

GEORGI PARPULOV, *Middle-Byzantine Evangelist Portraits: A Corpus of Miniature Paintings* (Manuscripta Biblica: Paratextus Biblici III, 7). Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter 2022. XIV, 167 pp., 79 plates. – ISBN 978-3-11-075463-6

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Middle-Byzantine Evangelist Portraits is an illustrated catalog of 469 Greek New Testament manuscripts (plus an appendix of seven manuscripts whose portraits were later repainted). The texts are mostly Gospel books and lectionaries dating from the mid-9th to the mid-13th centuries. To the extent possible, the catalog entries are arranged chronologically and those from the same period are arranged iconographically. PARPULOV provides an invaluable tool for manuscript scholars, especially those interested in Byzantine illumination. This volume will be of great use to art historians and New Testament text scholars.

The catalog entries are succinct (pp. 1–68), providing the shelf number of each manuscript and a brief description of the pose of each evangelist portrait (seated: writing, holding a pen, inking his pen, raising his pen, touching his lectern, holding his scroll, thinking, resting, reading; or standing: inspired, speaking; or a bust portrait as in catalog #436, Luke). The author also notes if a portrait is lost, missing, or unfinished (e.g., #428). Compositional details are included such as furniture and writing tools: stool, desk, lectern, table with canopy, caps, inkwell with pen-box, ink bottle/s, lunellum, scissors, knife, calipers, pumice, awl, sponge, scroll, fork, pen. Additional details are noted: the Hand of God, the presence of Prochorus, architecture, architectural frame and/or ornamented frame (e.g., #320), landscape, evangelist symbol, even the rare “man standing in doorway” (#276). The location of other illustrations (beyond evangelist portraits) is also noted and sometimes their subject is identified (e.g., #81 vs. #77). Evangelist symbols are called out as in #s 14, 224, 245, 246, 253, 264, 289, 438, 459 among others. The emphasis, however, is on the iconography of the evangelist portraits. There is no stylistic analysis although the latter should be facilitated by the chronological ordering of the catalog.

When available, each catalog entry also has a brief bibliography; PARPULOV sought to limit the entries to no more than three items. The volume also includes illustrations. Figures 1–6 are in color and depict writing implements in various materials including decorated pen holders and

inkwells. Plates 1–87 are full-page illustrations of evangelist portraits from 31 manuscripts in the catalog and almost all are in color. Some of these are from manuscripts which are not published or available online (e.g., #s 8, 23, 45, 123, 154, 175, 293, and 413). Approximately 55 percent of the 476 manuscripts in the catalog have been digitized and these are noted by a special symbol in the catalog entries.

To address the needs of New Testament text scholars and art historians, all catalog entries list GA (GREGORY – ALAND) numbers and D numbers (for Πίνακες). When no GA number is present, the evangelist portraits are found in other texts such as menologia (e.g., #s 148, 149, 150, 160, 165, etc.), or the portrait/s has been removed from an unidentified manuscript (e.g., #s 192, 198, 214, 305, 411, 468) or has been added to a manuscript from an unidentified source (e.g., #309). These various record numbers make it easier to tap into related online resources such as Πίνακες using Dxxx numbers, and GA numbers for the INTF databases from Münster. PΑRPULOV’s catalog entries have been (or will be) added to PTB: Paratexts of the Bible (www.manuscripta-biblica.org). For details, see MARTIN WALLRAFF’s Preface and the author’s Introduction.

To reiterate, this is a scholarly research tool containing descriptions of evangelist portraits of the middle-Byzantine period. However, on rare occasions, PΑRPULOV has drawn attention to tantalizing connections between portraits from different manuscripts. See, for example, #100; and #413, pl. 87.

The catalog also contains a bibliography (with no pretension towards completeness), and several indices including one of manuscripts cited by GA census number; an index of manuscripts cited by location and shelf-mark; and an index of dated or datable manuscripts.

Keywords

Evangelist portraits; illuminated Greek manuscripts; Greek Gospel manuscripts