has called us to his kingdom.

In this way "the Gospel" is a conceptual category which makes up the central guiding factor of monastic life according to the author of the *RB*. Aquinata Bockmann, one of the key scholars when it comes to the interpretation of this verse, demonstrates effectively that the Prologue of the *RB* is structured in such a way that verse 21 is the intentional structural crux of the chapter (Bockmann, 1992, pp. 85-90). In turn, the Prologue provides direction for how one is to read and use the rest of the rule. It is therefore difficult to underestimate the importance of accurately understanding the author's meaning here.

Before moving on to the task of interpretation, we must also look at the text in reflection of its source material in the *RM*, and make a few key observations concerning their relationship. More than any other portion of the *RB*, the Prologue and the first seven chapters draw heavily on the *RM*, although as stated earlier, they have been modified and edited to suit this author's own purposes, vision for monasticism, and style.

Regula Benedicti, Pro.21	*Regula Magistri, Ths. 17*
Succintis ergo fide vel observentia bonorum actuum lumbis nostris, per ducatum **evangelii** pergamus itinera eius, ut mereamur eum qui nos vocavit in regnum suum videre.	Succintis ergo fide uel obseruantia bonorum actuum lumbis nostris, per ducatum **evangelii** pergamus itinera eius, ut mereamur eum qui nos in regnum suum vocavit videre.

Putting these two verses parallel, the first obvious point to make is that they are nearly identical. In fact, they could both be translated into English in exactly the same way. However, on second glance there is a minor change in the word order in the last clause of the verse. This change does not alter the meaning in any regard, and also does not make a discernible statement concerning the emphasis of the sentence. There are two primary ways of explaining these differences. The first is that since we are working here with established norms for these texts rather than with original manuscripts, the differences may simply stem from a difference of transmission. The second is that it may represent a stylistic difference, in which the author of the *RB* seeks to make the text more readable by pairing *vocavit* with its subject (*nos*) rather than putting it at the end of the sentence with the other verb (*videre*). While the first would imply that there is nothing particularly interesting about the change in word order, the second would be grounds for arguing that the author of the *RB* intentionally edited this verse from the *RM* and the form found there should be regarded as his own thoughts on the matter. Since other scholars have proven so well that the *RB* does not simply copy material from the *RM*, but edits it to suit his own style and purpose (Green, 2000, pp.

130-131), either of these solutions represents a reasonable way of understanding these differences.

Current Literature on the Topic

Working from the premise that the *RB* author's thoughts on this verse are his own, despite its similarity to the *RM*, what are we to suppose he means by "the Gospel" or *evangelii*? As already mentioned, one key author on this matter is Aquinata Bockmann. Her 1992 article focused exclusively on this verse, and comes to the conclusion that *evangelii* must be a general reference to the person of Christ. "Thus, in the middle of this verse, per ducatum evangelii, we may understand that under the guidance of Christ, for he is the gospel in person, the summary of the Gospels, their center" (Bockmann, 1992, pp. 95-96). In a broad sense this interpretation seems plausible. In fact, it coincides well with one of the major roles of the Gospel Codex in art, serving as the presence of Christ himself. However, in the specifics, her interpretation becomes problematic. From this point on she reasons that *evangelium* must by extension be a reference to the whole canon of Scripture, because it would not be theologically appropriate to separate the Gospels from the rest of the Bible (Bockmann, 1992, p. 89). In her view, a true Christological interpretation of the Scriptures, in which Christ, the Word, speaks to people through the whole of the Old and New Testaments, does not allow for an interpretation of Christ as the Gospel that does not include the rest of the books of the Bible (Bockmann, 1992, p. 97). Here she is making a Christological, theological argument, rather than a historical one. While this may be true of Christological exegesis in 1992, it is very unlikely that we can apply the same logic to the author of the *RB*. As our manuscript analysis suggests, this author probably never conceived of the whole collection of Scripture as a single whole. Even if they conceptually belong to the same group, they are physically separated from one another, and treated distinctly from one another. The Gospels are clearly set apart and above the others.

However, it also seems that she feels the need to distance this occurrence of *evangelium* from all others in the *RB*, sensing a tension between it and other examples that clearly have only the four books of the Gospels in mind. She does this by categorizing it as a "hapax," or a word which occurs only within the Prologue, and not in the rest of the document. There are several words that can be categorized that way; however, she admits that *evangelium* is not truly one of them. It is just that it is only used in this manner here. The word itself does occur elsewhere, so its association with this category is questionable. She goes on to say that these hapaxes demonstrate that the Prologue is a unique literary work drawn from other

sources than the rest of the *RB* (Bockmann, 1992, p. 101). There are several problems with this very useful caveat. The first is that even if we were only examining the Prologue, *evangelium* occurs twice, and the other reference is to the text of the Gospel of Matthew. The second is that the Prologue is not unique material, but largely borrowed and customized material from the *RM*. The third occurrence of *evangelium* in Chapter 7 is also in material taken from the *RM* (among other sources) and connects specifically to the Gospel of Luke. So even excluding the liturgical material, as she is explicitly keen to do, this term seems to connect specifically to the Gospel texts rather than the whole of Scripture. The third and most compelling problem is that this category of the hapax, which fails to even apply entirely here, essentially serves in her work purely to allow us to see this verse in isolation from the rest of the *RB*. She fails to justify this isolation, but it is a necessary one for accepting her interpretation.

In short, her interpretation of *evangelium* or "the Gospel" as a reference to Christ himself, or the Gospel in person, is possible. However, her extension which makes it also a reference the whole of the Scriptures only works in the Prologue, verse 21, and does not ring true in the rest of the *RB*, or even the rest of the Prologue. Much of her work on this verse is very useful, such as demonstrating the structural centrality of this verse, but ultimately her desire to see this verse make theological sense builds an anachronistic barrier to finding an explanation which makes historical sense. This explanation may be excellent for the modern Benedictine reader, but gets us no closer to understanding the author of the *RB* himself.

Another key author, who is himself a giant when it comes to the interpretation of the *RB*, is Adalbert de Vogue. While Bockmann considers *evangelium* to be fundamentally a reference to the person of Christ, De Vogue sees it as primarily a concept encompassing his teaching. As with Bockmann, the essential idea that *evangelium* is a metonym for a concept encompassing the message of Christ has some overlap with the findings of this study so far. However, just as with Bockmann, it is in the extension of this idea and the implications of it for De Vogue that it begins to break down.

He begins his article by diving headlong into the meaning of "the Gospel" over time, acknowledging that the nuance of the Gospel message changes over history in regards to changes in human society, but ultimately claiming that these differences should be understood as variations of interpretation of the same core ideas (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973, p. 187). He summarizes "the Gospel" this way:

> The Gospel was for them above all what it is in reality: the message of
>
> salvation through Jesus Christ. In this respect, the Thema of the Master and the

Prologue of Benedict are exemplary. The first is, as we have said, attentive to the call of the Savior Christ, who attracts his person and invites him to preach his yoke. The second proposes to return to God by reconciliation with oneself and obedience to Christ the King (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973, p. 198).

In his interpretation of "the Gospel" as a concept focuses primarily on explaining how ancient monastic texts like the *RB* and the *RM* can be understood as oriented towards his own definition of "the Gospel" rather than asking what they would have meant by it to begin with.

Similarly to Bockmann, he argues that "the Gospel" must ultimately be a reference to the whole of the Scriptures, although he comes to this conclusion by a different means. He first makes a similar theological argument to Bockmann, that all of the Scriptures are the words of Christ, and because of that must be read on equal and similar terms. For support in this, he references the ways "the ancients" read other books of the Bible (although he is noticeably vague about which "ancients" he means) to say that the omnipresence of Christ in the Bible and the unity of the Scriptures are simple matters of faith which must direct our reading of this text (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973, p. 189). This seems to be a point which he does not feel the need to argue applies equally today and to the sixth century. However, as we will demonstrate later, this is far from a simple matter.

From there he continues by combining this theological argument with a stylistic one that Bockmann does not bring up, highlighting that there seems to be a continuity between the way Benedict uses the Gospels and the Psalms (and by extension, the rest of the Bible). Namely, he does not make an explicit distinction, or use them in dramatically different ways, but often borrows from other portions of Scripture to expound on "evangelical" themes. As an example, he references the connections between Psalm 33 and the "conduct of the Gospel" and Psalm 14 and the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973, p. 189). His argument is that although the theme which he is explaining might be considered "evangelical" in the way it draws on the Gospel texts, he freely uses other portions of Scripture to explain it, and does so without distinction. Combining these theological and stylistic arguments he argues that while the message of Christ in the Gospels is not only essentially the same in the sixth century and in the twentieth, but that the message of Christ is equally found in the indivisible canon of Scripture.

However, when it comes to having "the Gospel" as our guide, he reverts back to an inherent reliance on the Gospel texts, and even argues that if we see the *RB* in conjunction with the *RM* there are many examples of times that a concept in the *RB* is based on a text from the Gospels even though it is not immediately evident. One example he gives is the requirement in the Prologue for the new monk to distribute his property or give it to the monastery before joining. While the *RB* does not make a reference to a Gospel text here, the corresponding text in the *RM* explicitly references Matthew 19:21. In this sense he argues that the themes present in the *RB* are even more reliant on the Gospel texts than they might otherwise seem if viewed alone (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973, p. 195). However, his conclusion from this is that not that the *RB* demonstrates a particular reliance on the Gospels texts, or that its concept of "the Gospel" might be connected to them, but rather that even when the Gospel texts are not mentioned, or another text is used primarily, we should still consider the *RB* fundamentally "evangelical" in the sense that it derives its ideas from the teachings of Jesus.

In the end his conclusion is that the ancient authors of the *RB* and the *RM* taught through their rules the same essential "good news" as is taught today, because "both end in the foundation of a *schola* where the Lord Christ will be heard as a master, served as a sovereign, followed up to his cross and his kingdom" (Vogue A. d., Per ducatum evangelii. La Regle de Saint Benoit et l'Evangele, 1973, p. 198). Even though this does demand a particular reliance on the Gospel texts, he believes it should be interpreted in as wide a fashion as possible, regarding the Scriptures and the authors who use them as essentially achieving the same goals.

The Need for Revision

In their own ways, both of these authors arrive at the conclusion that the Gospel in this verse must be a very general reference to the whole of the Christian Scriptures and their message. Bockmann argues that *evangelium* here is a reference to the person of Christ, and by extension the whole of the Scriptures, and De Vogue argues that *evangelium* here is a reference to the summarized message of Christ, and by extension the whole of the Scriptures. The conclusions set by these two scholars have set the standard for interpretation of *evangelium* in this verse. In commenting on this verse, both Timothy Fry and Terrence Kardong rely on De Vogue and his interpretation for their commentaries (Fry, The Rule of St. Benedict In Latin and English with Notes, 1980, pp. 160-161) (Kardong, 1996, pp. 14-15).

But does this way of understanding the *Regula Benedicti* still make sense in light of modern scholarship, and the material evidence examined so far? I argue that it needs to be reassessed.

First, although the canon exists conceptually at this time, the Gospels are still a unique category theologically. Francois Bovon argues that the canonical structuring of the New Testament as those of the Gospels and of the Apostles was a foundational distinction as early as the second century which made sense of the relationship between the revelatory Gospel events and the orthodox interpretation of them (Bovon, 2002). Einar Thomassen, in outlining a history of canonization, demonstrates that while the divinization of Scriptures may have begun with their initial canonization around the second century, the position of the Bible itself as a sacred object, consolidated and revealed by God, belongs to a much later era, more akin to the Reformation than Late Antiquity (Thomassen, 2010, pp. 24-27). Therefore the theological arguments that Bockmann and De Vogue find so necessary for themselves, and which compel them to extend their conception of Gospel as the person and message of Jesus to the whole of Scripture, is not something we can accurately project onto the author of the *RB*. We can speak of the Gospels as having a unique theological character in relationship to Jesus Christ.

Second, the Gospels are usually housed together in a single codex, and rarely combined with other texts. In a physical, material sense, they stand with one another and apart from the rest. Although some codices were made beginning in the fourth century to house the whole Bible or the whole New Testament, "these mega-books…never becomes the sole or dominating format," and the canon continues for centuries to be a series of textual groupings normally found together, or a collection of collections (Bokedal, 2014, pp. 131-132). This general rule rings true in regards to the immediate context of the author of the *RB*, where our manuscript analysis reveals that within his lifetime and geographic area the predominate norm was the Gospel Codex, containing only Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The one exception is the *Codex Fuldensis* (541-546 CE, Capua), which does contain the entire New Testament and the Epistle to the Laodiceans, and in which the Gospels are found in a harmony arrangement resembling the *Diatessaron* (Metzger, 1977, p. 335). However, this was probably produced around the time of the author's death, and is in every way the exception rather than the rule when imaging his context. While there is some possibility that he may have used a New Testament codex, it is incredibly unlikely, and there is no evidence to suggest he ever used or even saw a whole Bible codex. In a physical sense, the author of the *RB* would have handled the Gospels as a unique group of texts, and as a result conceived of them differently as well.

Third, the Gospel as a metonym for Christ's teaching and for his person is displayed in art during this era by representing the Gospel Codex, which housed the four texts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, not the whole canon. As the artistic analysis demonstrates, the choice to represent the Gospel using the image of the codex is not a straightforward one. It poses several challenges, including the relationship between Jesus and the texts that he did not author. Nevertheless, it was a standard convention during this era, and the fourfold decoration themes show that it is clearly not meant to depict a whole Bible, but a Gospel Codex specifically. The identification between that term and that object in art makes the relationship between the metonym, the object, and the texts within it intellectually indivisible.

Fourth, this would be the only instance in which the term *evangelium* does not refer explicitly to the Gospel texts or to the Gospel codex. This will become clearer as the examination progresses, but it is a problem that Bockmann senses, and dodges. In order to say that this use of *evangelium* does not relate in a very specific way to the Gospels in the same sense that it does everywhere else in the *RB* requires the kind of caveat that she employed. However, it seems more loyal to the author himself to instead form a definition reflective of the text, even though it may be theologically problematic for some in the present.

In sum, it no longer seems tenable to suppose that by "the Gospel" in a singular, metonymical sense, refers broadly to the whole of the Christian Scriptures and their teaching. Instead, it seems more reasonable to retain the thoughts of Bockmann and De Vogue when they speak of the Gospel as a reference to the person of Christ and the message of Christ, but guard against the anachronistic compulsion to broaden the meaning of those things beyond the Gospels themselves. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John as a collective corpus hold a unique place in relationship to the person of Christ himself, and subsequently serve an exalted role in the monastic life as envisioned by the author of the *RB*. They also cannot be thought of in this era without consideration to the physical form which they took, and the depiction of that form in art. This first reference to *evaneglium* should not be divorced from those in the rest of the *RB* which refer to the Gospels in a textual manner, or as a liturgical object, as Bockmann and De Vogue have done. Rather it can be understood as a metonym which draws clarity, meaning, and dimension from these other uses, but sums them up and may perhaps also be more than the sum of its parts.

Before wrapping up this section it must also be noted that both Bockmann and De Vogue are endeavoring to create functional definitions for use in monastic life, rather than perform a detached historical inquiry. In one way it may be considered a limitation because this leads them to expand their understanding of the *RB* beyond the author's intention to encompass

twentieth century bibliology. Here the historian who has the ability to see the text as an outsider has some advantage. However, in another way their perspective as people who use this text gives them an implicit understanding which is another way very loyal to the text and the author's intention. They see the Gospel as something that is to be done, and incorporated into the life of the reader. This is not something they feel the need to voice explicitly, but it is an assumption which will become an important part of the conclusions of this investigation later on.

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B: *Evangelium* **as Text**

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Moving on to less provocative, yet equally important uses of *evangelium*, we turn first to the Prologue, verse 33-34, which reads:

Regula Benedicti, Prologue:33-34, Latin	*Regula Benedicti, Prologue:33-34, English*
Unde et Dominus in **evangelio** ait: Qui audit verba mea haec et facit ea, similabo eum viro humilia qui aedificavit domum suam super petram; venerunt flumina, flaverunt venti, et impegerunt in domum illam, et non cecidit, quia fundata erat super petram.	That is why the Lord says in **the Gospel**: Whoever hears these words of mind and does them is like a wise man who built his house upon rock; the floods came and the winds blew and beat against the house, but it did not fall: it was founded on rock.

Here the reference is to an explicit quotation from Matthew 7:24-25. The "Gospel" can then be understood to refer specifically to the corpus of texts known as the Gospels, and in this case the Gospel of Matthew in particular. While it is possible that the metonymic qualities of verse 21 apply here, it not necessary to suppose so, and it does not seem to fit the function of the word here, which is simply to point us to a quotation from Matthew.

Again, it is helpful to see this verse in connection with its source material in the *RM*.

Regula Benedicti, Pro. 33-34, Latin	*Regula Magistri, Ths. 31-34, Latin*
Unde et Dominus in **evangelio** ait: Qui audit verba mea haec et facit ea, similabo eum viro humilia qui aedificavit domum suam super petram; venerunt flumina, flaverunt venti, et impegerunt in domum illam, et non cecidit, quia fundata erat super petram.	Et subsequitur nobis Dominum in **evangelio**, dicens: Qui audit haec verba mea et facit ea, non movebitur in aeternum. Et nos interrogemus eum, dicentes: Quomodo, Domine, non movebitus in aeternum? Respondet nobis iterum Dominus:

	Quomodo? Quia similabo eum viro 99umilia, qui aedificauit domm suam super petram. Venerunt flumina, flauerunt venti et inpegerunt in domum illam, et non cecedit. Fundata enim erat super petra.

Unlike in verse 21, the *RB* author departs dramatically from the *RM* author here. While the *RB* author prefers to simply quote Matthew 7:24-25 directly, the *RM* author intertwines the reference to Matthew with content taken from Psalm 14:5, and turns them together into a short question and answer dialogue. Again we can say confidently that the *RB* author's thoughts here are distinct, and that they fall in line with his norm of simplifying material from the *RM* in order to make it easier to use and avoid unnecessary wording. However, they do use *evanglium* the same way, as a reference to the text of the Gospel of Matthew. *In evangelio* seems here to function as the most basic and direct way of citing simply that a quotation comes directly from one of the Gospel texts, or rather from the corpus of the Gospels; although as we will see in the next example, it is not the only way.

Going forward from the Prologue, we come to our third reference to *evangelium*, which is similar to that in Prologue 33-34 in the way it refers to a Gospel text. It comes in chapter 7, verses 65-66:

Regula Benedicti 7:65-66, Latin	*Regula Benedicti 7:65-66, English*
Dicens sibi in corde semper illud quod **publicanus ille evangelicus** fixis in terram oculis dixit: Domine, non sum humili, ego peccator, levare oculos meos ad caelos. Et item cum propheta: Incurvatus sum et humiliate sum usquequaque.	Constantly say in his heart what **the publican in the Gospel** said with downcast eyes: Lord, I am a sinner, not worthy to look up to heaven. And with the Prophet: I am bowed down and humbled in every way.

The first reference here is to Luke 18:13 with some conflation from Matthew 8:8, while the second is to Psalm 37:7-9 or Psalm 118:107. Even more explicitly than before, Gospel refers to the corpus of the Gospel texts, this time particularly to Luke, while the Prophet refers to the Psalmist. However, rather than using *in evangelio* as in Prologue 33-34, he uses the phrase *publicans ille evangelicus*, using "the Gospel" as an adjective, which literally translates (although poorly) as "that evangelical publican" rather than "the publican in the Gospel."

Most translators agree that the effective use of this phrase is simply to specify which publican is in question, namely the one that can be found in the Gospel story, and so translate it the same way as Prologue 33-34. However, comparing it to the *RM* suggests there may be more thought behind it.

Regula Benedicti, 7:65-66	*Regula Magistri, 10:85*
Dicens sibi in corde semper illud quod publicanus ille **evangelicus** fixis in terram oculis dixit: Domine, non sum humili, ego peccator, levare oculos meos ad caelos. Et item cum propheta: Incurvatus sum et humiliate sum usquequaque.	Dicens sibi in corde semper illus, quod publicanus **ante templum** stans, fixis in terra oculis, dixit: Domine, non sum humili ego pecator, leuare oculos meos ad caelos. Et item cum propheta dicat sibi talis discipulus: Incuruatus sum et humiliate sum usquequaqe.

Again, the *RB* has simplified and streamlined *RM* material, but it has also made a distinct change, no longer referring to the publican in front of the temple (as in the *RM* passage) but referring to the publican in the Gospel. Whether we should translate this as "the publican in the Gospel" or "the evangelical publican," it is worth noting that the *RB* author chose to identify him according to his relationship to the text, rather than his physical relationship to the temple in the story. While the *RM* identifies this man by using his location to help the reader recall the story being referenced, the *RB* author makes a deliberate change, identifying the man by his relationship to the book of Luke. Why would the difference be significant to him? I believe the answer has to do with the imagery of the Ladder of Humility, which this chapter is formed around, and which is introduced using a quotation from Luke, possibly 14:1, but more likely 18:14, seen below:

Regula Benedict 7:1, Latin	*Regula Benedicti 7:1, English*
Clamat nobis scriptura divina, fraters, dicens: Omnis qui se exaltat humiliabitur et qui se humiliate exaltabitur.	Brothers, divine Scripture calls to us saying: Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

This quotation introduces us to the mechanic of a monk moving upward through progressive stages of humility. Then, on the twelfth and final step of humility, we finally arrive again at Luke 18:13-14, with the words of the publican about whom Jesus is speaking. It is as if after

going through these steps, the monk has finally obtained the kind of exaltation described at the beginning of the chapter, of which the publican was the archetype. In this way the journey towards humility is both introduced and concluded by the publican of Luke 18. This theory makes some sense of the *RB*'s use of *evangelicum* as an adjective, rather than *in evangelio*, which would merely specify where the story is found. The publican in question is the one found in the text of the Gospel, but he is also himself a model for Gospel oriented humility. This phrase then serves both to specify which publican is being mentioned, and as a description of the character.

C: *Evangelium* as Object

While the passages we have examined so far are instructional material for monks concerning their way of life, the rest of the passages which utilize forms of *evangelium* are found in chapters 11, 12, 13, and 17 which regulate liturgy in the monastery. It is important, therefore, to visualize what the *RB* author has in mind as it would take place in a liturgical ceremony, rather than as an abstraction. The groundwork for this visualization lies in the manuscript analyses and the artistic analyses, which both intertwine so entirely with the liturgical use of the Gospels. None of the *RB* passages in this section are direct borrowings from the *RM*, and some of them are still dependent on corresponding sections for content, but the resemblance is not close enough to draw a useful comparison. It is also necessary to note that the translation utilized here has often decided to translate specific phrases into their modern, Benedictine, liturgical equivalent, rather than providing a direct translation. This serves to make the translation more useful devotionally, but we will need to use analyze the language more literally for our purposes.

The fourth reference to *evangelium*, or the first reference of this type is in chapter 11, verses 9-10, regulating the celebration of vigils on Sunday:

Regula Benedicti 11:9-10, Latin	*Regula Benedicti 11:9-10, English*
Quo perdicto, legat abbas **lectionem de Evangelia**, cum honore et timore stantibus omnibus. Qua perlecta, respondeant omnes Amen, et subsequatur mox abbas hymnum Te decet laus, et data benedictione incipiant matutinos.	When that is finished, he **reads from the Gospels** while all the monks stand with respect and awe. At the conclusion of **the Gospel reading**, all reply 'Amen,' and immediately the above intones the hymn 'To you be praise.' After a final blessing, Lauds

begin.

In specifying a reading from the Gospels (or *lectionem de Evangelia*) the fundamental question is whether *evangelia* refers to "the Gospels" as a corpus of texts or as an object. It is possible to say that this is a textual reference rather than a material one, and that this reference does not belong in a distinct category. While this is true to some extent, the passage seems to indicate that this is the point in the service where the liturgical object, the Gospel Codex, is used, the monks stand in response. Out of the Gospel Codex, the text is then read. *Evangelia* is plural, which makes it difficult to conceive of it as a singular object, but it must be remembered that the Gospel Codex is a single object with an ever present plurality. It is a physical embodiment of the fourness of the Gospels being brought together into a single object reflecting the oneness of Christ. Remembering the conclusions of the manuscript analysis, there is not another book or object that the Gospels would be read from other than the Gospel Codex, and it is highly unlikely that there would have been any other books within the codex that housed the Gospels. In this period there would be no need to differentiate between the Gospels as a corpus of texts or the Gospels as an object. They are functionally inseparable.

However, which of these definitions is more appropriate here is a matter of debate, the main positions of which are represented by Georg Holzherr and Albert Blaise (Kardong, 1996, p. 185). Holzherr argues in his commentary on the *RB* that *evangelia* here should be understood as a reading from the book of the Gospels, something which he says was reserved to the bishop during this celebration (Holzherr & Abbey, 1994, pp. 122-124). However, Blaise in his Latin-French dictionary disagrees and defines it as the text as it is read, either from the portions of the Gospels most frequently employed in the liturgy (e.g. the *Magnificat*), or from the four Gospel texts (Blaise, 1975). Blaise's definition for *evangelia* is meant to cover the whole of Ecclesial Medieval Latin, while Holzherr's is specific to the *RB*. Perhaps on a wider scale Blaise's understanding is more universally applicable, but for this verse in particular Holzherr seems have a clearer understanding of the text at hand.

As noted earlier, most current translations of the *RB* focus on making it available and useful to the modern reader, which often means interpreting the text in the way that makes it most immediately clear today. In that sense, *evangelia* here only makes sense as a reference to the texts. However, in the same way that these translators must think of how their readers will understand the term "Gospels," we must try to ask ourselves what the *RB* author would have understood by it. Hypothetically, if you were you to ask the author of the *RB* whether he

meant to refer to the object of the Gospel codex or the corpus of texts it contains, he would have likely found the question itself impossible to answer, or else superfluous. It is outside of his context for him to imagine someone reading from the texts of the Gospels using something other than a Gospel Codex, and a stretch to imagine someone reading from a Gospel Codex something other than the texts of the Gospels. It seems likely that by the end of the conversation he may side more with Holzherr than Blaise, but ultimately not see the distinction as an overly useful one. In this way the question is much more pertinent to us than it would have been to him.

The fifth, sixth, and seventh references can be examined together, as they are nearly identical in form. The fifth reference is in chapter 12, verse 4:

Regula Benedicti 12:4, Latin	*Regula Benedicti 12:4, English*
Inde benedictions et laudes, lectionem de Apocalypsis una ex corde, et responsorium, ambrosianum, versu, **canticum de Evangelia**, litania, et completum est.	The Canticle of the Three Young Men, Psalms 148 through 150, a reading from the Apocalypse recited by heart and followed by a responsory, an Ambrosian hymn, **the Gospel Canticle**, the litany and the conclusion.

The sixth reference is from chapter 13, verse 11:

Regula Benedicti 13:11, Latin	*Regula Benedicti 13:11, English*
Post haec sequantur laudes; deinde lectio una apostoli memoriter recitanda, responsorium, ambrosianum, versu, **canticum de Evanglia**, litania et completum est.	Next follow Psalms 148 through 150, a reading from the Apostle recited by heart, a responsory, an Ambrosian hymn, a cersicle, **the Gospel Canticle**, the litany and the conclusion.

The seventh and final reference of *evangelium* in the *RB* is from chapter 17, verse 8:

Regula Benedicti 17:8, Latin	*Regula Bendicti 17:8, English*
Post quibus psalmis, lecctio recitanda est; inde responsorium, ambrosianum, versu,	After these psalms there follow: a reading and responsory, an Ambrosian hymn, a

canticum de Evangelia, litania, et oratione dominica fiant missae.	versicle, **the Gospel Canticle**, the litany, and, immediately before the dismissal, the Lord's Prayer.

In these three passages the form of *evangelium* is the same as above (*evangelia*), except instead of being a reading from the Gospels, they refer to a canticle, or song. Kardong makes specific notes on two of these references, 12:4 and 17:8, stating that the canticle in 12:4 may be a reference to the *Bendictus* in Luke 1:68-79, and that the canticle in 17:8 may be a reference to the *Magnificat* in Luke 1:46-55. This assessment has less to do with the text itself, and focuses primarily on which portions of the Gospels are traditionally used at the corresponding times of day. He does not offer a suggestion for which passage might be referenced in 13:11 (Kardong, 1996, pp. 185, 187,196). Holzherr concurs for the most part with on these points, but continues to translate *evangelia* as "Gospel book" (Holzherr & Abbey, 1994, pp. 125-129, 137-139). They are likely correct, but it should be understood that this usage does not come from the *RB*, but from other liturgical sources. Which specific canticles are sung here is not specified; only that they are taken from the *evangelia*.

Unlike 11:9-10, these references lack instructions on standing in response to the Gospels, although this is probably because the instruction does not need to be repeated after being elaborated upon in the previous chapter. It would make little sense to suppose this was only the response to the Gospels during vigils on Sunday. This is especially likely in light of a passage from the *Liber Ponticifalis*, a work of which the first edition was completed around the beginning of the sixth century (or around the same time as the *RB*), and records various biographical notes and decrees of the bishops of Rome. It states that Anastasius, who reigned from 399-401, "decreed that as often as the holy Gospels are read, priests are not to be seated but are to stand and bow" (Johnson, 2009, p. 4:57). Although this is not in specific reference to the liturgical context of the monastery, it reinforces the notion that standing is the proper response to a reading from the *evangelia*. While these references differ from 11:9-10 in referring to a canticle rather than a reading, and in lacking explicit directions concerning standing, they are otherwise the same in the way they speak of the Gospels, and seem to have the same mindset of a corpus of texts contained in the object of the Gospel Codex.

D: Conclusion

Again, as with the artistic analysis, the categories of metonym, text, and object intertwine indivisibly. The Gospel as a metonym in Prologue: 21 is defined by the Gospel texts. It is a

singular concept which makes up the guiding force of the monastic life, and which is found most completely in the collective corpus of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospel as text, although rather straightforward in Prologue: 33-34, is more complicated in 7:64-65, where it not only serves to place the publican within the text of Luke 18 as a setting, but also describes the publican as an example of the kind of humility demonstrated in the Gospels and elaborated on in the *RB*'s Ladder. It is both a textual reference, and an attribute. And the Gospel as an object is situated squarely within references to the readings and songs to be taken from the Gospel texts. While it is the object in use in the liturgy, it is simultaneously a means of accessing the texts to be read and sung.

Much of the controversy surrounding interpretation here comes down to the extent of separation between these categories. Bockmann and De Vogue argue to separate the Gospel as a metonym from the Gospels as texts, while I argue that there is no way to understand it as a concept divorced from them. Holzherr and Blaise disagree over the Gospels in liturgy and whether *evangelia* refers to a book or a text, while I argue that for the *RB* author that is not a sensible division, although I lean towards thinking he has the physical codex in mind. Ultimately it comes down to understanding conceptually how these all important texts are brought into use during the time of its authorship. Do the Gospels have a single conceptual meaning? Are the texts or the object which houses them the more important aspect of the liturgy, and can they be separated? What does it mean when a character from within the texts is described using Gospel as an adjective? What is the range of flexibility that this word can take within a single author's mind, or within the vocabulary of a region and period?

However, in the midst of all of these unanswered questions, there is a single binding factor between them, which touches on the very nature of the *RB* itself: the Gospel is always something to be done. It is the guide for the performance of good works, it is the admonition to both hear and follow the commands of Christ, it is the description of somebody who has climbed the Ladder of Humility, it is something to be read, sung, and revered. Whether in the performance of deeds, the work of spiritual discipline, or the participation in the liturgy, the *RB* continually uses *evangelium* in conjunction with a direction to action. *Evangelium* itself as a metonym is an embodiment of the person of Christ, the concept of his teaching, and his actual presence. It is then adapted in several key ways so that it can be applied to every tangible aspect of monastic life. As the *RB* author sums up in the Prologue, verse 35, "With this conclusion, the Lord waits for us daily to translate into action, as we should, his holy teachings."

Chapter 8
Conclusion

Within the Regula Benedicti already we have found a great variety of usage concerning the term evangelium. First of all, evangelium is a metonym which brings together a wide range of concepts attached to the texts of the Gospels and the Christ that they proclaim, including his attributes, his teaching, his person, and his presence. Although Aquinata Bockmann believes it primarily references his person, and Adalbert de Vogue believes it primarily references his teaching, there is no reason to suppose that it does not mean both. Brian Cummings speaks at length about the ways that books are capable of serving as mediating points which bring together not only texts, but multiple conceptual categories related to them, including the meaning of those texts, the physical realities they are expressed through, and the thoughts or feelings they engender. Bockmann and De Vogue find it theologically necessary to divorce their concepts of a metonymic evengelium from the Gospels as a corpus of texts, in order for it to fit with their twentieth century doctrine of the Scriptures. However, by placing that theological objection to the side in this investigation we have been able to show that these texts, the teachings which they contain, and the person which they give an account of exist in the RB as an inseparable whole.

While it is a metonym, a conceptual focal point for a whole family of concepts, evangelium is also a reference to the texts of the Gospels themselves and their content. This can take different forms and expressions. It serves as a straightforward way of citing content found within those texts, saying that a particular verse comes from the Gospel according to Matthew, for instance. Yet the form can also be varied, and function additionally as an adjective describing somebody, saying that their story is found in the text and that they embody its meaning in some way. In both cases, what is most clearly in mind is the text of the Gospels, showing that it is not always necessary for a use of the term to be complicated or extend beyond Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Referring to these texts, however, does seem to be a sort of baseline for evangelium in this text. For whatever else it refers to, this much seems ever present in some capacity.

In addition to being a potent term in the conceptual realm, evangelium is also grounded in the physical liturgical object which contains these texts, the Gospel Codex, which then serves itself as the embodiment of the metonym, a corporeal object bearing the attributes, teaching, person, and presence of Christ. When this object is brought forward and read from, those

present stand in reverence and awe. The object draws its significance from the texts it contains, and the person to whom the texts point. Above and beyond all of the other codices which would be present in the monastery, the Gospel Codex bore a unique relationship to Christ himself.

The indivisible categories of the Gospel as metonym, text, and object form an interrelated matrix of thought within the RB. They are points at which Christ himself is brought into the monastery in thought, word, and deed. What many of the Benedictine historians cited in this study have understood instinctually but which deserves note here is that on each occasion there is an action expected in response to the Gospel. In the Prologue this is through the performance of good works, in Chapter 7 it is through the progression of humility and spiritual maturity, and in Chapters 11, 12, 13, and 17 it is through the enactment of the liturgical ceremony. Evangelium then serves not only the point of Christ's presence in the monastery, but also the starting point of the monk's response to that presence.

However, there are also other categories which have been hinted at in this study, but which do not themselves appear in the RB. These especially stem from the analysis of visual sources. One prominent category is the Gospel Codex as an attribute of Christ, or an object which he can hold in order to say something about himself and his qualities. Another is the Gospel Codex as an object which, bearing as it does the presence of Christ, serves to confer honor on someone other than Christ when they are holding it. It is distinctly possible that there are textual expressions of these categories which remain to be examined, but they may also be uses which are uniquely expressed within the visual realm.

Perhaps the most unexpected result from this examination was just how cohesive the system of thought surrounding evangelium can be when the work is understood as a whole. The relationships between the different uses serve vastly different functions, and have been traditionally seen apart from one another, which made it surprising to find just how intertwined these different functions and categories are. Equally intriguing was the degree to which the categories represented in the artistic analysis overlapped with the textual analysis. Although it was hoped from the beginning that there would be a strong enough tie between them for one to inform the other, the amount of common ground that resulted was beyond expectations. The extent to which the pieces of this investigation fit together seems as if it was done intentionally, but the difficulty was in fact found in keeping each of the respective pieces distinct when they threatened to blur together seamlessly.

The question now is just how far this Gospel matrix extends outside of the RB. How broadly can this net be cast and still discover a system of thought surrounding this term which

is largely cohesive? The potential for this direction of study is vast, and the starting points almost innumerable. Just one of many potential examples is Cyril of Alexandria's apologetic letter to Theodosius II describing the Council of Ephesus in 431. He writes, "Then the holy synod gathered in the church named after Mary and appointed Christ to be, as it were, its confessor and head. The gospel book was placed on its holy throne in order to be venerated (Johnson, Worship in the Early Church: An Anthology of Historical Sources, 2009, p. 3:375)." Here it appears that the metonymic power of the liturgical object of the Gospel Codex extends so far that it is the chosen instrument for making Christ present at the Ecumenical Council in a visible and tangible way. It would be difficult to underestimate the potency of this remark.

A tantalizing example of a visual source which reflects the use of the Gospel Codex exalted and venerated as it bears the presence of Christ can be found in the Baptistery of Neon in Ravenna. As shown in the pictures below, four codices, each bearing one of the Gospels, sit enthroned at the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern points of the lower register of the round baptistery.
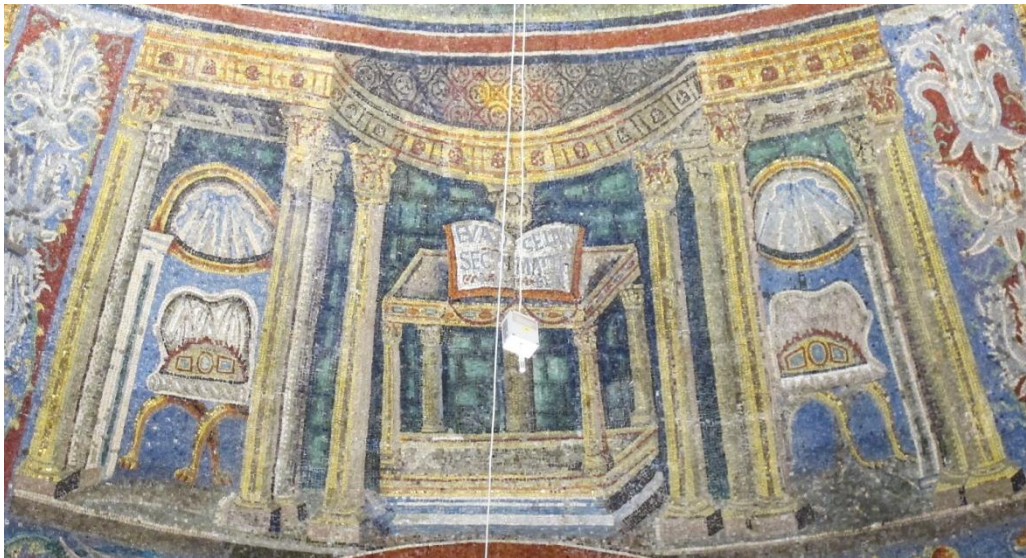

Figure 32- Gospel of Matthew Enthroned, Baptistery of Neon, Ravenna, Early 6th Century
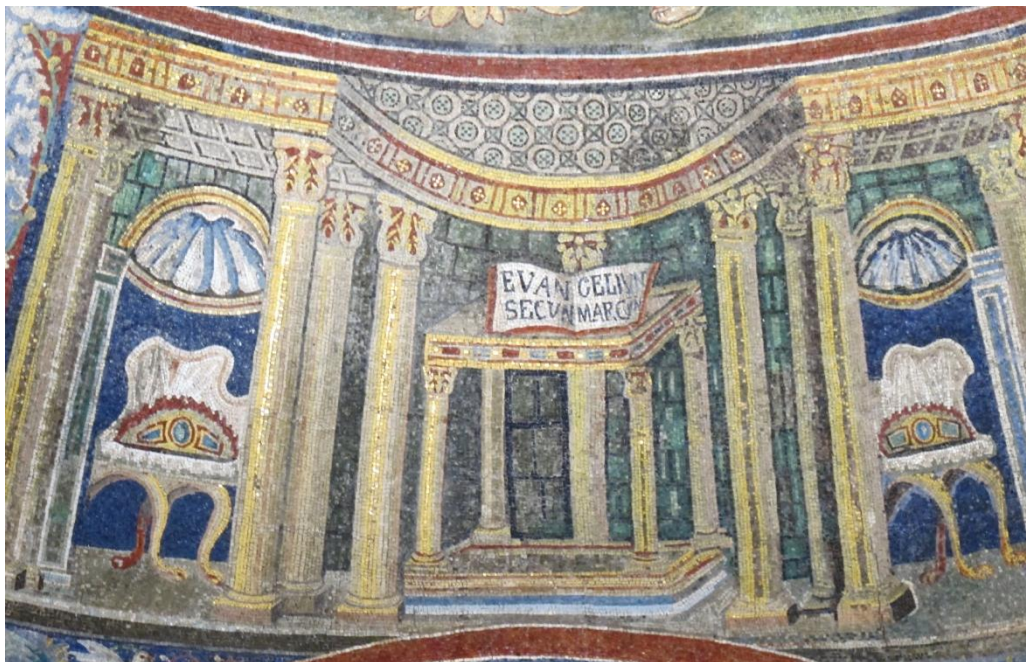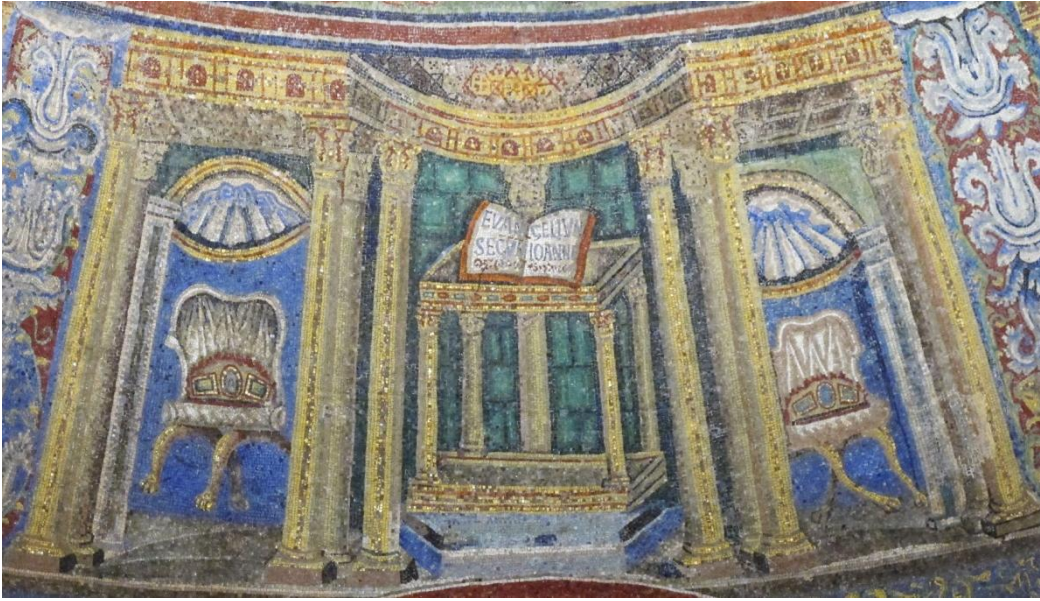
Figure 33- Gospel of Mark Enthroned, Baptistery of Neon, Ravenna, Early 6th Century

Figure 34- Gospel of Luke Enthroned, Baptistery of Neon, Ravenna, Early 6th Century

Figure 35- Gospel of John Enthroned, Baptistery of Neon, Ravenna, Early 6th Century

This baptistery was built approximately 70 years after the Council of Ephesus which Cyril describes, but the conceptual similarity is striking. Part of the way in which Christ himself is present on the occasion of baptism and presides over the ceremony is through the image of Gospel codices enthroned.

One concrete next step which can be taken towards exploring the meaning of the Gospel during this period of Christianity may be to expand the use of the methodology established here to encompass the larger region and era of the Latin speaking West in Late Antiquity. The categories which have been established during this study may go a long way towards allowing us to better interpret other texts from a similar context, or they may be in desperate need of expansion in order to be useful in a wider way. The only way to establish this is to continue applying the methodology worked out here to an ever widening scope of textual and material sources.

After such a study it would be possible to chart a rough matrix for understanding the Gospel in the Latin West as it transitions from the world of antiquity into the medieval world. But what about the in the Greek speaking East? Or in Syriac Christianity? While much of the work done utilizing artistic sources may be immediately transferable, the textual and codicological components would need to be reworked for each region and time period. The textual examinations would need to morph to accommodate the major differences in grammar and syntax across languages, and the codicological components would need to reflect a very different set of technological developments and directions.

It may also come about through the examination of texts that other material sources emerge which are tied just as strongly to the interpretation of the Gospel as those used here,

which would open up a whole new range of opportunities for interdisciplinary understanding. The value of synthesizing intellectual categories which can be found and expressed across different mediums would only become more valuable as the number and variety of sources incorporated increased. It is probably impossible to arrive at a set a definitions for the Gospel which would prove useful for the whole of Late Antique Christianity, but at the very least this kind of work can establish a framework within which is can be read that helps us lessen the barriers of anachronism and presupposition to a minimum.

Although this long term goal represents years of work, at the end of this present study we can be said to at least understand the Regula Benedicti and its conception of evangelium more thoroughly and more appropriately to the author's context than we could before. In the mind of this sixth century monastic author, the Gospel means the person, message, and presence of Christ, made present in the monastery through the texts of the Gospels and the physical codex which contained them, and requiring a response from the monks in each area of their life and worship. It is the guide for the monk to pursue good works, it is the beginning and end of the Ladder of Humility, and it is the focal point of liturgical worship. While evangelium only occurs seven times, each of these moments is crucial, and our understanding them correctly drastically affects the way we read this text.

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