

THREE LOST MINIATURES IN CODEX SINOPENSIS

(PARIS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE, SUPPLÉMENT
GREC 1286; GREGORY-ALAND O/023)

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Summary

Codex Sinopensis (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, supplément grec 1286; Gregory-Aland O/023) is one of the earliest examples of an illuminated gospel book. This article examines instances of transferred paint in the codex along with textual and paratextual features to identify three lost miniatures that once adorned the pages of *Codex Sinopensis*. Thus, our knowledge of one of the earliest cycles of miniatures in a gospel book can be extended with the addition of the three identifiable but now-lost miniatures: *The Miracle of the Coin from the Mouth of the Fish* (Matthew 17:24–18:4), *the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard* (Matthew 19:25–20:9), and *Christ's Entrance into Jerusalem* (Matthew 21:5-12).

1. Introduction

Codex Sinopensis is a sixth-century illuminated copy of the Gospel of Matthew. Forty-three surviving folios are kept in Paris at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) under the catalogue number supplément grec 1286. It is unclear whether the codex originally contained more than a single gospel. Captain Jean de la Taille, a French military officer, acquired forty-three folios of the codex in December 1899 from an elderly woman in what is now Sinop, Turkey.¹ Shortly

¹ An abridged version of this article was presented at the conference 'Illuminating the Dark Ages: Manuscript Art and Knowledge in the Early Medieval World (c. 600–

thereafter, the codex came into the custody of the BnF, and Henri Omont published its *editio princeps*, which includes a pseudo-facsimile of each page.² Omont also published two shorter, earlier notices of the manuscript.³

Prof. D. Ainaloff of the University of Kazan later acquired a forty-fourth folio of Codex Sinopensis, which he donated to a *gymnasium* in Mariupol. Ainaloff sent photographs of this folio to Omont, who published its text with a pseudo-facsimile in the same manner as the rest of the manuscript.⁴ This folio comes directly between folios 21 and 22 at the BnF. Unfortunately, the whereabouts of the Mariupol leaf are unknown as of the time of this writing. In 1961, Marcel Richard reported that it had disappeared.⁵ Kurt Treu confirmed the status of the Mariupol leaf as missing five years later, adding that according to Eugenia Granstrem it no longer exists.⁶ The entire manuscript along with the photograph of the Mariupol leaf has been digitised and is available online via Gallica, the digital library of the BnF.⁷

1100)' held on 28 June 2018 at the University of Edinburgh. I wish to thank the attendees of that conference as well as Kathleen Maxwell and James Magruder for providing helpful feedback on earlier drafts. Many thanks as well to Christian Förstel of the Bibliothèque nationale de France for permitting an autopsy examination of Codex Sinopensis in April 2018, by which I was able to verify the raised texture of the transferred paint on a few folios.

² Henri Omont, 'Notice sur un très ancien manuscrit grec de l'Évangile de saint Matthieu, en onciales d'or sur parchemin pourpré et orné de miniatures, conservé à la Bibliothèque nationale (no. 1286 du Supplément grec)' in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale et autres bibliothèques*, vol. 36 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1901): 599-676.

³ Henri Omont, 'Un très ancien manuscrit grec de l'Évangile selon saint Matthieu, récemment acquis pour la Bibliothèque nationale', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 44 (1900): 215-18; 'Manuscrit grec de l'Évangile selon saint Matthieu'.

⁴ Henri Omont, 'Un nouveau feuillet du Codex Sinopensis de l'Évangile de Saint Matthieu', *Journal des savants* (1901): 260-62.

⁵ Marcel Richard, 'Rapport sur une mission d'étude en U.R.S.S. (5 Octobre-3 Novembre 1960)', *BIRHT* 10 (1961): 56.

⁶ 'Das Blatt in Zdanov [i.e. Mariupol] lt. Mitteilung von Frau E. Granstrem nicht vorhanden', Kurt Treu, *Die griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments in der UdSSR: Eine systematische Auswertung der Texthandschriften in Leningrad, Moskau, Kiev, Odessa, Tbilisi und Erevan* (TUGAL 91; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966): 361.

⁷ www.gallica.bnf.fr (accessed 21 February 2020).

The five surviving miniatures in Codex Sinopensis are well known by art historians. They were reproduced and discussed by Omont in 1900⁸ and by André Grabar in 1948.⁹ They are:

- f. 10v The Beheading of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:6-12)
- f. 11r The Feeding of the Five Thousand (Matt. 14:15-21)
- f. 15r The Feeding of the Four Thousand (Matt. 15:32-38)
- f. 29r The Healing of the Two Blind Men (Matt. 20:29-34)
- f. 30v The Cursing of the Fig Tree (Matt. 21:18-20)

Each miniature is flanked by two Old Testament figures offering Greek Old Testament text written inside a black box as if it were a *rotulus* scroll to accompany the image, and the text of these excerpts is given both by Cronin and by Grabar.¹⁰ When Omont published his pseudo-facsimile of the Mariupol leaf, he expressed his hope that more leaves would be discovered, 'et peut-être quelqu'un d'entre eux contiendra-t-il la peinture d'une nouvelle scène du Nouveau Testament à ajouter à celles que nous a conservées déjà le Codex graecus chrysopurpureus Sinopensis'.¹¹ Though no new illuminated folios have ever surfaced, the newly available images of Codex Sinopensis bear evidence of three lost miniatures.

2. Lost Miniatures and How to Find Them

When the Rockefeller McCormick New Testament¹² was published, Harold R. Willoughby noted that its missing folios likely contained miniatures.¹³ Willoughby remarked

[I]t is both a fascinating and a rewarding endeavor to estimate the number and the subject-matter of the missing compositions. By observing accurately the number of folios removed from a gathering and

⁸ Henri Omont, 'Peintures d'un manuscrit grec de l'Évangile de saint Matthieu, copié en onciales d'or sur parchemin pourpré, et récemment acquis pour la Bibliothèque Nationale', *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot* 7 (1900): 175-86.

⁹ André Grabar, *Les peintures de l'Évangélaire de Sinope (Bibliothèque nationale, Suppl. Gr. 1286): Reproduites En Facsimilé* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1948).

¹⁰ H. S. Cronin, 'Codex Chrysopurpureus Sinopensis', *JTS* 2 (1901): 599; Grabar, *Les peintures de l'Évangélaire de Sinope*, 9-10.

¹¹ Omont, 'Un nouveau feuillet du Codex Sinopensis de l'Évangile de Saint Matthieu', 261.

¹² Chicago, University of Chicago Library, Goodspeed Ms. 965; GA 2400

¹³ Harold R. Willoughby, 'The Reconstruction of Lost Rockefeller McCormick Miniatures', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51 (1932): 253-62.

the extent of the text that was inscribed on them, one can estimate the approximate number of the lost miniatures.¹⁴

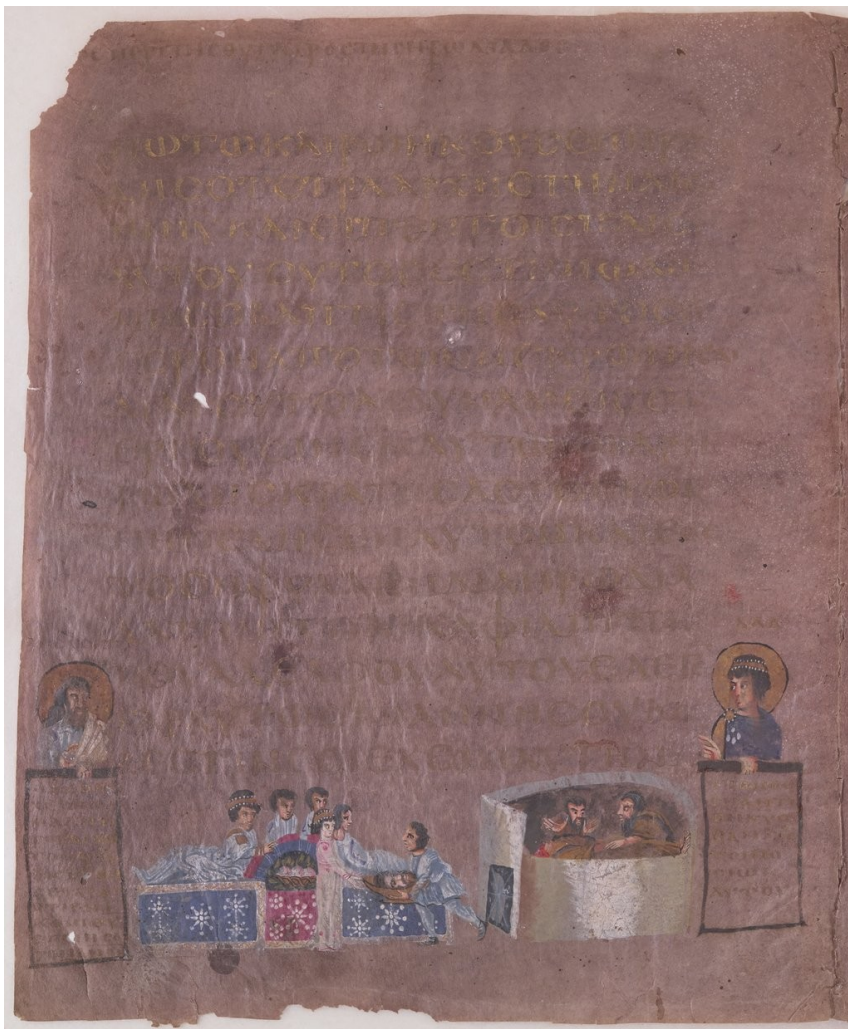


Fig. 1: Codex Sinopensis, f. 10v (The Beheading of John the Baptist). The five extant miniatures all appear at the same location in the lower margin, and I propose that the lost miniatures were located at this location on the page as well. Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Willoughby conjectured concerning a number of lost miniatures primarily from the text in the lacunae, but he provided justification by citing extant miniatures of the relevant sections in manuscripts

¹⁴ Willoughby, 'The Reconstruction', 254.

elsewhere.¹⁵ In the case of Sinopensis, several factors point to evidence both of lost miniatures and of their identity: the text in the lacunae, the existence of known miniatures in other Greek gospel books, and transferred paint onto the pages that originally faced the lost illuminated folios. Ink, paint, or even contamination that has been transferred across an opening to a facing page can be used to shed light on ancient artifacts. Georgi Parpulov mentions three stains in the left margin of Getty MS 70, an icon of St Mark, that correspond to three stains in the right margin of f. 111r in GA 1427 (Sofia, Ivan Duichev Centre, Greek MS 132). These stains are part of the evidence that Getty MS 70 was originally a part of GA 1427.¹⁶ Transferred ink and paint can even preserve traces of lost pages of manuscripts. Lost text from Acts in Codex Bezae (D05; Cambridge, University Library, MS Nn.2.41) was recently identified through offset ink.¹⁷ Mildred Overton Budny identified the contents – text and illustration – of several missing folios from British Library Royal MS 1 E. vi on the basis of offset ink and pigments.¹⁸ In Codex Sinopensis, transferred paint can indicate the presence of a miniature on a facing page. In some cases, extant miniatures have left their mark on the pages that faced them in the original layout. In a few other cases, traces remain that point to miniatures on pages that are now lost. Where only one folio is missing, some corroborating evidence is available by reconstructing the missing text based on two sibling manuscripts of Codex Sinopensis.

2.1 F. 31r

One extant example of transferred paint is on f. 31r. There is no gap in text between f. 30v and f. 31r, so the two pages faced each other in the original layout of the codex. F. 30v is adorned with the miniature of Christ cursing the fig tree, and like all surviving miniatures in Codex Sinopensis, two excerpts from the Greek Old Testament flank the

¹⁵ See especially Willoughby's extended treatment of the lost miniatures of Goodspeed Ms. 965 in *The Rockefeller McCormick New Testament Volume III: The Miniatures* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932): 289-336.

¹⁶ Georgi Parpulov, 'The Study of Byzantine Book Illumination', *Palaeoslavica* 21, no. 2 (2013): 202.

¹⁷ Elijah Hixson, 'A Lost Page of Codex Bezae: Traces of the Bezan Greek Text of Acts 10.4-9', *NTS* 64 (2018): 213-30.

¹⁸ Mildred Overton Budny, 'British Library Manuscript Royal 1 E. VI: The Anatomy of an Anglo-Saxon Bible Fragment' (PhD thesis, London, University of London, 1984): 317-20. See also Budny's identification of a lost depiction of the Virgin with Child that originally preceded f. 7r, on 704-705.

scene. They are introduced by the Old Testament figures associated with the texts, in this case Habakkuk and Daniel, and their texts are surrounded by black boxes. On f. 31r, the lower left corner contains a faint outline of the black box surrounding the text of Daniel 4:10-11 on f. 30v; remnants of the paint have been transferred over. The right margin of f. 31r. contains traces of black paint from the hair of Habakkuk (facing the page from the left margin of f. 30v) as well as a faint outline of the top of his halo.



Fig. 2: Habakkuk on f. 30v Fig. 3: Transfer of Habakkuk on f. 31r
Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

2.2 F. 28v

A second example of transferred paint from an extant miniature is on f. 28v. This page faces f. 29r without a gap in the text; f. 29r features the miniature of Christ healing the two blind men, flanked by excerpts from Psalm 138[139]:5 on the left and Isaiah 35:5 on the right.

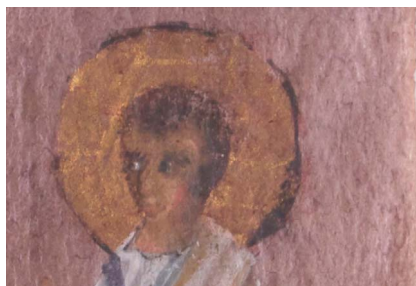


Fig. 4: Transfer of Isaiah on f. 28v Fig. 5: Isaiah on f. 29r
Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

A noticeable portion of the black outline of Isaiah's halo has been transferred to the left margin of f. 28v, as well as a few flecks of his

dark hair. Traces of the black box beneath these transferred remnants of Isaiah are less prominent, but a faint square outline is visible.

Also noticeable is the presence of transferred gold ink in the lower right corner of f. 28v. A flaw in the parchment – scar or a repaired hole – contains partial letters from the facing Psalms excerpt: $\chi\epsilon[\iota]\rho[\alpha] \mid \varsigma[\omicron\nu]$. The transferred gold ink matches the ink that is missing from the Psalms excerpt on f. 29r, most noticeably from ρ .



Fig. 6: f. 28v, transferred text

Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France



Fig. 7: f. 29r, text

2.3 Textual Relationship of Codex Sinopensis and its Two Siblings

One surprising feature can add some corroborating evidence of the lost miniatures in Codex Sinopensis. This codex is one member of a trio of sixth-century gospel books, which each contain text copied from the same exemplar. All three surviving members are *codices purpurei*, but Codex Sinopensis is the only member written entirely in gold ink with a single-column text. Codex Rossanensis (Rossano, Museo Diocesano, s.n.) contains a series of half-page and full-page miniatures in an introductory section at the beginning of the manuscript.¹⁹ These miniatures are not flanked by two Old Testament excerpts. Instead, the half-page miniatures are accompanied by four excerpts below them.²⁰ The third member of the trio, Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus, is scattered throughout several collections, and no miniatures from it survive.

¹⁹ On these miniatures, see William C. Loerke, ‘The Rossano Gospels: The Miniatures’ in *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis: Commentarium*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo (Codices Mirabiles; Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1987): 109-71.

²⁰ For a recent edition and discussion of their texts, see Elijah Hixson, ‘Forty Excerpts from the Greek Old Testament in Codex Rossanensis’, *JTS* 67 (2016): 507-41. The full-page miniatures are not accompanied by excerpts at all.

The text of both Codex Rossanensis and of Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus is arranged in two columns of short lines, sixteen ruled lines per page in Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus and twenty ruled lines per page in Codex Rossanensis. As it happens, the line lengths per column in each manuscript are nearly identical. Although Codex Sinopensis is arranged in single-column text in sixteen ruled lines per page, one line of text in Codex Sinopensis is, on average, almost exactly twice the length of one line in one column of its two siblings. The result of this textual relationship is that it is possible to reconstruct the missing text from Codex Sinopensis with a degree of accuracy. One average folio of Codex Sinopensis contains exactly the same amount of text as one average folio of Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus or sixty-four lines of Codex Rossanensis.

This relationship is relevant because the scribe of Codex Sinopensis did not always copy sixteen lines of text onto a single page. Where there are illuminations, the scribe left the final line blank in order to allow more room for the artwork. The following table illustrates the line lengths for the illuminated pages.

Miniature	Folio	Page	Number of lines
The Beheading of John the Baptist	f. 10	10r	16
		10v (miniature)	15
The Feeding of the Five Thousand	f. 11	11r (miniature)	15
		11v	16
The Feeding of the Four Thousand	f. 15	15r (miniature)	15
		15v	15
The Healing of the Two Blind Men	f. 29	29r (miniature)	15
		29v	16
The Cursing of the Fig Tree	f. 30	30r	16
		30v (miniature)	15

Table 1: Lines of text on illuminated pages in Codex Sinopensis

The scribe generally wrote sixteen lines on pages that lack illuminations and fifteen lines on illuminated pages. f. 15v is the only exception to this trend, in which the scribe wrote only fifteen lines on a page that lacks an illumination. The amount of text on missing pages can be estimated by counting lines in Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus and Codex Rossanensis. One non-illuminated folio should contain the same amount of text as approximately sixty-four half-length lines in

each of the other two manuscripts, but an illuminated folio should contain the same text as only sixty-two (or possibly sixty) half-length lines in the two manuscripts.

Folio 15 can be used to test this method. Admittedly the text will not be exact; f. 15 contains fifteen lines on each side of the folio. Still, f. 14 is the first leaf of the same bifolio as f. 15, and f. 16 follows f. 15 without a gap in the text. If f. 15 is treated as if it were lost, it is possible to estimate the text one would expect it to contain from the number of lines in Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus and Codex Rossanensis. The results can be checked against the actual f. 15.

The text on f. 15 comes between *οι μαθηται αυτου ποθεν*, the last line of f. 14v, and *και πρωι ημερον χειμων(ν)*, the first line on f. 16r. In Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus, approximately fifty-nine half-length lines of text occupy the space between *ται αυτου· ποθεν ημω εν* (St Petersburg f. 43r, col. 2, lines 13-14) and *ρανος· και πρωει ημερον* (New York f. 1r, col. 2, lines 9-10). In Codex Rossanensis, sixty half-length lines of text occupy the space between *τω οι μαθηται αυτου ποθεν* (p. 128[v], col. 1, lines 1-2) and *και πρωι ημερον χειμων·* (p. 129[r], col. 2, lines 3-4). A non-illuminated page would contain text that would require sixty-two to sixty-four lines in these two codices. Fewer lines of text suggest that either the scribe made an error or the text on f. 15 does not occupy sixteen full-length lines on each side. Because this scribe rarely made errors²¹ but did employ only fifteen lines on illuminated pages, the implication is that f. 15 was probably illuminated, a conclusion verified by the fact that f. 15 is indeed illuminated.

These calculations are relevant because two of the lost miniatures occur on pages missing between two extant pages (i.e. no other folios are missing in the gap). Admittedly, this method is not without problems. Scribes were not mechanical, and line lengths varied from page to page. Additionally, textual variations and errors could interfere with calculations of the expected text. Still, the scribe had only so much space available, and if other indicators point to lost miniatures, the amount of expected text could provide some corroborating evidence.

²¹ Omont notes only six corrections in forty-three folios in 'Notice sur un très ancien manuscrit grec', 607.

3. Lost Miniature 1: The Miracle of the Coin from the Mouth of the Fish

The first lost miniature was on the *recto* of the third folio in the eighth gathering, which came between what are now folios 20 and 21 at the BnF. This folio would have contained the text of Matthew 17:24–18:4 and the miniature would probably have been a depiction of the miracle of The Coin from the Mouth of the Fish (Matt. 17:27). Transferred paint on f. 20v is evidence of the missing miniature. In the lower right corner, there are ink impressions of the right and lower sides of the black box containing Greek Old Testament excerpts. Folio 20r is not illuminated, so the visible traces of paint cannot be show-through from the other side of the folio.

Notably, f. 20v lacks a marginal chapter heading, despite the fact that the beginning of the new section is marked at Matthew 17:22 on f. 20v by a paragraph sign (¶) in the left margin. In a discussion of the extant miniatures, William C. Loerke noted that ‘the five miniatures of the Sinope [codex] were places on those pages whose top margins display the chapter heading of the event depicted’.²² Typically, the copyist of Codex Sinopensis added the marginal chapter heading on the page where the chapter began, unless the chapter began on one of the last two lines. Exceptions are made, however, for miniatures. On f. 14v, the new chapter begins at lines 6-7 (Matt. 15:32), but the chapter heading ‘Concerning the seven loaves’ (περι των ζ αρτων) does not appear until the following page, where it accompanies a depiction of the event. In the case of the lost miniature between folios 20 and 21, it would be unusual for the scribe to have left out the chapter heading on f. 20v unless the *recto* of the following folio contained a miniature, in which case the chapter heading would be expected there.

²² William C. Loerke, ‘Sinope Fragment’ in *Eerdmans Encyclopedia of Early Christian Art and Archaeology*, ed. Paul Corby Finney, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016): 507. John Lowden also noted this phenomenon in ‘The Beginnings of Biblical Illustration’ in *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible*, ed. John Williams (Penn State Series in the History of the Book; University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999): 23.



Fig. 8: 023, f. 20v, lower right corner

Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

The traces of paint on f. 20v can be supplemented by the expected text in the gap. Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus is not extant for this section of text, but the Codex Rossanensis contains the passage. The missing text occupies sixty-two half-length lines in Codex Rossanensis, allowing the possibility of thirty-one lines of text on the missing folio

of Codex Sinopensis, not the thirty-two lines characteristic of a non-illuminated folio.²³

Based on the missing text from the lost page between folios 20 and 21 and on the traces of paint on f. 20v, it is highly likely that the missing folio (containing Matt. 17:24–18:4) had a miniature on its *recto*. Although no depiction of this event survives in Codex Rossanensis, it is depicted in the eleventh-century Greek tetraevangelion GA 269 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, grec 74, f. 35r).²⁴

4. Lost Miniature 2: The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

The second lost miniature was probably on the *verso* of the folio immediately before f. 26 in the original codex. This lost folio is the first folio of the ninth gathering, and consequently the first half of the bifolio of which f. 35 is a part. The images of f. 35 reveal that its counterpart was cut out with a sharp edge. A clean cut from top to bottom preserves a thin but almost perfectly rectangular strip from the inner margin of its counterpart.²⁵ Two folios are missing from the gap between folios 25 and 26. This gap is too large to calculate the number of lines expected from the text in Codex Rossanensis, but the two folios would have contained Matthew 19:25–20:9.

In the lower margin, what appears to be a faint horizontal line of the right half of the miniature can be seen, though it is not as clear as the remnants of the black boxes on f. 20. More importantly, there are traces of a thick vertical line of paint in the middle of the lower margin. The text immediately preceding f. 26 would contain part of the parable of The Laborers in the Vineyard, specifically Matthew 20:8, when the master called the workers in order to distribute their wages. The

²³ Allowing for slight variations, sixty-two lines of text in Codex Rossanensis could equate to either thirty-one or thirty-two lines in Codex Sinopensis. However, sixty-four lines in Codex Rossanensis is too large for thirty-one lines in Codex Sinopensis. Stated alternatively, sixty-four lines in Codex Rossanensis would be strong evidence against a miniature on the lost folio, but sixty-two lines in Codex Rossanensis permits, but does not prove, a lost miniature. I give this estimation only as corroborating evidence for this reason.

²⁴ High-resolution images of GA 269 are available at <http://gallica.bnf.fr> under the catalogue number grec 74 (accessed 21 February 2020).

²⁵ Cf. the inner margin of f. 3, which is a jagged tear.

pericope begins at Matthew 20:1 and it was listed in the ancient system of chapter headings, though no depiction of this parable survives in Codex Rossanensis. The parable is depicted in GA 269 (f. 38v); C. M. Kauffmann reports that it was read liturgically at least as far back as the seventh century, ‘presumably as an assurance to sinners that they would be admitted to the Kingdom even if they came late’.²⁶

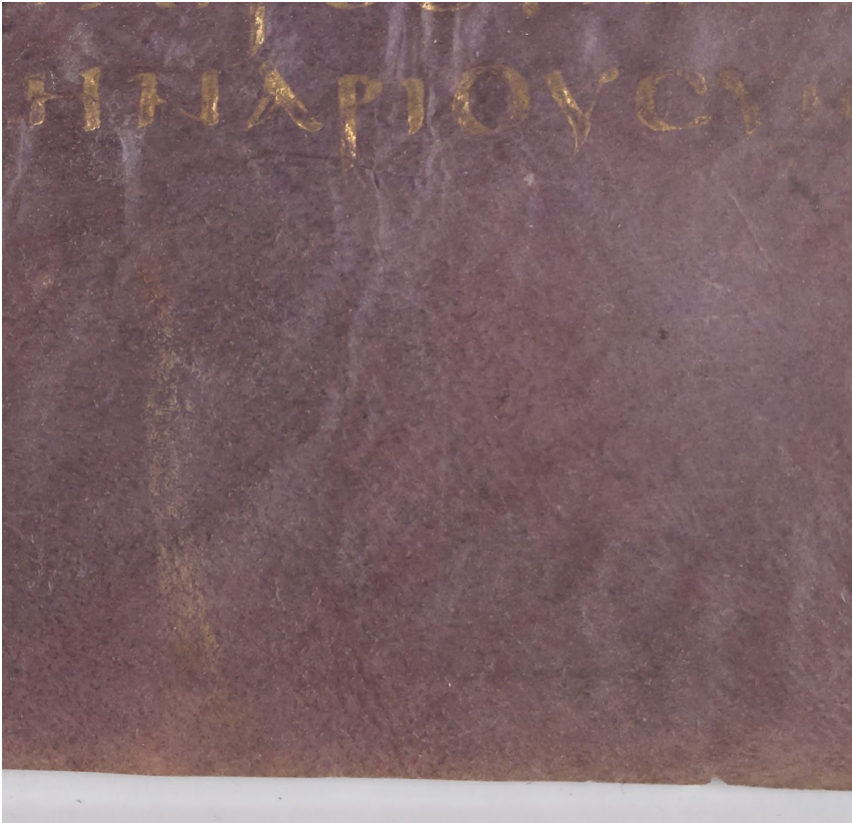


Fig. 9: f. 26r, vertical paint line and horizontal scene outline
Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

²⁶ C. M. Kauffmann, ‘The Sainte-Chapelle Lectionaries and the Illustration of the Parables in the Middle Ages’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 67 (2004): 7. The Sainte-Chapelle Lectionaries also contain depictions of this parable.

5. Lost Miniature 3: The Entrance into Jerusalem

The final lost miniature of which there is evidence was on the folio that originally preceded f. 30. This folio was the first half of the bifolio that included f. 30 at the centre of the ninth gathering. The gap between folios 29 and 30 contained text from Matthew 21:5-12. This section of text is part of the narrative of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem, a miniature of which is preserved in Codex Rossanensis and in GA 269 (f. 41r).²⁷ Some peculiarities in the lower margin of f. 30r are probably traces of ink from this lost miniature, and both Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus and Codex Rossanensis are extant for this text, allowing the number of lines in the single-folio gap to be estimated.

One problem posed by f. 30r is that the margins contain show-through of paint from the miniature and accompanying Old Testament excerpts on the *verso*. Thus, only traces of paint that can be shown not to come from f. 30v are evidence of a lost miniature. The most visible example is in the lower right corner. The black box containing Habakkuk 3:17 is clearly visible, but a faint black horizontal line can be seen beneath the show-through from f. 30v.

At the top of the show-through of the black box from f. 30v there is a bit of dark pigment where the clothing of the Old Testament figure should be. This dark pigment cannot come from f. 30v for two reasons. First, the figure of Habakkuk on f. 30v is clothed in white with light blue trim, not dark colours. Second, the dark pigment on f. 30r encroaches down into the black text box from f. 30v, but the body of Habakkuk on f. 30v is completely above the black box, save his hand, with which he grips the upper border. Above the dark pigment there are faint traces of rose gold surrounded by flecks of chamoisee. Traces of chamoisee are also visible adjacent to the dark pigment at its left.

²⁷ For a discussion, see Loerke, 'The Rossano Gospels: The Miniatures', 123-26. This miniature was reproduced most recently in Giovanni Sapia, *Cuore e storia di una città: Codex Purpureus Rossanensis tra cattedrale e Museo Diocesano* (Rossano: Ferrari editore, 2015).-

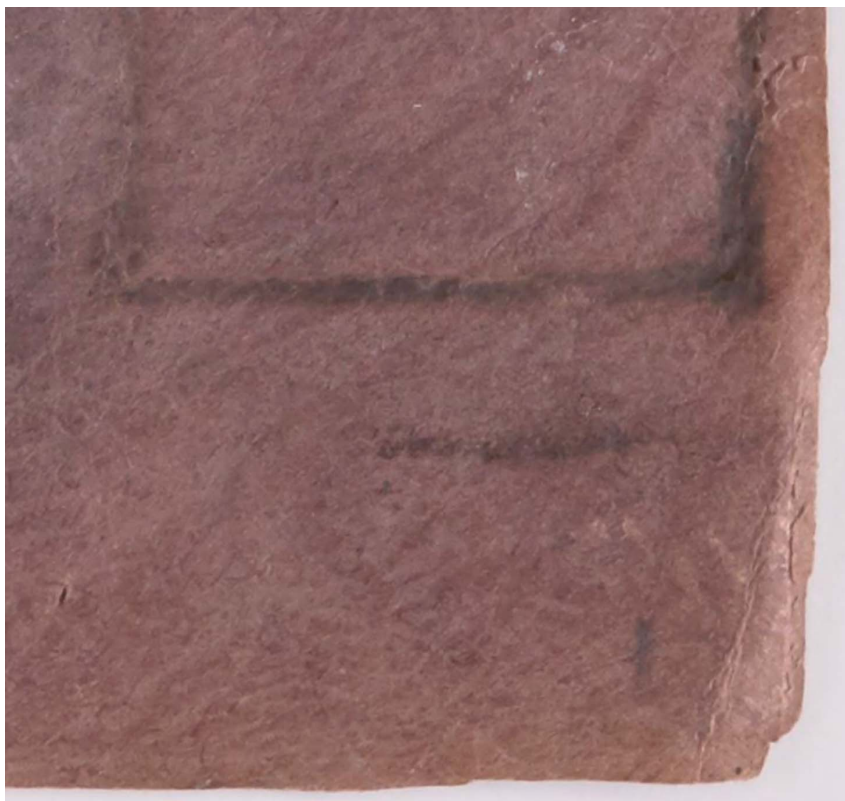


Fig. 10: f. 30r, black ink from lost text box beneath the show-through of black line from text box on f. 30v

Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

One explanation of these traces of paint is that the figure in the left margin of the lost folio preceding f. 30 was David. David is a prominent figure in the Old Testament excerpts in both Codex Rossanensis, appearing above twenty-two of the forty extant excerpts, and also in Codex Sinopensis, appearing above four of the ten extant excerpts.²⁸ In Codex Sinopensis, David's appearance is reminiscent of the Ravenna mosaic of Justinian I in the Basilica of San Vitale. Both feature a purple robe with an imperial fibula on their right shoulders.²⁹ Rose gold-coloured paint is used to accent the face of David in Codex

²⁸ Hixson, 'Forty Excerpts', 512-18; Cronin, 'Codex Chrysopurpureus Sinopensis', 599.

²⁹ Loerke describes the appearance of David in Codex Sinopensis and discusses differences in the appearance of the same figure in Codex Rossanensis in 'The Rossano Gospels: The Miniatures', 165.

Sinopensis, while shadows in his face and on his hands, adjacent to his purple clothing, are depicted with chamoisee. The shape, colour, and location of the flecks of paint on f. 30r could all be explained by transfer from a figure of David in the left margin of the *verso* of the lost folio.

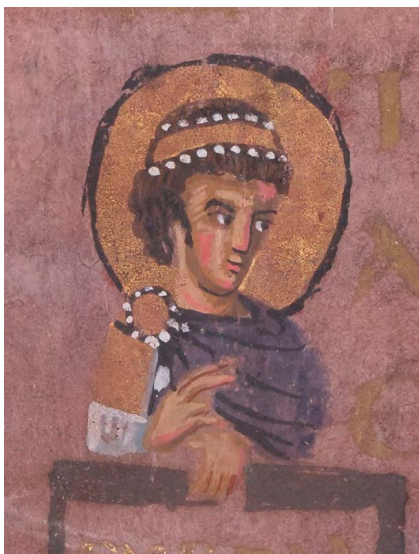


Fig. 11: Sample of David in Codex Sinopensis, taken from f. 29r

Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France



Fig. 12: f. 30r, possibly David

In the lower right corner, two additional abnormalities cannot be explained as show-through from f. 30v. Most prominent is the dark spot to the right of the show-through of the black box containing text from Daniel 4:10-11. The spot is visible, but lighter in colour, on f. 30v, suggesting that it is either a smudge directly on f. 30r or transferred there from the lost folio facing it. An unidentified shape to the upper right of the dark spot (beneath the final δ of the *nomen sacrum* $\delta\alpha\delta$ on the final line) cannot be from f. 30v. The cursed fig tree occupies the place on the *verso*, but the empty space between the main branches of the fig tree is at this place on the *verso* – there is no paint there to show through.

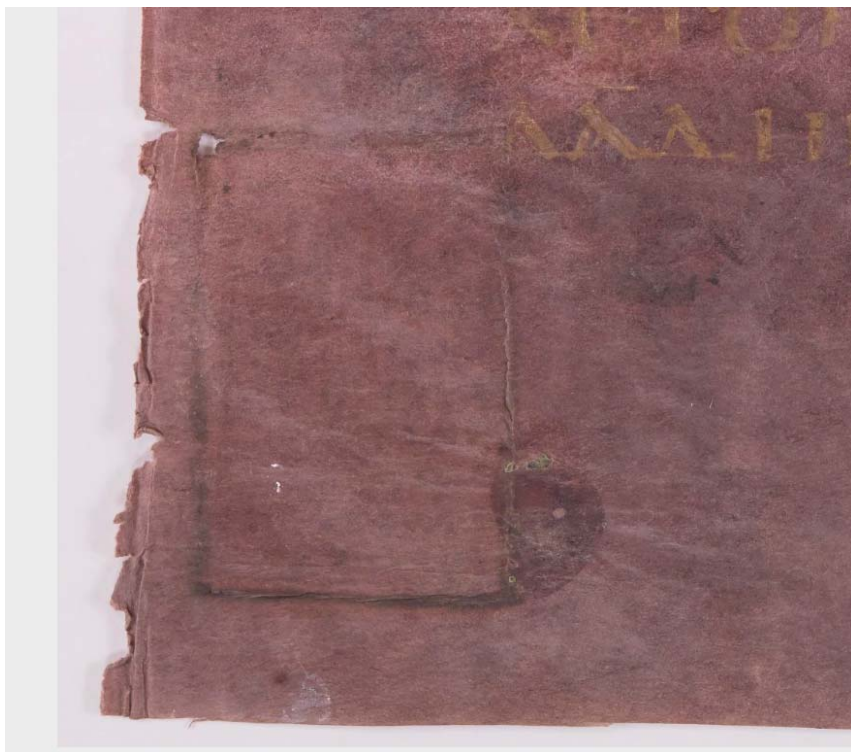


Fig. 13: f. 30r, lower left corner

Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

The amount of text missing in the gap suggests that the scribe did not fill all thirty-two lines of text that would be expected in a non-illuminated folio. Variations between scribes result in sixty-one half-length lines in Codex Purpureus Petropolitanus and fifty-eight and a half half-length lines for the same text in Codex Rossanensis. A non-illuminated folio of Codex Sinopensis should have thirty-two full-length lines, or around sixty-two to sixty-four half-length lines in the other two codices.

In summary, the gap in the text suggests that the scribe left at least one line blank, as was his or her custom when copying the text on pages that would be illuminated. The flecks of paint suggest that a miniature once faced f. 30r on the now-lost folio that preceded it. Christ's entrance into Jerusalem is depicted in Codex Rossanensis, which indicates that a depiction of the scene existed in the community that produced the manuscripts. It seems likely, therefore, that a

miniature of the scene once existed in Codex Sinopensis on the *verso* of the lost folio between folios 29 and 30.

6. Conclusion

Regarding the twenty missing folios of GA2400, Willoughby lamented ‘It is more than a tragedy that the Rockefeller McCormick manuscript has been robbed of a large number of miniatures in the course of its history.’³⁰ The Rockefeller McCormick manuscript may have lost twenty folios, but Codex Sinopensis has been robbed of anywhere from a hundred to over four hundred and fifty folios.³¹ If five miniatures survive in the forty-four extant folios, many more were almost certainly lost. Any traces beyond the surviving five could shed more light on an important early witness to Christian art. Miniatures for each of the scenes I have suggested are present in the eleventh-century Paris Codex Grec 74 (GA 269), and one is also extant in Codex Rossanensis.

Further research might make it possible to verify the three lost miniatures that I have suggested. The flecks of paint could be analysed scientifically to identify the colorants and if possible to match them to the colorants used in the five extant miniatures. Maurizio Aceto et al. analysed the colorants in the Vienna Genesis (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, theol. gr. 31), a sixth-century purple codex possibly related to Codex Sinopensis.³² Aceto et al. used UV-Vis diffuse reflectance spectrophotometry with optic fibres (FORS), Raman spectroscopy, and X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF) to undertake the analysis, all of which are non-invasive techniques. Additionally, Marina Bicchieri used a combination of Raman, infrared spectroscopy, and XRF to identify specific pigments used in the production of Codex Rossanensis.³³ As technology advances, so could our knowledge of an important witness to early Christian text and art.

³⁰ Willoughby, *Rockefeller McCormick New Testament III*, 289.

³¹ Cronin estimated the original size to be 144 leaves of Matthew’s Gospel, or 490–500 leaves of all four Gospels, in ‘Codex Chrysopurpureus Sinopensis’, 592.

³² Maurizio Aceto et al., ‘First Analytical Evidences of Precious Colourants on Mediterranean Illuminated Manuscripts’, *Spectrochim. Acta A* 95 (September 2012): 235–45.

³³ Marina Bicchieri, ‘The Purple Codex Rossanensis: Spectroscopic Characterisation and First Evidence of the Use of the Elderberry Lake in a Sixth Century Manuscript’, *Environ. Sci. Pollut. R.* 21 (2014): 14146–57.