



DARK AGES



Through the period of Early Christian Era, the history of western art adepts to the percepts of Pope Gregory

Images to teach a layman the sacred world

Dark ages: The period which followed the early Christian era after the collapse of roman empire is known by the uncomplimentary title of the dark ages.

The term dark ages is used to convey that the people who lived during these centuries of migration, war and upheavals were plunged into darkness.

Referred to a few centuries that followed the decline of the ancient world and preceded the emergence of European countries

We assume that this was a period from 500AD to 1000AD

This was not just dark but a patchy period with tremendous differences between the people and classes

Five hundred years did not see emergence of any clear and uniform style.





Evidences state that people particularly in the convents had inclinations towards learning art and had great admirations for it

These educated priests and clergies held powerful positions at churches or courts and tried to revive the art they so admired

But their efforts often slowed down or came to an end due to frequent wars and invasions from the north

The various Teutonic tribes, the Goths, the Vandals, the Saxons, the Danes and the Vikings swept through Europe raiding and pillaging.



Native Art

Considered as barbarians by those who valued Greek and Roman achievements in literature and art.

They had feeling for beauty and art tradition of their own, different from the Greek or Roman standards

Skilled craftsmen experienced in finely wrought metalwork and wood carving



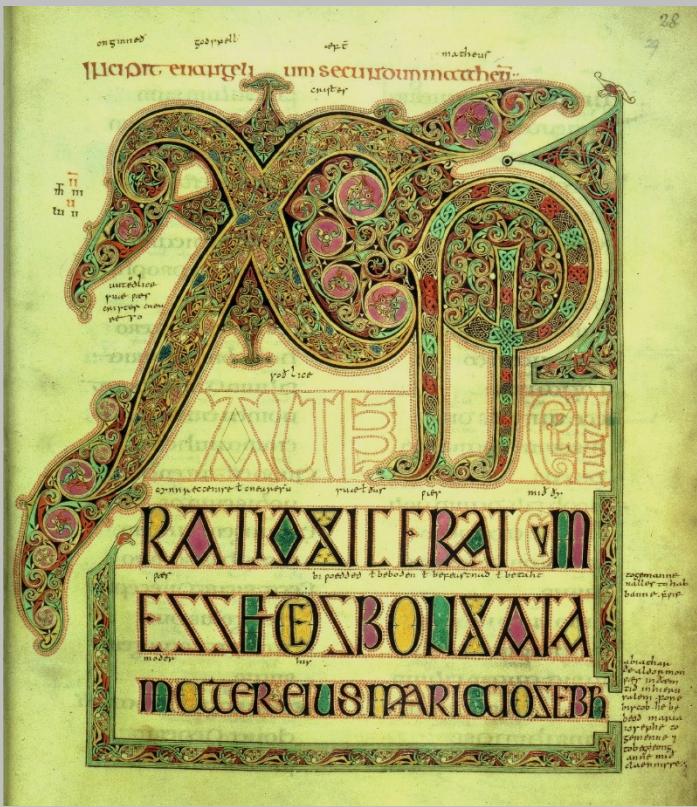


Love for complicated patterns and twisted forms mysteriously interlaced characterizes their style of art

Exact origin of these patterns from 7th century AD is difficult to trace

Art show prominently inclined towards the primitivism and resembles the ideas of contemporary tribes elsewhere

Threatening figures used to serve more than the cause for decoration as they were used for purposes of working magic and exorcizing evil spirits.



The missionaries of Celtic Ireland and the Saxon England applied traditions of northern craftsmen to the tasks of Christian art.

Most amazing creations are the manuscripts made in England and Ireland during the 7th and 8th C.

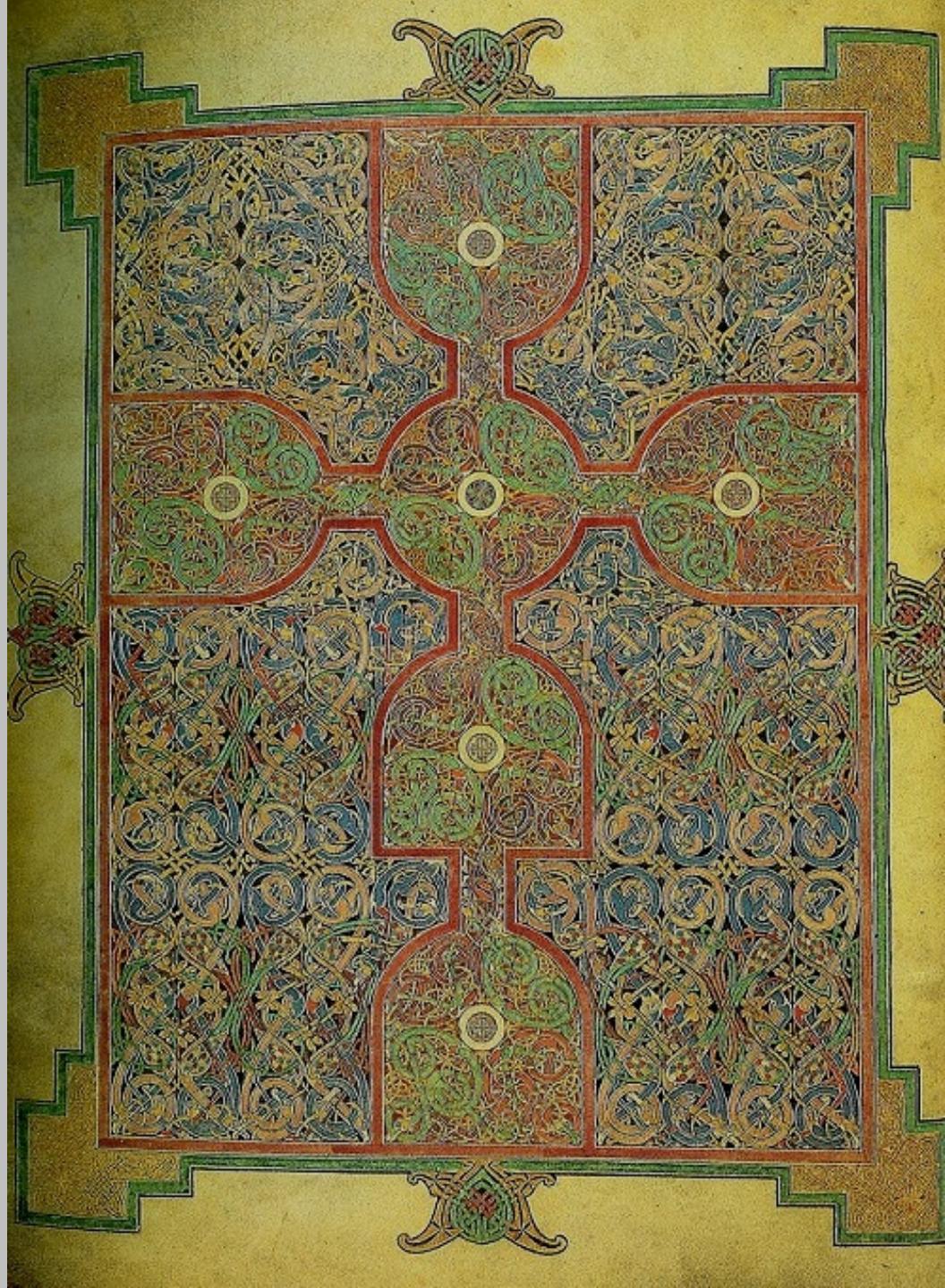
The twisted shapes and intertwining patterns and shapes with interwoven bodies is a characteristic feature of the designs from the period.

Lindisfarne Gospel

Image displays a cross composed of rich lacework of intertwined serpents standing against an even more complicated background.

various patterns correspond to each other and form a complex harmony in design and colour

patience, skill, perseverance and a knowledge of technique is just what the scheme require



use of human figures observed in the manuscripts of England and Ireland
Transformation into a stylization of patterns away from naturalistic depiction
in the use of human form to suit ones taste.

Figure of evangelist looks As stiff and quaint
as the primitive idols.

Artist grown up in a native art tradition
finds it difficult to adapt themselves with the
requirements of the Christian books.

unfair to call it merely crude but the
beautiful new patterns added a new element to
western art.

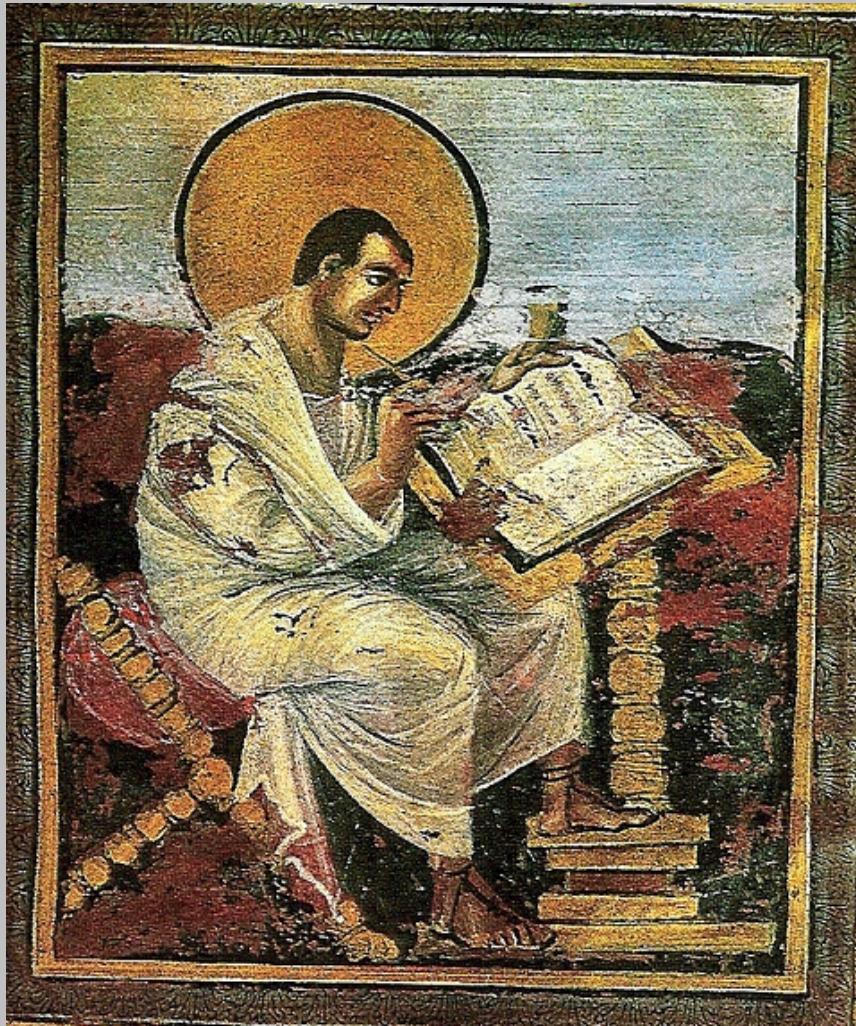
Without this influence the western art would
have grown on the same lines of Greek,
Roman or Byzantine ideals.

The amalgamation of classical style and the
native taste gave birth to a new direction to art



St. Luke, 750AD

St. Matthew writing the gospel, 800AD

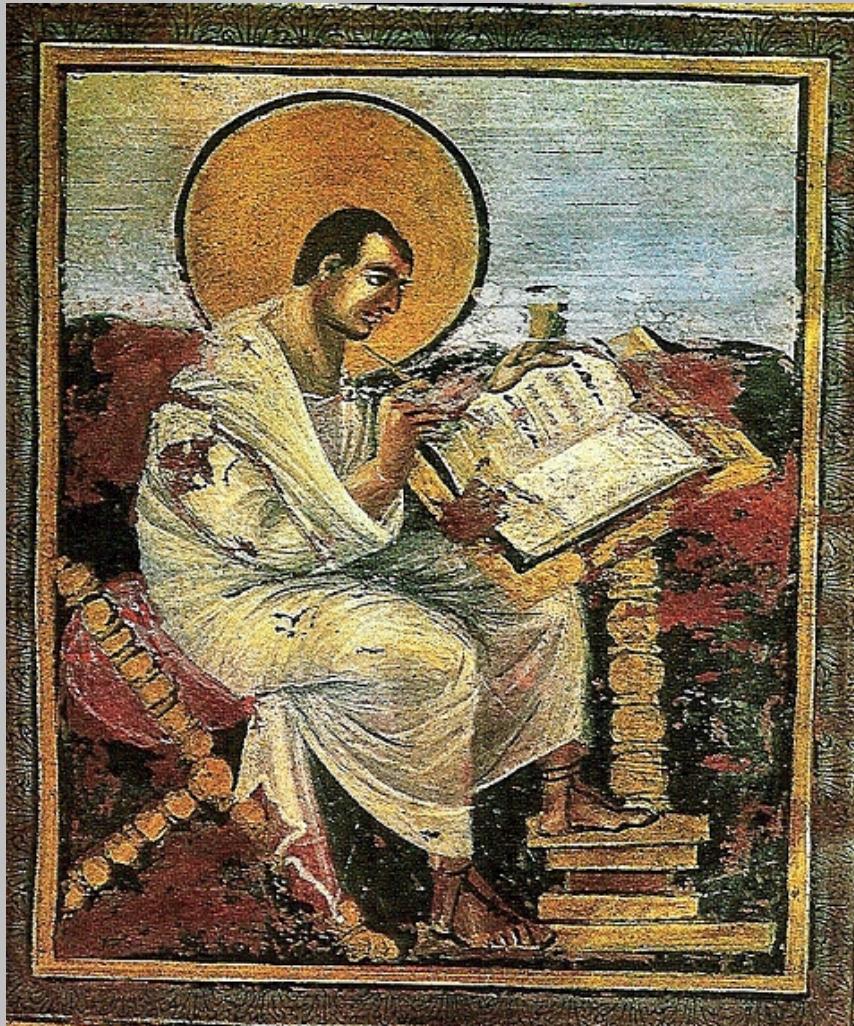


St. Matthew writing the gospel, 830AD



St. Matthew writing the gospel: Different interpretation of same theme by two artists; painting on the right done by a native artist while the one in the left by a high priest

St. Matthew writing the gospel, 800AD

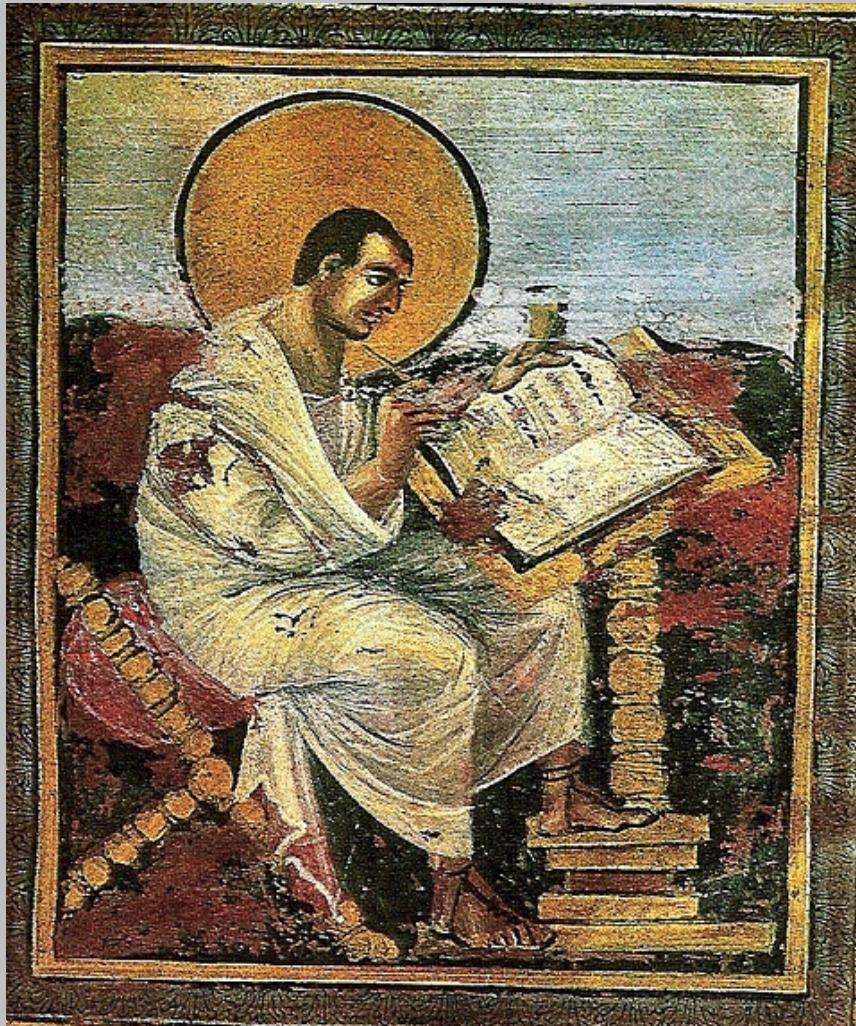


St. Matthew writing the gospel, 830AD



The Greek and Roman custom of representing the portrait of author on the opening page; Copied from similar ancient model

St. Matthew writing the gospel, 800AD



St. Matthew writing the gospel, 830AD

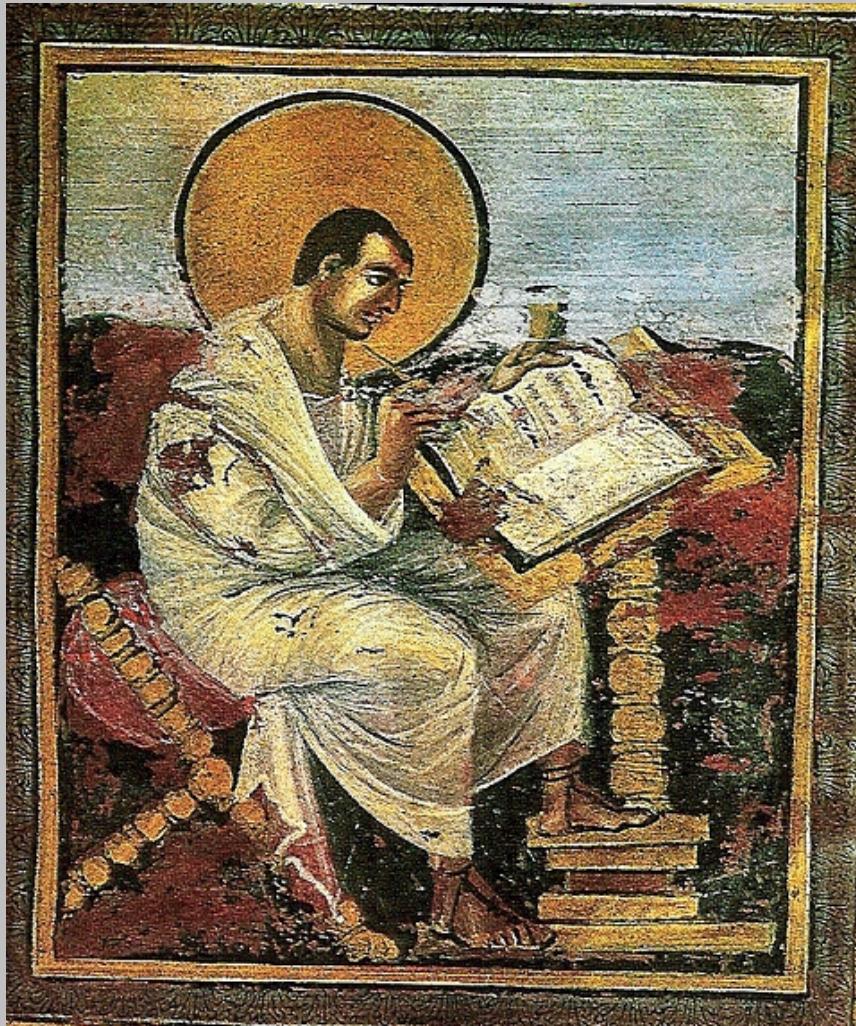


Dressed in toga; classical fashion

Drapery Pattern

Left: More naturalistic; Right: Expressionistic

St. Matthew writing the gospel, 800AD



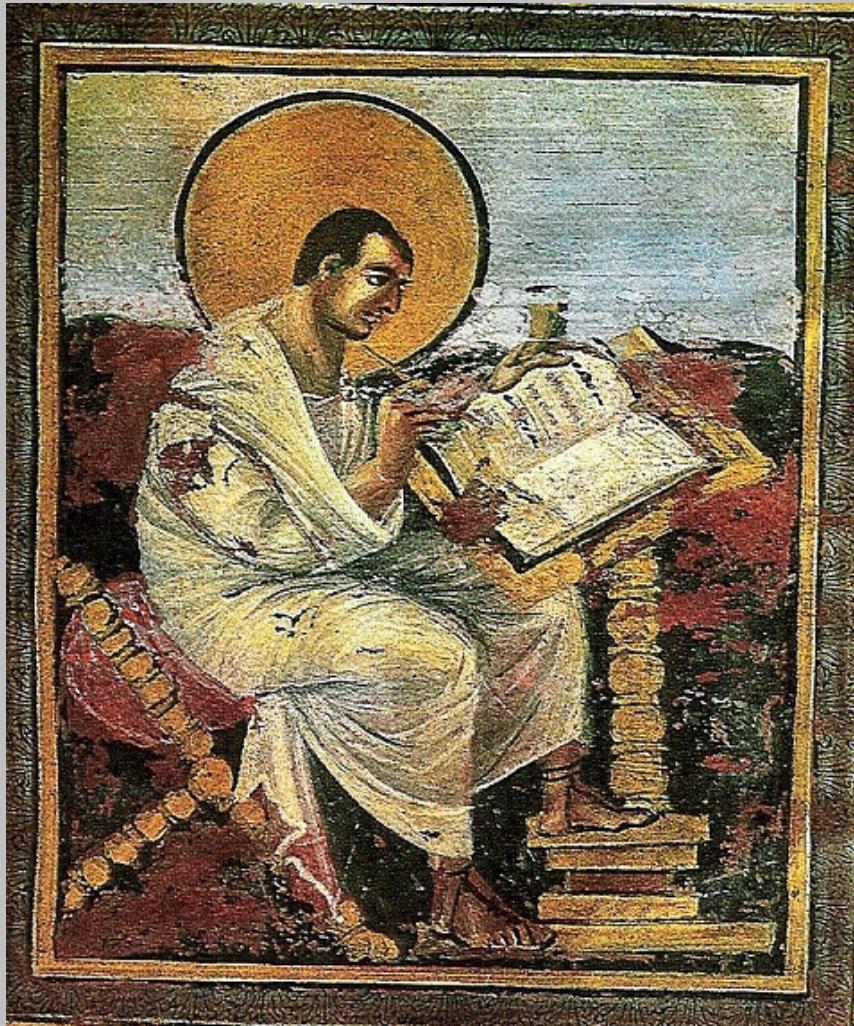
St. Matthew writing the gospel, 830AD



Left: attempt to model face with naturalistic shades of light & colour

Right: colours expressionistic in approach while use of light and shade unreal

St. Matthew writing the gospel, 800AD



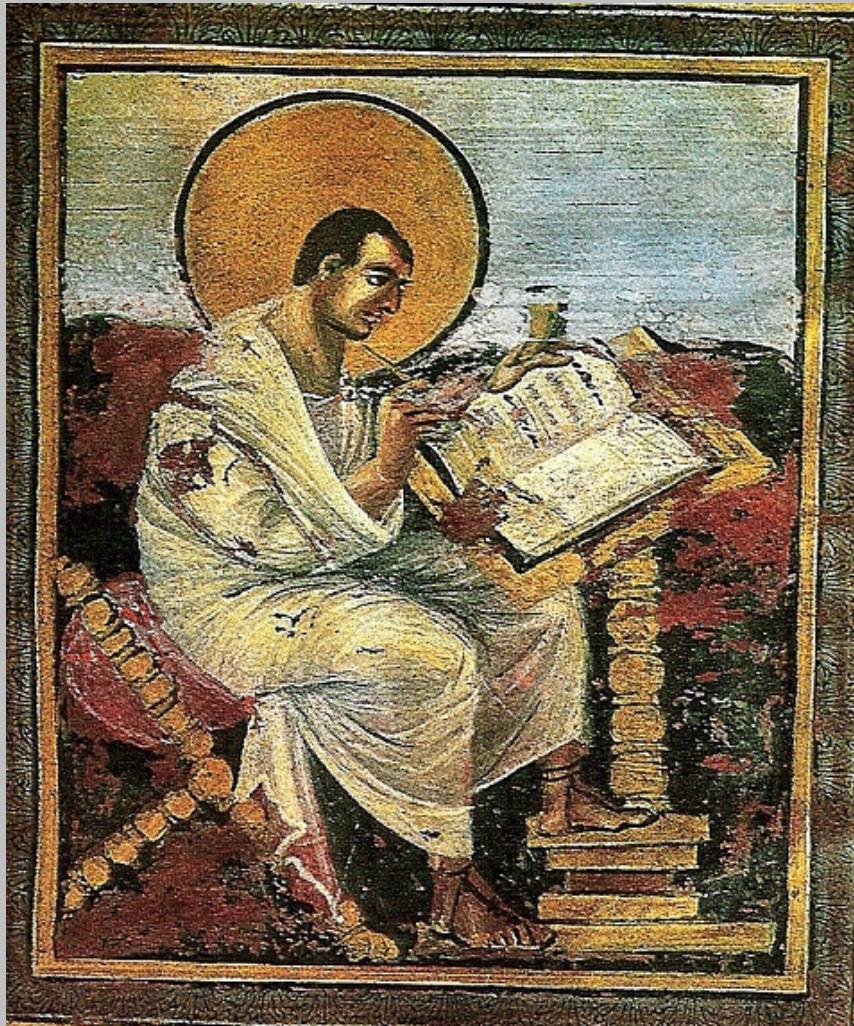
St. Matthew writing the gospel, 830AD



Left: Artist represents the evangelist like a serene old scholar, in a quite atmosphere writing the word of God

Right: artist succeeded in conveying something of his own awe and excitement. Intended expression of tense concentration

St. Matthew writing the gospel, 800AD

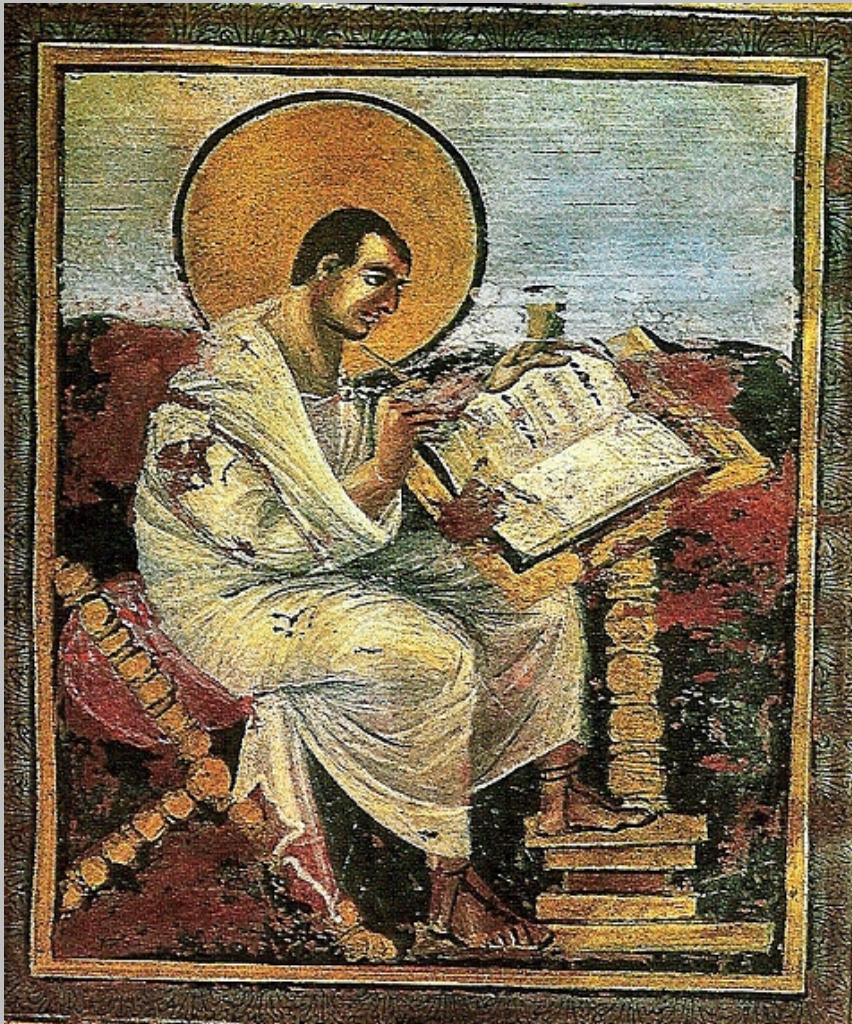


St. Matthew writing the gospel, 830AD



Right: not just a mere clumsiness or ignorance. An impression gathered from the scrolling lines and swift brush work used for drapery and the background reveal the mood of intense excitement

St. Matthew writing the gospel, 800AD



St. Matthew writing the gospel, 830AD



Emergence of a new medieval style
Egyptians: Drew what they knew exist
Greeks: that they saw
Middle ages: expressed what they felt

Lord approaching Adam and Eve after the fall, 1000AD, Germany



clarity of thought and direct expression

shifting of guilt and the origin of evil shown with clarity
idea and message more important

Beauty and proportion no longer relevant

Christ washing the Apostles feet after the last supper, 1000AD

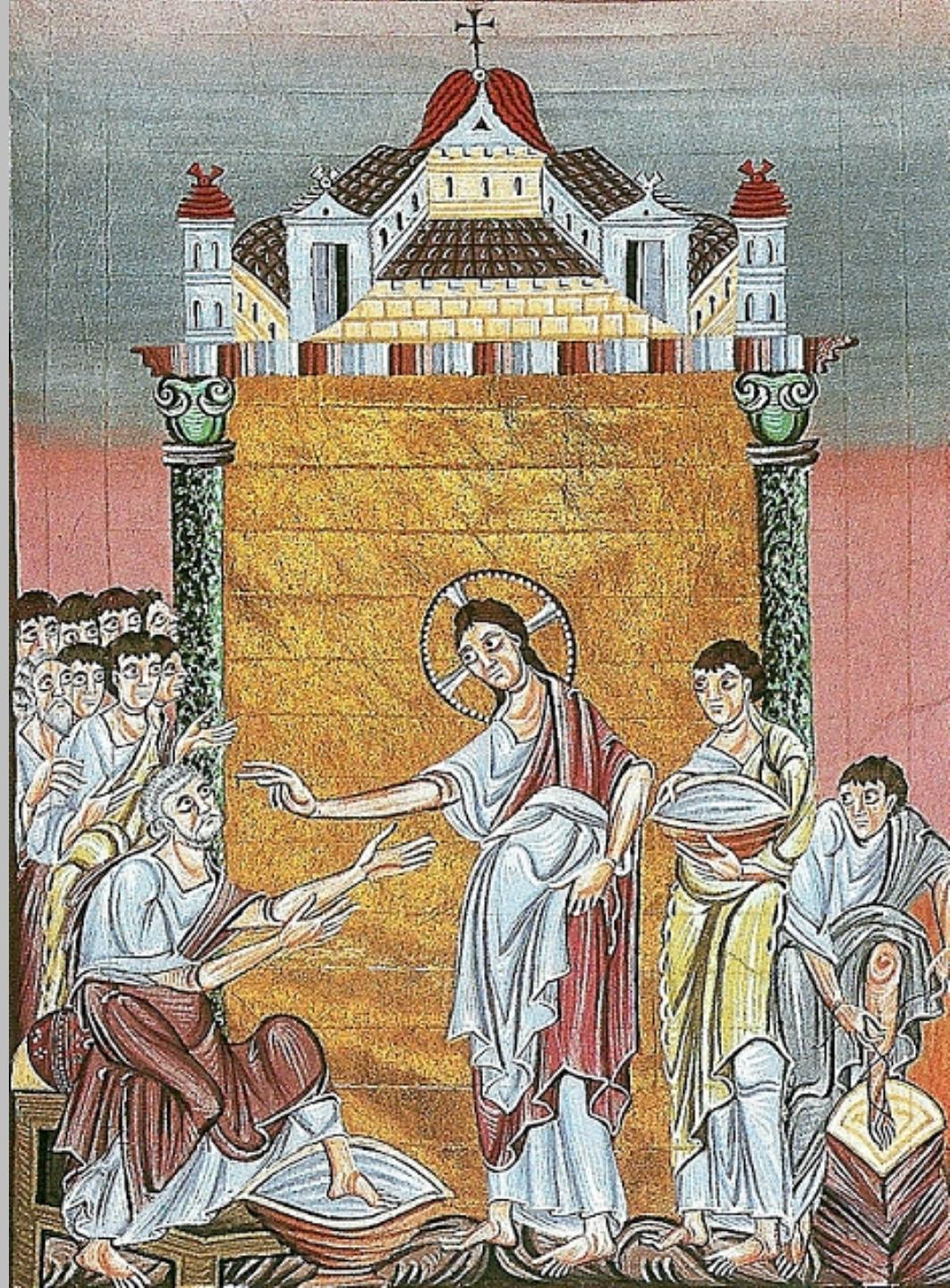
Unintended to create a convincing likeness of nature or to make beautiful things

Purpose lied in communication and to convey the faith in the content and the message of the sacred story

Exchange remained important, No element to divert attention.

The gestures against the flat background stands out like solemn inscriptions.

All eyes of figures rigidly turned towards them to show something significant happening





TOP: KING HERALD SWEARS AN OATH TO DUKE WILLIAM OF NORMANDY
BOTTOM: KING HERALD RETURNS TO ENGLAND.



Bayeux tapestry
1080AD

Secular art themes
commissioned by the
barons, feudal lords
and kings.

A memorable tapestry

A picture chronicle

Depicting an epic with

- economy of means
- suggestive forms
- simplification

