

MEDELTIDSHANDSKRIFT 5; LECTIONARIUM LUNDENSE II

Lund University Library

Olim: M. 60 N:o 7; Ms. H. L. a) fol. 3

Epistolary. Denmark (Lund), 12th century, second third, Latin

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Support: Parchment

Extent: ff. i + 198,

Size: 258 × 180 mm.

Decoration

One secondary illumination, f. 77v, and 342 original 12th century initials divided into three categories: a) simple with no decoration or a single leaf ornament; b) 7 initials with an undulated line along the stem (ff. 1r, 32r, 40r, 67v, 89v, 96r, 129r); and c) 7 initials with double undulated lines and bordure details in a second colour, or other kind of decoration indicating days of special solemnity described below. In the secondary portion of the manuscript, the initials are simple red lombards, five of which are decorated with leaves or geometric void white ornaments (ff. 149r, 188v, 192r, 192v).

Detailed description

f. 70r : initial (F) for Cena Domini, blue with double undulated line and tail leaf ornament in red; f. 73r : initial (I) for Sabbato sancto, blue and red with dividing undulated line and parallel line in the red area, protruding leaf ornament at tail in blue and red and leaf ornament in red at top serif, left side is furnished with bordure (smerlato) decoration; f. 77v : a framed column-width illumination covering the lower two thirds of the written space, depicting Maestas Domini seated on a cushioned throne with right hand raised slightly turned inwards in a blessing gesture, and left hand resting on a book placed on his left knee. The proportionately big head, the childish hair dress and the evasive gaze renders the figure of Christ a rather modest stature, the intimacy of which is further stressed by the limited space allowed by the perspective frame. The soft folds of the dress are delicately drawn in alternating black and greyish blue lines, although a substantial part of the blue pigments have flaked off and been replaced in modern time. The frame consists of concentric bands in (outside inwards) bright green, gold, mauve with simple floral ornaments in white, gold and blue. The lower part of the inner frame is orange with small circles and arches in white, suggesting a footstool with an architectural structure. There are no traces from any precedent illumination. The page was most probably not originally decorated (cfr. f. 72v); f. 78r : initials (F, F, I) for Die Paschae, originally monocoloured in red with foliated fillings and extended tails. Secondarily enhanced with dark blue with white floral decoration and burnished gold on raised gesso ground; f. 92r : initial (I) for Die Pentecosten, blue with double undulated lines and leaf ornament at tail; f. 152r : small initial (I) for Vigilia omnium sanctorum, blue simple letter with bordure decoration in red along left side.

Style: The miniature on f. 77v has previously been dated to the 12th century in the literature. It has been used to corroborate a dating of byzantinizing reliefs from Lund Cathedral to the 1140:s, and to provide proof of early romanesque lundensian book illumination. However, the dark blue pigments and the gold on gesso ground used in the miniature are identical to the secondary initials of the opposite page, f. 78r. These initials are clearly altered compared to their original monocoloured appearance. A close parallel to the miniature is presented by the Maestas Domini in the Book of Horne, now in the Danish National Museum, which shows the same, though more intricate, composition of the frame, throne and gestures. The multiple frame with gilt central panel, delicate white floral ornaments in the blue field outside the central panel, the composition of the throne and the posture of Christ, his hair with almost circular contour and sliding down his left shoulder, the short beard with marked strokes flanking the thin mouth all present

striking similarities between the two manuscripts. Also the discrepancies can be accounted for. The somewhat illogically curved edges of the throne in Medeltidshandskrift 5 can hardly be derived directly from the bowl-like construction of the upper part of the throne in the Maiestas-picture in the Horne-Book, but is on the other hand totally coherent with the construction of the bench in the portrait of St. Mark in the Horne-Book. In both manuscripts the same small window-openings of the oblique plane in front of the throne can be observed, and the suppedaneum which is present in the Horne-Maiestas, is lacking in Medeltidshandskrift 5 and the Horne-Mark. Although the general appearance of the figures is very similar, there are few exact matches as to the folds, but a comparison between the folds on Christ's right arm and right half of the torso in the two manuscripts, show identical composition. A prominent feature in this manuscript, but lacking in the Horne-Book, is the double contour with thin black and white lines close together. In Danish book-illumination it is frequently used in the "Naestved Calendar", Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, E. don. var. 52 2o, dating from 1228-50, in which the same folds on the lower hems occur as here, as well as gilt central panels. The similarities are not, however, close enough to attribute the two manuscripts to the same workshop. The gradation from light to dark mauve-brown in the halo in Medeltidshandskrift 5 has its counterpart in the halo of St. Nicolaus in the Horne-Book. The small black eyes with pupils turned sideways, are not identical with the frontal gaze of the Horne-Maiestas but occur in all of the evangelist-portraits, and is iconographically motivated. These circumstances make it probable that the artist of Medeltidshandskrift 5 has turned to the evangelist-portrait in the Horne-Book rather than to the Maiestas for the details in order to adapt the figure of the Majestas to a smaller format. It is not likely that the Horne-Book was produced by a Danish artist, but it must be emphasized that, if it were executed around 1220 in northern Germany, it was probably made in an area occupied by Denmark, or by a German artist active in Denmark, on commission to the Scanian monastery of Bosjö. The miniature in Medeltidshandskrift 5 is undoubtedly a direct paraphrase of the Horne-Maiestas made by an artist, connected to Lund cathedral, in front of the Horne-Book, with details copied and assembled from different miniatures in the Horne-Book shortly after the fire in 1234, when the Horne-Book still must have been regarded as very much up to date.

In comparison to the mural paintings in the south transept of Lund cathedral from the time of restoration after the fire under archbishop Uffe Thrugotsen (1228-52), known only through watercolour drawings from the 1830:s, but clearly reminiscent of the mural paintings in the church of Åhus dating from the mid 13th century, the transitional style of Scanian painting is consistent enough to suspect the Maiestas-miniature in Medeltidshandskrift 5 to be the product of a Scanian school of illumination during the mid 13th century.

The reading for St. Andrew on f. 155v was repeated on the flyleaf in the late 15th or early 16th century, suggesting a continuous use of the manuscript at the altar of St. Andrew in Lund cathedral, which was inaugurated in 1303 by the dean Andreas, with a special endowment for the restoration of the books. A date of the miniature between the fire in 1234 and the restoration of the church, which according to the colophon of a diploma of 1241, was partly in use at that time, is historically motivated and in accordance with the style.

Iconography: The blessing gesture of Maiestas Domini, with the hand facing sideways, and the evasive gaze reoccur in byzantine art from the late 12th century onwards, and it is likely that the prototype was introduced to Germany after the fourth crusade, 1204.

Binding

Light brown calfskin binding, Sweden, Lund University library bindery, signed in pencil at the inside of the lower cover: Knutsson 1965 . Size: 270 x 180 x 78 mm.

Light brown calfskin binding over bevelled wooden boards with rounded fore-edge corners. Two metal hook-clasp fastenings at fore-edge. Rounded spine. Tight back with four raised double bands. Blind-tooled library label of cloth at the tail of the back. Embroidered endbands of white linen. Former edge trimming preserved together with five textmarkers of parchment at fore-edge. Former pastedowns

restored and preserved as separate pastedowns. All along sewing on four double cords laced through the boards. Textblock restored.

Microfilm placed in the Microfilm collection of the manuscript department.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Nielsen, L.: *Danmarks Middelalderlige Haandskrifter*. København. 1937.