LATE ANTIQUE AND EARLY MEDIEVAL IBERIA

John Williams

Visions of the End in Medieval Spain

Catalogue of Illustrated Beatus Commentaries on the Apocalypse and Study of the Geneva Beatus

Edited by Therese Martin

Amsterdam
University
Press

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Late Antique and Early Medieval Iberia

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To Mary

John Williams

Photo: Hamid Shams

Contents

List of Illustrations

Editor's Foreword

The five volumes of John Williams's magnum opus, *The Illustrated Beatus: A Corpus of the Illustrations of the Commentary on the Apocalypse*, came to conclusion in 2003. Throughout the following years, Williams carried on with his research and publications on the Beatus manuscripts, while new works by other scholars appeared, most notably Roger Gryson's 2012 textual analysis of the Beatus Commentary. In the meantime, two heretofore unknown Commentaries came to light, one fragmentary and one nearly complete. A decade after completing *The Illustrated Beatus*, Williams decided to publish an updated summary of his ideas and conclusions that would take into account these discoveries, gathering together, for the first time ever, all twenty-nine known illustrated copies of the Beatus Commentary on the Apocalypse, and undertaking a comparative analysis within a single volume. Williams offers here his latest considerations on the material, revising and summing up a lifetime of study.

This volume also presents an in-depth look at the recently discovered Geneva Beatus. One of only four Commentaries written outside the Iberian Peninsula, this Italian manuscript closely follows a Spanish model but was written in a Beneventan script and painted in a style dramatically different from the Iberian examples. The Geneva Beatus includes multiple exceptional elements that distinguish it from the rest of the Commentaries. Williams discusses each illustration, highlighting especially Geneva's unique characteristics, with the hope that the present publication will facilitate future studies.

When this book was in the final stages of preparation, John Williams was unable to continue working on it, so he asked me to see it through to completion. It was an honor to collaborate with him on its publication and a pleasure to continue learning from him. He died on 6 June 2015, a few months before the book went to press. When in doubt, I turned to his illustrated Beatus Corpus for clarification.

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All translations are by John Williams unless otherwise indicated.

1 Visions of the End in Medieval Spain

Introductory Essay

Three remarkable monuments bestow on Spain a preeminent position in the history of medieval art: the Great Mosque of Córdoba, founded in 784 (Fig. 1), the shrine of the Apostle James at Santiago, founded in the ninth century (Fig. 2), and the illustrated copies of the Commentary on the Apocalypse by Beatus of Liébana, the subject of this book.

The origins of the last two enterprises can be linked to a single person, the monk named Beatus. Although we have few details of his life, these two undertakings alone would preserve his name for posterity. Beatus completed his first edition of the Commentary on the Apocalypse in the year 776, and he was present in 785 in the Asturian capital when Adosinda, the widow of King Silo (r. 774-83), took her vows as a nun. He would thus have been known to Alfonso II, the king whose reign from 791 to 842 witnessed the discovery of the tomb of the Apostle James on the western frontier of his kingdom. The association between Saint James and Spain was not a local topic until Beatus in his Commentary credited him with the evangelization of the peninsula. Although Beatus did not speak of James's death and burial, he authored a hymn, "O Dei Verbum," for the predecessor of Alfonso II, King Mauregatus, where James was not only

Figure 1 **Great Mosque of Córdoba, late tenth century**

Photo: Therese Martin

Figure 2 **Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, early twelfth century**

Photo: Jennifer S. Alexander

identified as the preacher of the Gospel throughout the peninsula, but honored as the patron of Spain as well.[1] The link between the royal family and Liébana, Beatus's monastery, would continue under Alfonso III, king from 866 to 910. A major expansion of the Compostelan *locus sanctus* took place when Sisnando, like Beatus a former abbot of Liébana, presided as bishop of Santiago. He oversaw the construction of the new basilica dedicated in 899, the largest church then in Spain. With this history, it is difficult to deny a connection between the writings of Beatus and the discovery of the apostolic tomb, which fostered a pilgrimage that even today brings thousands to Santiago every year.

The Commentary on the Apocalypse

If the eighth century was a difficult time for a Europe still coming to terms with the collapse of the Roman Empire, for Iberians it was calamitous. Their Christian kingdom disintegrated almost overnight after an army of Berbers led by Muslim Arabs crossed the narrow Strait of Gibraltar in 711 and took possession of rich lands that had supplied the Roman Empire with wheat, olives, wine, and metals, both precious and base. The lands were so integral to the empire that Caesar was a governor there, and the emperors Trajan and Hadrian were among its natives. For the most part, Iberians would remain where they were after the Islamic conquest and gradually assimilate. Although Muslims tolerated Christianity as a religion of the Book, Christians with a religious calling must have chafed under rules designed by their Islamic governors to veil the public face of Christianity. Numbers took the road north to the unoccupied margin behind the Cantabrian range. Among these refugees would have been a monk named Beatus. We can only guess at his trajectory, but he must have left al-Andalus about the time Abd al-Rahman I (r. 756-88) arrived and made Córdoba his capital. Beatus then settled in Liébana, where he composed his Commentary.

Internal evidence assigns the Commentary a date around 776. Thus it can be linked, if speculatively, to the prospect of an event even more momentous than the Muslim occupation of most of the peninsula: the end of the world that Christian tradition predicted would take place in the year 800 (Spanish era 838), based on calculations of the earth's age.[2] Beatus was aware of the Church's official stand against trying to predict the end of time. After all, Jesus himself had warned against such attempts, and earlier predictions had proven wrong. However, Beatus's solemn warning that only a quarter of a century remained before the end must reflect his own belief: "Thus, for all that has been said above every catholic ought to ponder, wait, and fear, and to consider these twenty-five years as if they were no more than an hour, and day and night should weep in sackcloth and ashes for their destruction and the world's."[3]

Beatus composed his work by dividing the text of the Apocalypse or Revelation, the final book of the Bible, into sixty-eight sections, termed *storiae*. Typically a dozen or so verses, these present the text in its normal sequence. Each *storia* was followed by a series of exegetical passages – the *explanatio* – which interpret in allegorical and anagogical terms each of the verses or figures in the *storia*. Between the *storia* and its interpretation copied from a variety of sources, Beatus for the first time inserted an illustration that was essentially a pictorial reprise of the Apocalyptic narrative just above it. The Commentary itself was a collage of allegories and symbolic interpretations that would have been virtually impossible

1 González Echegaray 1995, 667ff.

2 Williams 1994a, 103ff.

3 Gryson 2011; Gryson 2012, II: 523.

Figure 3 Map of the World. Morgan Beatus, fols. 33v-34. New York, The Morgan Library & Museum, MS M.644

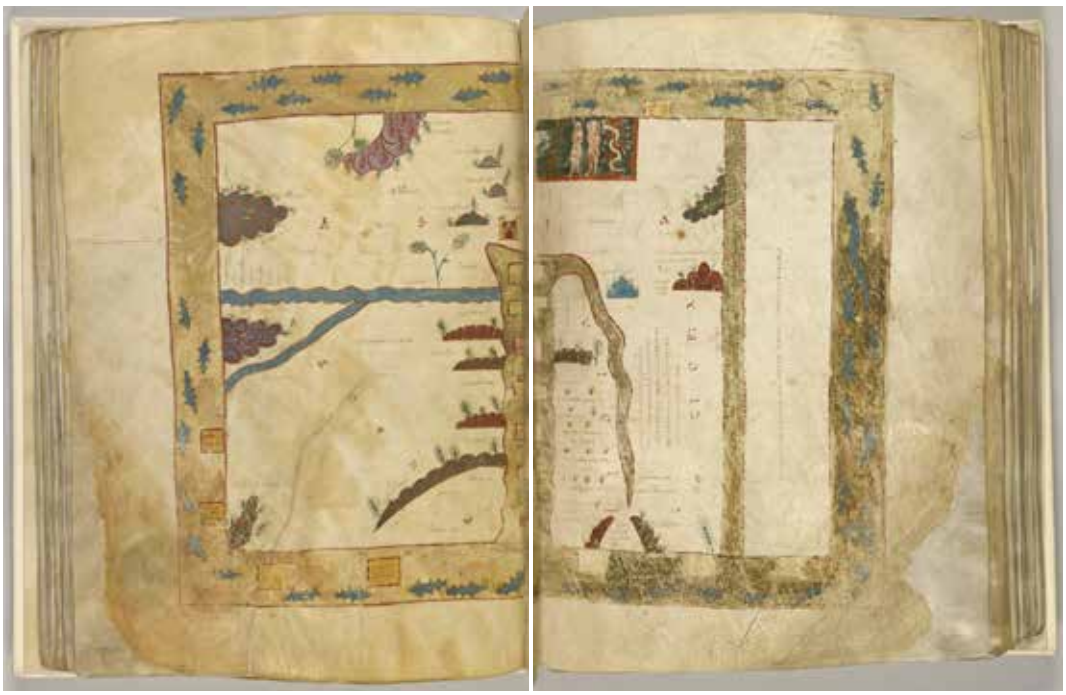


Photo: Joseph Zehavi

to present coherently in pictorial form, given the poetic, visionary language of John's Revelation.

A prominent exception to the Apocalyptic content of Beatus's Commentary was the map of the world present from the beginning (Fig. 3).[4] It was prompted by Beatus's inclusion of *De apostolis* from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* (Bk. VII, 9, 1-4), along with a short portion of the "Birth and Death of the Fathers" (*De ortu et obitu patrum*) sometimes attributed to Isidore, in which the Apostle James's mission was to convert Hispania. Probably based on a formula inherited from Late Antiquity, the map, spread across two pages, was one of the most all-encompassing to survive from the first millennium.[5] Adam and Eve preside over Paradise, which appears in the premier locale at the top (direction east). This is the habitable world of Asia, Europe, and Africa above the equator, the world that in the Book of Genesis was divided among Noah's sons, Shem (Asia), Ham (Africa), and Japeth (Europe), with the ocean surrounding it.

The Illustrated Commentary

Most historians have assumed that the images in the first illustrated Commentary would not have been invented by Beatus or some scribal colleague, but appropriated from an inherited manuscript of the Apocalypse.

4 For the map, see Saénz-López 2014a and Williams 2014. Crucial questions regarding the history of the map have not been resolved.

5 Williams 1997b; Edson 2005.

However, surviving Apocalyptic imagery offers no counterpart for the illustrations,[6] for the content of each Beatus picture was dictated by the *storia* just above it, and thus generated particular compositions unmatched in other traditions.

The texts of these *storiae* were borrowed from a commentary on the Apocalypse written in the second half of the fourth century by the North African writer Tyconius;[7] one might therefore postulate a lost illustrated Tyconius as a model for Beatus's work. Despite the complete lack of surviving examples, claims for "lost models" played a significant role in the twentieth-century historiography of medieval illumination, and depressed the appreciation of invention in new works. In the case of the illustrated Beatus Commentary, a parallel tradition of original biblical illustration in northern Spain provides an additional reason for recognizing inventiveness in Spanish manuscript production: in the middle of the tenth century at the Castilian monastery of Valeránica, the scribe Florentius created a Bible with some ninety pictures placed next to the passages that provided their inspiration.[8] This fact, together with my growing skepticism of the doctrine that medieval imagery was always based on some earlier model, eventually led me to reject my former assumption of a Tyconian model for the illustrations in favor of the originality of the images composed by Beatus for his Commentary.[9] However, it may be that the Commentary subsequently served as an inspiration for Florentius's illustrated Bible, for, as we shall see, there is reason to think that Florentius himself was responsible for a copy of the Commentary. In any case, I am less certain today that Beatus would have conceived an illustrated Commentary without a Tyconian model, for the *storiae* – the quotations from the Apocalypse that precede each illustration and essentially define their content – are virtual captions for the pictures. The challenging question of what inspired the inclusion of illustrations is too important to close; it is my hope that future generations of scholars will delve further into this matter.

The decision to incorporate a multitude of illustrations is perhaps the most surprising aspect of the enterprise. Beatus himself may never even have seen an illustrated book. Certainly none from the peninsula survives from so early a date, and claims for their existence lack real evidence. The oldest Iberian manuscript with an image, an orational now in Verona, dates from around the time of the Muslim invasion of 711; it has a drawing of a wind rose of the type associated with Isidore's *De natura rerum*, with personifications of the winds.[10] Helmut Schlunk once argued for the existence of a Visigothic tradition of biblical illumination, in part on the basis of a comparison between the Offering of Isaac in the Bible of 960 and a similar iconography on a capital in the seventh-century church of San Pedro de la Nave.[11] Whatever the origin of Beatus's decision to illustrate his Commentary, it resulted in the most densely illustrated Latin text of any Christian exegetical work up to that point. Ultimately, it was the pictorial cycle rather than Beatus's text that conferred upon him a fame that would endure to our own time, and in places not known to exist when he wrote.

Given the integral relationship of text and picture in the Beatus tradition and the uniformity of imagery and format through the centuries, scholars have assumed that the

6 Klein 1992.

7 Gryson 2011; Gryson 2012, I, XVIII, CXXXVII.

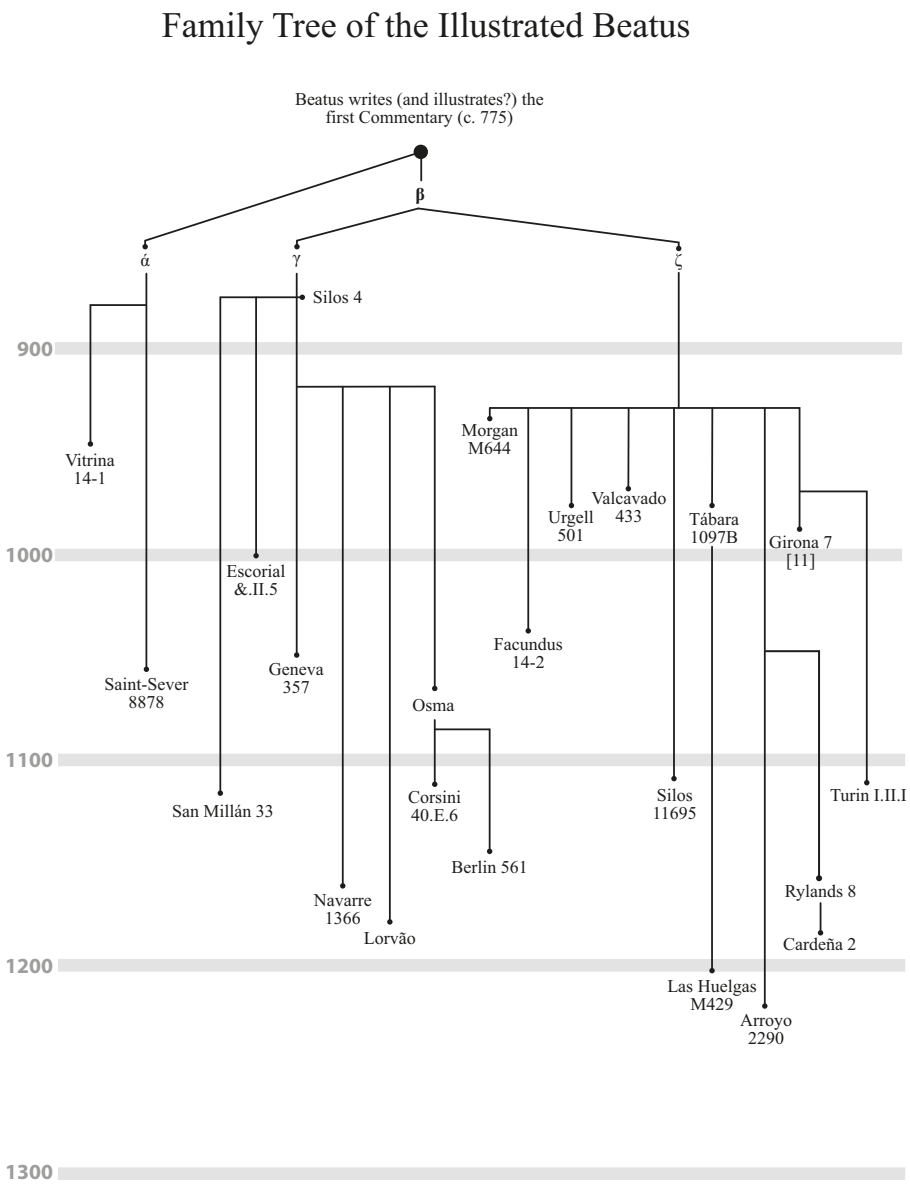
8 Williams 1999b; Díaz y Díaz 1999; Williams 2012b.

9 Williams 2003a, 110-11.

10 Williams 1977, 10-11.

11 Schlunk 1945.

Figure 4 Family tree of copies of the Commentary (Williams over Gryson)



Commentary was illustrated from the beginning. Roger Gryson, the editor of the latest and most authoritative edition of the Commentary, states definitively that "it is certain that the author never conceived of his work as other than illustrated."[12] It can only be imagined that the illustrations were considered partners in the "reading" of the Apocalyptic narrative that appeared just above them. In the famous

12 Gryson 2012, I: XVIII.

admonition Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604) made to a bishop who had scandalized believers by removing biblical paintings from a church to avoid idolatry, the pope said that pictures tell a story (*historia*), just as words do.[13] Both the *storiae* of the Beatus Commentary and its pictures were designed to fix in the brothers' minds the message that God would mete out justice, punishing those who rebelled against him and rewarding the righteous, albeit after severe challenges.

As we shall see, post-medieval marginal glosses confirm that the Commentary was read aloud in a monastic setting during meals in the refectory, a practice that presumably dated from much earlier.[14] Thus, as the monks consumed their daily meals, they would have meditated on the transcendent events that were just beyond the horizon.

The Beatus Tradition: In the Beginning

Although the first Beatus Commentary does not survive, the descent of the tradition through time has left us with forty-one witnesses, some mere fragments.[15] Of the surviving manuscripts, the twenty-nine with illumination are described in the complete census gathered here for the first time; each is referred to parenthetically according to its census number. Taking into account the presumed copies posited by the family tree of the texts (Fig. 4), at least 100 complete manuscripts may have been executed.[16]

Wilhelm Neuss, the original master of the illustrated Commentary's history, composed a family tree of illuminated copies according to which there was an earlier Branch I, closest to the original text, and a Branch II, subdivided, that arose in the tenth century.[17] Neuss's genealogy has stood the test of time, albeit with modifications resulting from more precise analyses culminating in Gryson's 2012 critical edition.

The oldest witness to the tradition, the fragment now at the Castilian monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos (No. 1), is dated by the style of its script and illustration to the last quarter of the ninth century, about a century after Beatus composed the original. It came to Silos in the eighteenth century from Nájera. Although no earlier illustrated manuscripts survive from the Iberian peninsula, the color palette and ornamental details of the fragment recall manuscripts written during the reign of Alfonso III (d. 910) of Asturias, Beatus's home territory. If the Silos Commentary was Asturian in origin, or if it was slavishly copied from an Asturian model by someone with little experience, as it seems, then it is the Commentary with the closest ties to the region where the archetype originated.

Neuss imagined that the original Beatus resembled the Commentary copied in the middle of the eleventh century at the Gascon monastery of Saint-Sever-sur-l'Adour (No. 13). While it is true that the Saint-Sever Beatus employs the original edition of the text, its relatively naturalistic style, so attractive to Neuss,

13 Carruthers 1990, 222-23; Miranda, C. 1998, 339-49.

14 The Commentary was not useful liturgically, for it divided the text of the Apocalypse in a way that did not correspond to the Easter readings of the mass in the Hispanic rite. However, a Silos lectionary (London, BL, MS Add. 30848) for the Roman rite appropriated Apocalyptic texts from the Commentary for readings on the four Sundays after the Easter octave. See Walker 1998, 88.

15 Gryson 2012, I: XIV-XVI. To this should be added a fragment in Milan, No. 28 in this volume's census.

16 "The history of the text [...] obliges us to suppose that there were as many lost examples as those that survive," Gryson 2012, XVIII.

17 Neuss 1931.

Figure 5 Relief of Christ with Angels, Quintanilla de las Viñas, late seventh century

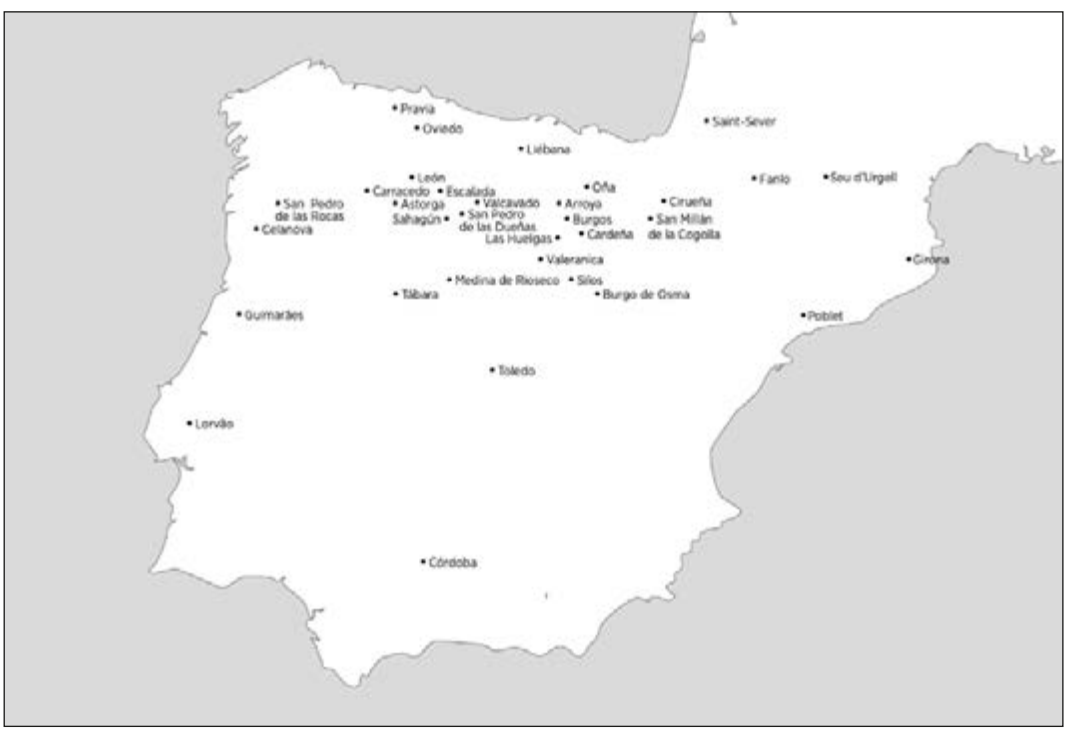
Photo: Hamid Shams

owes its character to an emerging Romanesque aesthetic. By the seventh century, however, peninsular style had already transformed from a Late Classical aesthetic into a more abstract medieval style, as confirmed by figural reliefs like those in the church of Quintanilla de las Viñas (Fig. 5). The schematic treatment of figures and space in the Silos fragment is almost certainly closer to the style of Beatus's original illustrator than the sophisticated illusionistic techniques employed by Garsia, the artist-scribe responsible for the Saint-Sever Beatus. Indeed, it is apparent that the latter's primitive text is accompanied by a set of images belonging to the tenth-century evolution of the illustrations.

Monasteries and Scriptoria

The premier sites in the dissemination of Beatus's Commentary after it was launched from Liébana were all in north-central Spain (Fig. 6), in the kingdoms of León, Castile, and Aragon.

Figure 6 Map of Iberian sites connected to the history of the Beatus Commentary



Map: Amelia Williams

Strangely enough, none of the surviving copies originated in the region that sheltered Liébana, although, as we saw, the ornament and color of the Silos Commentary (No. 1), the earliest example, is linked to manuscripts from the Asturian region. Beatus's Commentary was born in a monastery, and nurtured by monastic and conventual culture throughout its history. As the original dedication of the Commentary states, it was designed for "the edification of the brothers." Some of these monasteries would have a special place in the history of the Commentary, themselves producing copies for other foundations into the thirteenth century.

Not all monasteries had a scriptorium, a space set aside for the copying of books. In the Beatus tradition, three are especially worthy of close attention because each produced multiple copies: Tábara, Sahagún, and San Millán de la Cogolla. San Salvador de Tábara had one of the most important, having produced at least six copies: three survive and three others are implied by the family tree of texts (see Fig. 4). Indeed, the illustrators of the Tábara Beatus of 970 (No. 5) honored their scriptorium in an extraordinary manner by including a portrait of it (see Fig. 41), the only such image from early medieval Europe. The scriptorium is attached to one side of a five-story bell tower whose masonry construction is indicated by the convention of a pattern of polychromed blocks. This early medieval tower may still survive, wrapped within the twelfth-century tower of the church of Santa María at Tábara, which replaced San Salvador (Fig. 7). In the painted image, it is topped off by a tile roof with two projecting belfries, a bell suspended in each. The tower is populated to a surprising extent: four men, of lay status to judge by their dress, occupy the wooden ladders that provide a means of communication between the floors, while another figure at ground level handles the ropes that allow one of the bells to be rung. In the scriptorium are two scribes dressed as monks: the one on the right wearing the larger hat is identified as Emeterius, the other as Senior. Each holds with one hand what appears to be a book or a page attached to some support; with the other hand each applies a long pen or stylus to the surface. In an adjacent room another seated figure cuts the skin of a sheep or calf with a pair of shears, an earlier stage in the process of producing a manuscript. No windows are represented, but the space must have been well lit.

Figure 7 Santa María (formerly San Salvador) de Tábara, consecrated 1137

Photo: Hamid Shams

The scriptorium depicted in the Tábara Beatus is a modest studio in comparison to the space allotted on the ninth-century plan of St. Gall in Switzerland, our earliest graphic witness to scriptorial space.[18] The plan dedicates a generous upper area of 1600 square feet, reached by a monumental set of masonry steps, to the copying of books. Within are seven desks, illuminated by seven windows; each desk is large enough to serve a pair of scribes. St. Gall's idealized (though realistically conceived) plan includes sleeping accommodations for just over 100 monks plus some 130 to 150 servants. At Tábara, the writing room is also depicted as being on the second level, but is a far smaller and more cramped wooden structure communicating with ground level by means of a ladder. Yet if we accept the account in the Life of Froilanus, who founded Tábara around 900, this monastery housed "600 souls devoted to God."[19] Since this was a duplex foundation, this number would have included both monks and nuns; male and female lay figures, such as servants and laborers, could also have been included. Even so, it is an incredible number. As we shall see, Tábara's scriptorium played a seminal role in the history of the Beatus tradition.

Summer was an ideal time for writing and painting. The Beatus Commentary that was copied in 970 at Valcavado (No. 4) seems to have been largely the work of a single monk, Obecus, whose colophon states that the copy was completed between 8 June and 8 September. If a dozen Sundays are subtracted, he wrote the book's 230 folios in 79 days at a rate of at least two and a half folios per day, an impressive achievement. Although Obecus did not complain of the physical cost of this intensive labor, some of his colleagues did. Two decades earlier the eminent scribe Florentius of Valeránica, a key figure in the development of the Beatus tradition carried out by Maius of Tábara, penned a poetic lament in the colophon of the Book of Homilies by Smaragdus:

> A man who knows how to write may think this no great feat. But only try to do it yourself and you shall learn how arduous is the writer's task. It dims your eyes, makes your back ache, and knits your chest and belly together – it is a terrible ordeal for the whole body. So, gentle reader, turn these pages carefully and keep your fingers far from the text. For just as hail plays havoc with the fruits of spring, so a careless reader is a bane to books and writing.[20]

San Salvador de Tábara

In the following sections, our focus turns to the scriptoria and individual artists whose activities are most important to the development and long chronology of the Beatus manuscripts, beginning with the critical significance of Tábara. It was at Tábara that the Beatus Commentary underwent a pictorial reformation that granted it a second life, and in turn offered posterity a splendid new chapter in the history of book illustration. Although we celebrate the eminence of Tábara on the basis of the three copies that survive, the textual stemma, as noted, testifies to another three now lost. The author of the seminal revision of the format was in all probability a monk named Maius (or Magius). He was responsible for the oldest surviving complete

18 Horn and Born 1979, I: 145-55; www.stgallplan.org/en/index_plan.html.

19 Williams 2011a, 17.

20 Nordenfalk in Grabar and Nordenfalk 1957, 168. This would be repeated verbatim in 1091 by Munnius in a Beatus Commentary written at Santo Domingo de Silos (No. 16). Such laments were a part of European scribal traditions.

copy, today in the Morgan Library & Museum in New York (No. 2). Its colophon reveals that it was made for a monastery dedicated to St. Michael. The prevailing assumption is that this was San Miguel de Escalada, founded in 913 by monks from Córdoba, and that Maius must have headed its scriptorium; this identification is based on the fact that at one time the Morgan Commentary was in Escalada, for on folio 293^{v} is a note in fourteenth-century script reading *Obiit Petrus levita CSR*.[21] This reference to the death of a canon of San Rufe has been explained by the fact that in 1156 the monks of Escalada were replaced by canons of Saint-Rufe d'Avignon. It should be noted, however, that around 900, when Froilanus of León founded San Salvador de Tábara, he also founded San Miguel de Moreruela just six kilometers to the southeast (Figs. 8, 9).[22] There is a strong circumstantial case to be made that Maius copied his text at Tábara for this sister monastery of Moreruela and not for Escalada, as we have no evidence otherwise of contact between Tábara and Escalada. Moreruela would have been destroyed when the Muslim general al-Mansur (also known as Almanzor, d. 1002) raided this area of Zamora at the end of the tenth century. If the Beatus Commentary were at Moreruela, it would have been relocated at that time to another monastery in the kingdom of León. Its eventual home at Escalada could well have been made possible by the fact that the royal daughters of the Leonese throne, by way of the inheritance termed the *infantazgo*, came into possession of the monasteries of the kingdom with all their goods. Documentary evidence testifies to gifts awarded by the infantas of León to the monastery of Escalada on more than one occasion.

21 García Lobo 2005, 58-65.

22 Ferrero Gutiérrez 2011; Williams 2011a, 30ff.

Figure 8 San Miguel de Moreruela, thirteenth century

Photo: Hamid Shams

What we know of Maius comes from the extraordinarily informative colophon beneath the grand Omega (Fig. 10) at the end of a Commentary completed at Tábara by his disciple, Emeterius, in 970 (No. 5):

> O truly blessed man, whose body lies in a coffin in the cloister and who wished to see the book brought to completion and bound. This was Magius, priest and monk, the worthy master-painter. He gave up the work he began when he went eternally to Christ on the feast of St. Faustus, the third day before he departed out of time, era 1006 [AD 968]. Then I, the priest Emeterius, formed by my master Magius, was called to the monastery which was raised under the protection of the Savior when they wished to complete the book for the most exalted Lord, and I took it up once more. From the kalends of May to the 6th kalends of August, I completed the book in all its authority. May he deserve to be crowned with Christ. Amen. O tower of Tábara, tall and of stone, the first place where Emeterius sat for three months bent over and with all his limbs maneuvered the pen. The book was finished the 6th kalends of August era 1008 [AD 970] [in the ninth hour].[23]

23 Pérez 2010, 224-26.

Figure 9 San Miguel de Moreruela, window from time of foundation, *c*. 900

Photo: Hamid Shams

The Tábara Beatus is a poor relic of its original state, but invaluable in providing us a glimpse of its scriptorium together with details about Maius and the manuscript's production. Thanks to Peter Klein's analysis of the pictorial tradition of the Commentaries, we know that full-page and double-page pictures, as well as the systematic use of frames and painted backgrounds, were not part of the earliest stage of the tradition.[24] By correlating textual edition

24 Klein 1976.

Figure 10 Omega. Tábara Beatus, fol. 167. Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Cod. 1097B

Photo: John Williams

Figure 11 Whore of Babylon and a King (Apoc. XVII, 1-3). Vitrina 14-1 Beatus, fol. 137^{v}. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, MS Vitrina 14-1

Photo: Hamid Shams

and pictorial content, Klein encountered a consistency that allowed him to attach formats and iconographies to the progressive editions of the text. The initial stage of the tradition would have introduced the basic core of seventy-four Apocalyptic subjects composed essentially as they are found in all of the Commentaries regardless of date, but as pictures scarcely wider than the text columns in which they were inserted, and without frames or painted grounds (Fig. 11). The Morgan Beatus (No. 2) is the earliest surviving Commentary to display the opulent format associated with this phase of the illuminated Beatus tradition. Large framed illustrations, often filling an entire page or, for the very first time in the history of illustrated books, stretching across adjacent pages, are posed against the polychromatic striped backgrounds that characterize the so-called Mozarabic style of illumination.

At the same time, Maius decided to augment significantly the pictorial content by adding new subjects. This iconographic expansion was made possible by the tradition of biblical illustration invented contemporaneously by Florentius. Based at Valeránica in Castile (some 150 miles to the east of Tábara), Florentius is the only character in the history of early medieval Spanish manuscripts to rival Maius as a revolutionary scribe/painter.[25] Florentius's Bible gave Maius the images of the Evangelists with witnesses paired with angels presenting the Gospels, which appear at the beginning of the manuscript. Known as the León Bible of 960 (León, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, Cod. 2), this was also the source of Maius's preface with genealogical tables distributed over the following fourteen pages (see Fig. 45), where the family tree of Jesus is enumerated in a chain of linked circles comprising some 600 names. In combination with portraits of such important ancestors as Adam, Noah, Abraham, and David, the genealogy of pre-Christian history was here divided roughly into four ages, culminating in a depiction of the Adoration of the Magi (see Fig. 71). The 960 Bible also supplied eleven scenes illustrating St. Jerome's Commentary on the Book of Daniel, which was appended to the back of Maius's book – perhaps Daniel's first appearance in a Beatus manuscript (Fig. 12). Since the set of Daniel illustrations in Florentius's Bible was more complete, these images were clearly appropriated for the Commentary (Fig. 13). This borrowing of Evangelist portraits, genealogical tables, and Daniel pictures for Maius's newly revised Commentary on the Apocalypse is not the only evidence for contact between Maius and Florentius. The *Moralia in Iob* completed in 945 by Florentius, now in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid (Cod. 80), includes an illustration of Christ in Majesty based on a combination of prophetic visions from Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the Apocalypse, with cherubim holding the heavenly glory that surrounds Christ while the animals symbolizing the Evangelists seem to converse below (Fig. 14). Although this was a prominent theme elsewhere in Europe, it is the first known Majesty picture from the Iberian Peninsula. Combining animal heads with human bodies, moreover, is a particularly Spanish treatment of the four Evangelists. That formula, as well as the disks with whorl patterns that support these figures, had appeared a half century earlier on two gilt silver reliquary caskets, gifts from the Asturian royal family to the cathedrals of Oviedo and Astorga (Fig. 15).[26] More to the point, the whole composition assembles elements that resemble remarkably the Adoration of the Lamb in Maius's Beatus, held by the Morgan Library & Museum (Fig. 16; no. 2).

25 Williams 1970; Díaz y Díaz 1999, 56-58; Williams 1999a; Williams 2012a, 351-54.

26 *Art of Medieval Spain* 1993, 143-45.

Figure 12 Daniel in the Lions' Den. Bible of 960, León, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro Cod. 2, fol. 233^{v}

Photo: Fernando Ruiz Tomé, © Museo San Isidoro de León

Figure 13 Daniel in the Lions' Den. Morgan Beatus, fol. 260. New York, The Morgan Library & Museum, MS M.644

Photo: Hamid Shams

Figure 14 Christ in Majesty. *Moralia in Iob*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Cod. 80, fol. 2

Figure 15 Silver base of agate casket with Cross and Evangelist symbols, first decade of tenth century. Cámara Santa, Oviedo Cathedral

Photo: Fondo Manuel Gómez-Moreno – Ricardo Orueta, CCHS

The degree of replication exhibited by the cherubim holding a starry circle is so exceptionally close that it is certain that one could not have been made without knowledge of the other, or an image precisely like it.

So, which scribe followed the other? This composition's dependence on the fourth chapter of the Apocalypse suggests that Maius himself was its originator, as Florentius left us no Beatus Commentary. Nevertheless, the possibility, even probability, that Florentius had been responsible for one emerges from an examination of a later Beatus, copied at Santo Domingo de Silos in 1091 and illustrated in 1109 (No. 16).[27] Not only does it incorporate colophonic texts such as the lament quoted above, which are identical to ones penned by Florentius, but it also includes a unique frontispiece, a Majesty page (Fig. 17) resembling that which introduced the Bible of 960 (Fig. 18), and probably the lost Bible of 943.

While this conclusion leaves open the possibility that Florentius established the new Beatus format, the case for his candidacy is weaker than Maius's. The innovative design of frames and painted grounds in the Morgan

27 Boylan 2005, 175-77.

Figure 16 Adoration of the Lamb (Apoc. IV, 6-V, 14). Morgan Beatus, fol. 87. New York, The Morgan Library & Museum, MS M.644

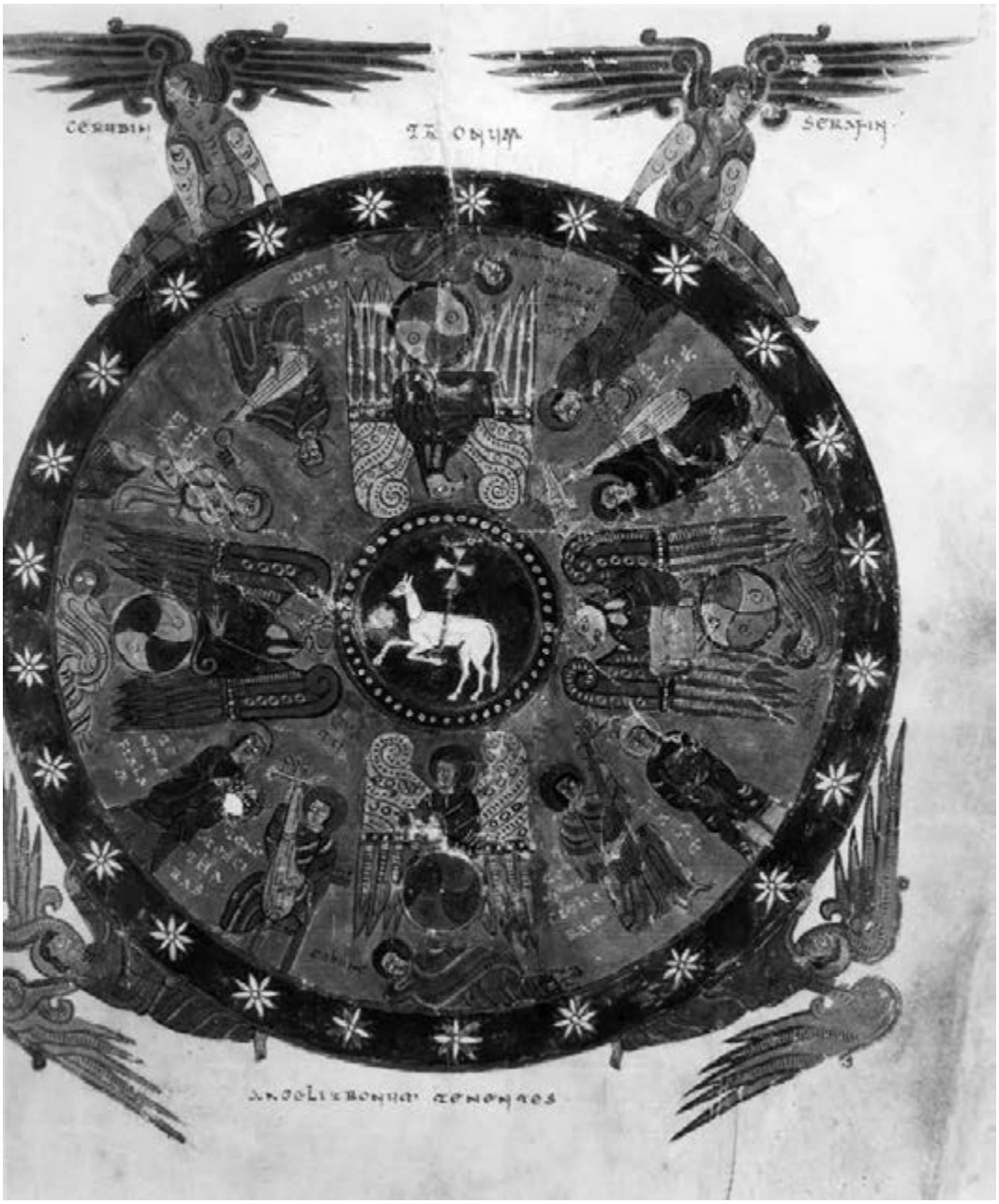


Photo: Joseph Zehavi

Figure 17 Christ in Majesty. Silos Beatus, fol. 7ᵛ. London, British Library, MS Add. 11695

Photo: John Williams

Figure 18 Christ in Majesty. Bible of 960, León, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, Cod. 2, fol. 2

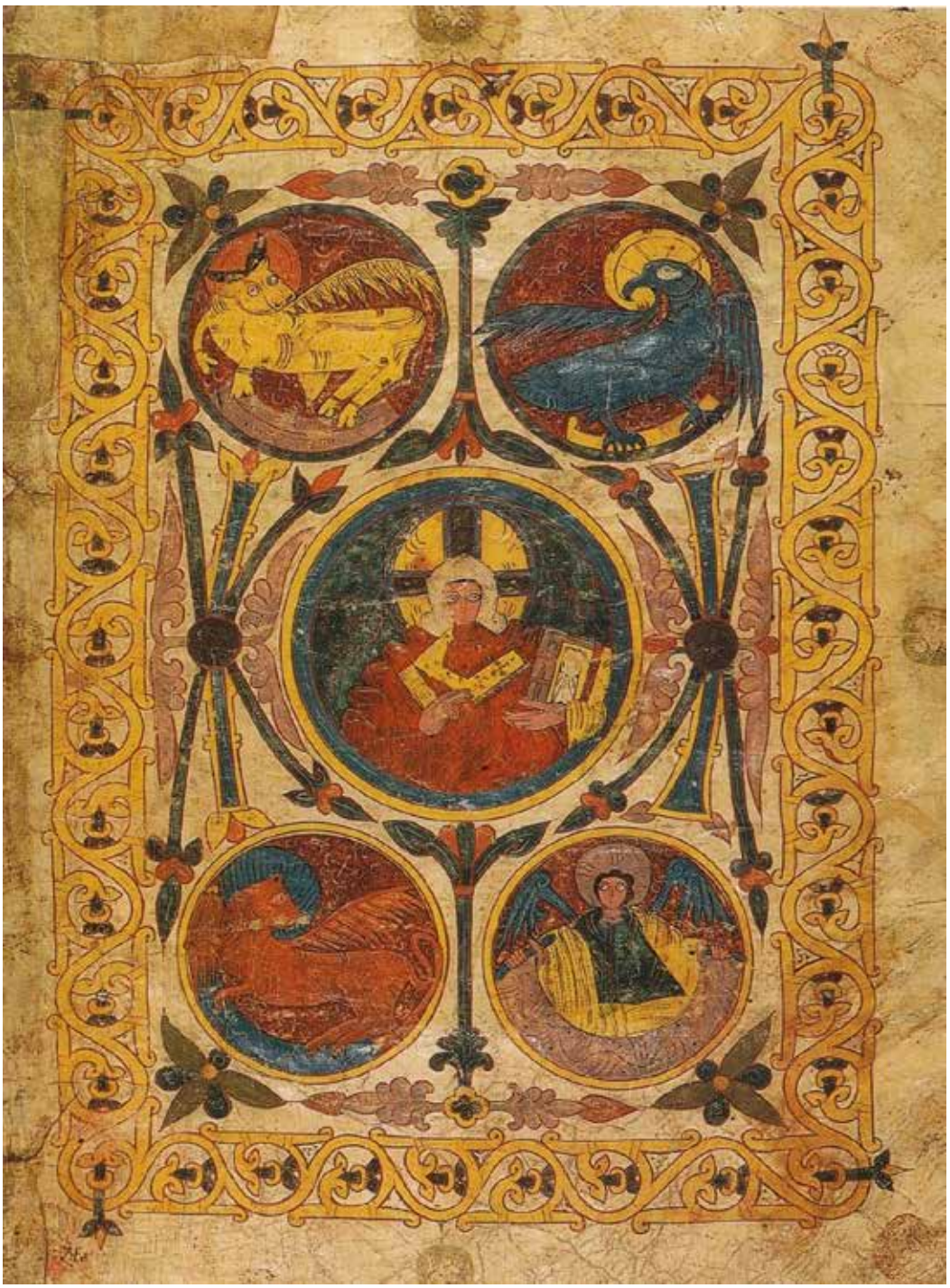


Photo: Fernando Ruiz Tomé, © Museo San Isidoro de León

Beatus was not employed in Florentius's Bible of 960, and the figure style, tending toward the flat and abstract, does not display the pictorial sophistication Maius seems to have gained from emulating Touronian exemplars. More crucially, the connection between Tours and Tábara made clear by Maius's initials and the frontispieces of the Girona Beatus (No. 6) cannot be matched at Valeránica. Indeed, the Valeránican Bible tradition of pictures inserted without frames into the columns of text contrasts completely with the full-page images found in the Bible of Tours, while the initials employed by Florentius follow a Carolingian type not related to Tours. A date close to 945 seems apt for the Morgan Beatus (No. 2). Although Maius died in 968, Florentius was still active a decade later. In the ornamental vocabulary and liberal use of gold, the Girona Beatus of 975 (No. 6), a product of Tábara, reveals a new adhesion to Florentius's style of writing.[28] In terms of figurative art, however, Valeránica had nothing to teach Tábara.

The mere fact that Maius's copy is the oldest Commentary to display the new format and expanded iconography does not guarantee that it was the first of its kind, or even that Maius was responsible for the pictorial revolution. Almost certainly this was not the first manuscript to display the new format: its technical brilliance presupposes earlier efforts by Maius; and in the family tree of manuscripts (see Fig. 4) the Morgan Beatus is not the first even in its own family. The larger question is whether Maius invented or inherited the revisions. One might reasonably imagine that Maius used as his model a Commentary by some other scribe, a manuscript that then would have disappeared without a trace in the following centuries. While the case for assuming the precedence of another scribe depends mainly on accepting this hypothesis as probable rather than merely possible, the case for attributing this new Beatus to Maius himself has several more convincing components. One is the unprecedented and unparalleled praise for Maius as "worthy master-painter" (*arcipictore onestum*) in the colophon of the Tábara Beatus quoted above, and the extraordinary skill applied to the manuscript in terms of design, layout, and execution. It is the only instance of such a designation for an artist in any Spanish medieval manuscript. The eloquent colophon of the Morgan Beatus itself emphasizes the imagery as bearer of content:

> [...] As part of its adornment I have painted a series of pictures for the wonderful words of its stories so that the wise may fear the coming of the future judgment of the world's end.[29]

Given the repeating obsession with millennial years, it seems possible that this statement, written by a member of a generation that might see the year 1000, signals a concern with the imminent end of earthly time.[30] If there was anxiety at the approach of the year 1000, however, other kinds of contemporary documents do not reflect it, even though al-Mansur, Cordoban commander and scourge of the Christian kingdoms, who undertook numerous raids through the north as the millennium expired, could have been portrayed as an ally of the Antichrist; he was not. While this silence does not prove that Spain was free of millennial anxiety, it must be remembered that preparing for the end in the expectation of judgment was the central fact of life for every monk and nun, whether they thought that judgment was imminent or not. Anticipation of the end of time was not necessarily the primary reason for the Commentary's popularity, for more copies were made after the

28 Shailor 2000, 638.

29 Pérez 2010, 221-24.

30 Klein 2011b; Coffey 2010.

year 1000 than before, at moments impossible to align with any millennial fears.

The Beatus Commentary was a reflection of revitalized monastic culture in the tenth century along the frontier between al-Andalus and the Christian kingdoms. Its remarkable pictorial narrative epitomized "Mozarabic" painting, that is, the brilliant polychromatic style associated with pre-Romanesque art in the peninsula.[31] If taken literally, the label "Mozarabic" is misleading. Mozarabs were Christians living under Muslim rule in al-Andalus, but few examples of painting survive from that region. None of our Beatus Commentaries was made in al-Andalus, and there is no certain evidence that any of their creators underwent their cultural formation in Muslim-dominated territory. Acceptance of that label for our Commentaries and other illuminated manuscripts of the tenth and eleventh centuries seems born of a mistaken notion. The few early examples of painting from Islamic lands do not support such a view.

By contrast, the Biblia Hispalense, now in Madrid (Biblioteca Nacional, MS Vitrina 13-1), is the *c.* 900 product of a Christian scribe in Seville, a true Mozarab. The Evangelist symbols of the Biblia Hispalense (Fig. 19), with their subdued color scheme and successful illusion of three-dimensionality, stand in vivid contrast to those in a contemporary Leonese Bible of 920 (Fig. 20) in the Cathedral of León (Cod. 6), but it is the style of the Leonese example rather than the Sevillian one that has been labeled "Mozarabic."[32]

Although Maius benefited considerably from contacts with the pictorial art of Carolingian France, the flatness and brilliant color of his pages belong to a peninsular aesthetic formed in isolation. In the single Asturian illuminated manuscript surviving from the ninth century, the Bible of La Cava dei Tirreni (Biblioteca de la Badia, MS memb. I), intense hues are combined with archaic ornamental formulas.[33] Although, as will be noted in the discussion of the Girona Beatus (No. 6), Islamic iconographies might find their way into a Beatus Commentary, it is difficult to identify any Islamic contribution to the style. Simply put, there was no comparable Islamic manuscript painting in the tenth century. Where Christian and Islamic arts did share compositional formulas was in the figural representation of celebration and Majesty, as we shall see below.[34]

The illuminated initials of the Morgan Beatus offer a direct clue as to the inspiration for the new format and stylistic complexity. The rapid growth of scribal activity in the middle of the tenth century coincided with a revolution in the design of peninsular initials, for which Carolingian exemplars were taken as models. Initials whose best analogs are found within the repertory of Gallic manuscripts of the eighth century were displaced overnight by initials based on Carolingian types of the ninth century. In Valeránica, Florentius adopted the Carolingian Franco-Saxon style for the creation of his initials.[35] Maius also used Carolingian initials as his inspiration for change, but they belonged to the particular format associated with the scriptorium of Saint-Martin de Tours in central France.[36] Thus the initial I of Maius's Commentary has panels that are square and filled with rosettes and palmettes, a formula employed at Tours (Figs. 21, 22). No Touronian manuscript can be found in a peninsular library today, and the manner in which that center's characteristic vocabulary of illustration and ornament became known at Tábara remains a mystery. Its impact, however, is beyond

31 Williams 1997a.
32 Williams 1977, Plates 3, 4.
33 Williams 1977, Plates 1, 2.
34 Williams 1994a, 143ff.
35 Guilmain 1960.
36 Williams 1987.

Figure 19 **Symbols of the Evangelists Luke and John. Biblia Hispalense, *c.* 900, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, MS Vitrina 13-1**

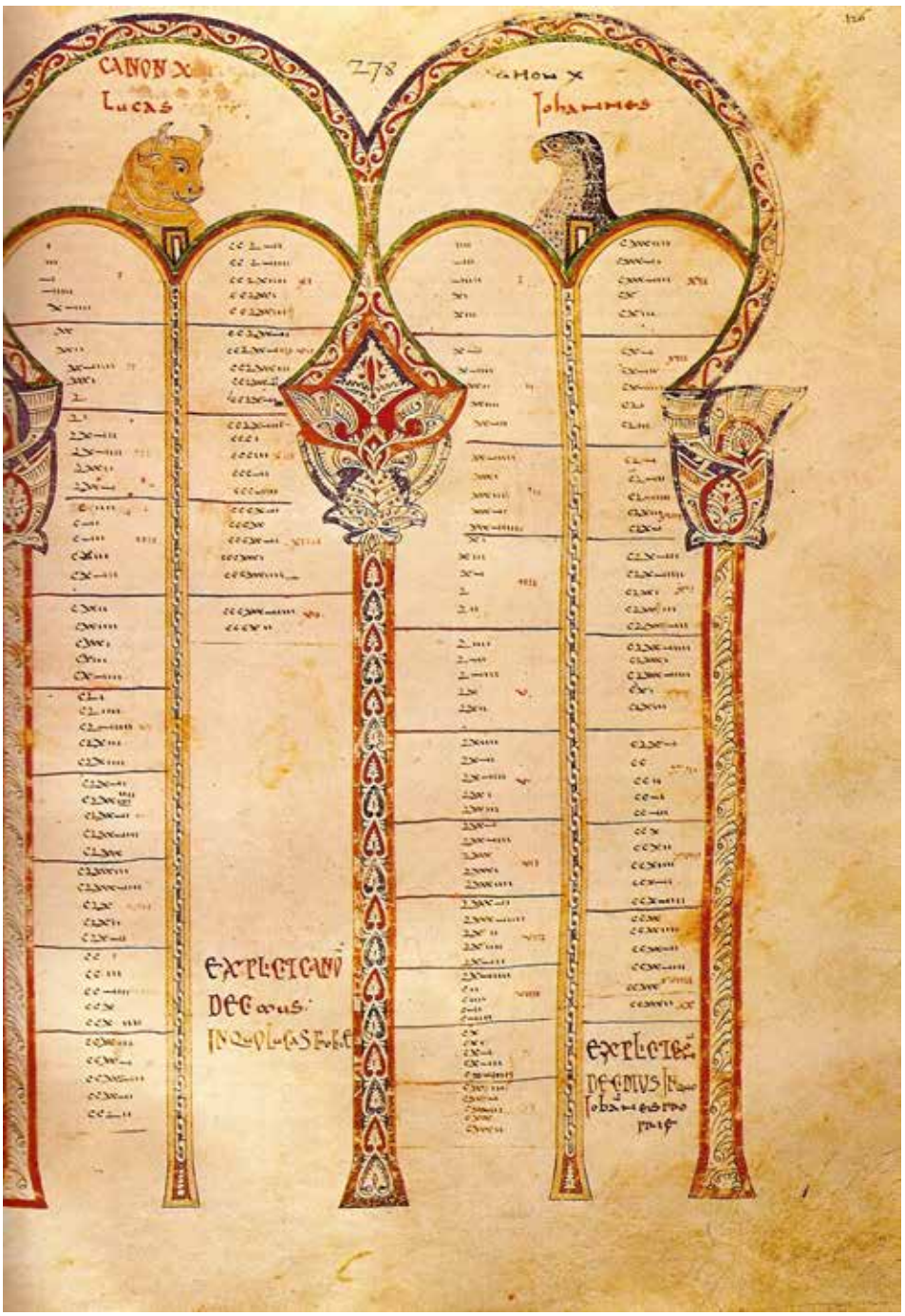


Photo: John Williams

Figure 20 Symbols of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Bible of 920, León Cathedral, Cod. 6

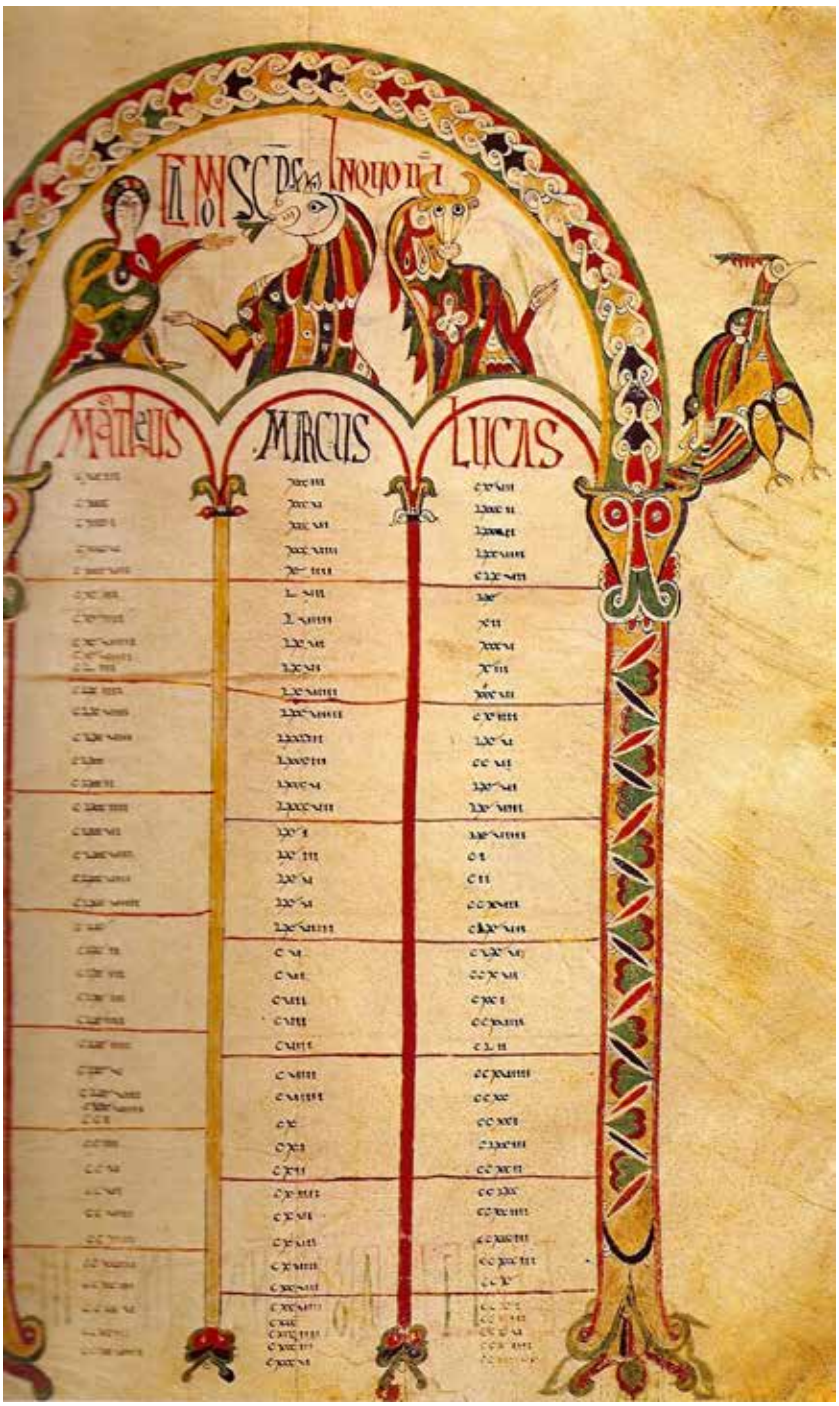


Photo: John Williams

Figure 21 **Initial I. Morgan Beatus, fol. 10. New York, The Morgan Library & Museum, MS M.644**

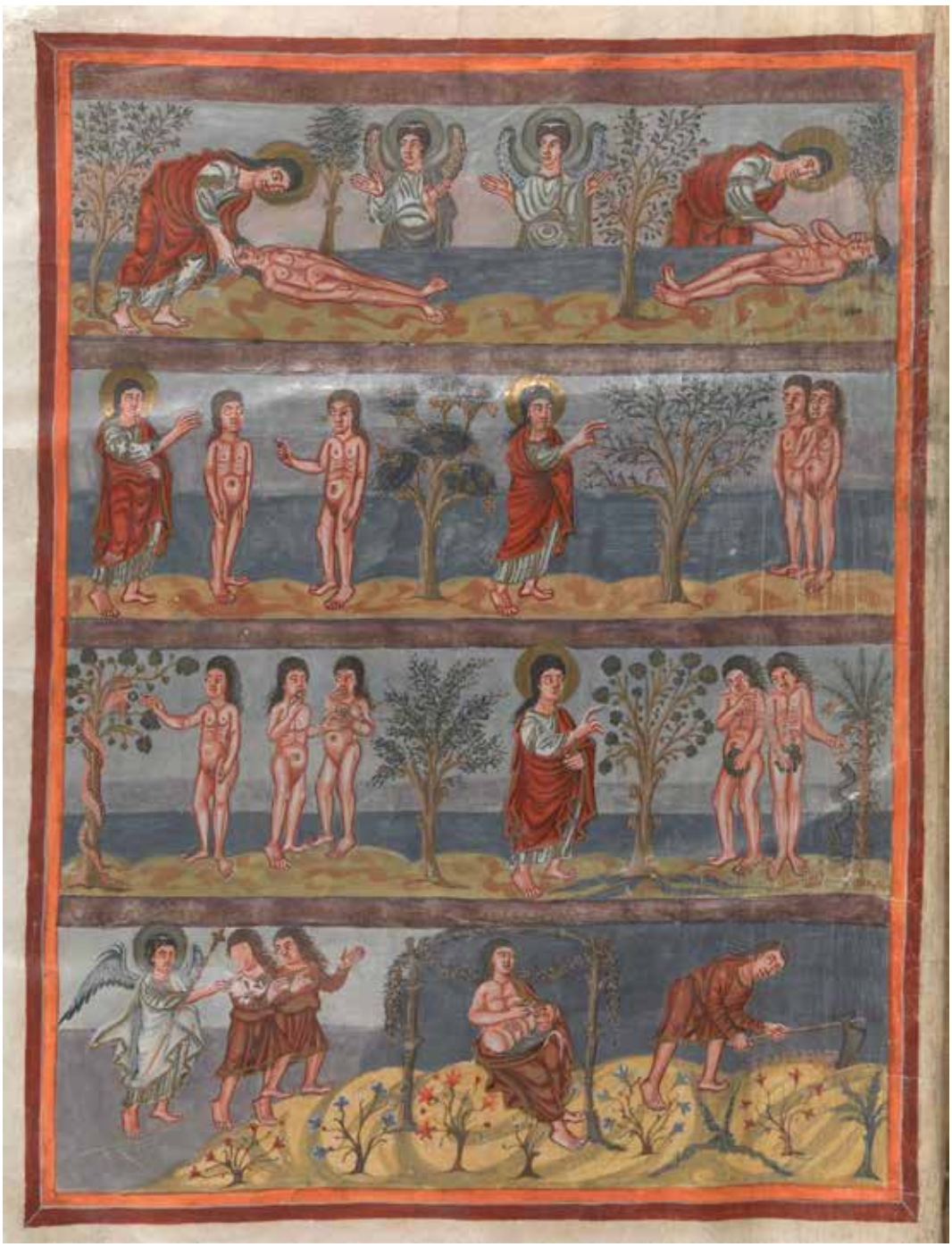
Photo: Hamid Shams

Figure 22 **Initial I. Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS Car. C 1, fol. 453^{v}**

Drawing: John Williams

dispute. Moreover, fully illustrated Touronian manuscripts must have been known, for in a slightly later Commentary from Tábara, now in the cathedral of Girona (No. 6), the innovative Cross and Christ in Majesty frontispieces were based on formulas with exact counterparts in Touronian biblical manuscripts. Given these clear links, it seems likely that Touronian biblical illustration inspired Maius to abandon the small illustrations with plain parchment backgrounds (which had been standard in the earlier phase of the illustrated Commentary) in favor of the new format of framed illustrations

Figure 23 Genesis frontispiece. Moutier-Grandval Bible, London, British Library, MS Add. 10546, fol. 5^{v}



with painted backgrounds, for both are typical of the great illustrated Bibles of Tours (Fig. 23). While we cannot absolutely confirm Maius's responsibility for the reformation that made the Beatus Commentary one of the most resplendent manuscript traditions in the Middle Ages, the clear evidence of Touronian formats at Tábara points to the latter as the scriptorium responsible for the revolution. And Maius has no known rival for the honor of carrying out this revolution.

Emeterius, the disciple of Maius who completed at Tábara the Commentary of 970 (No. 5), collaborated five years later with two others, one of them a scribe named Senior, on the magnificent Beatus now in the Cathedral of Girona (No. 6). Emeterius's name appears at the end of the manuscript, below an immense interlace Omega (Fig. 24). Presented in an elaborate display script against a painted ground, his name is preceded by two others, the first of which, most extraordinarily, is that of a woman: "En, painter and helper of God, [and] brother Emeterius, priest" (*En depintrix et D*[*e*]*i aiutrix frater Emeterius et presbiter*).[37] The circumstances behind this celebration of a woman's participation in such an ambitious book are difficult to pin down. It is usually assumed, for this period, that the only women who could have been involved in manuscript production were nuns. We know that nuns worked as scribes: Leodegundia, for example, copied a *Liber regularum* in the region of Tábara around 930.[38] There were duplex monasteries in which monks and nuns lived, usually in separate establishments under a common abbot – or, at times, an abbess – and Tábara was one of these. The label *Dei aiutrix*, helper of God, has been seen as a confirmation of En's religious station, but this honorific title was also bestowed on non-religious, albeit persons of high rank, so a civil status for En is not out of the question.[39] The search for a "feminine" hand among the miniatures has been rewarded to the satisfaction of some, but even En's role as a painter is not confirmed by the label *depintrix*, for it was a term sometimes used for purely scribal activity. One example comes from the monastery of Sahagún, where the scribe of a document that is not illuminated signed it *Dominico depinxit*, although *scripsit* was the usual verb employed by scribes in the Sahagún documents.[40] Since writing and painting were done while the sheets of parchment were unbound, En's contribution did not necessarily require her presence in the scriptorium itself. The fact that her name is presented first and in an ornamental format may favor her identification as head painter or even as patron. In any case, she is accorded a special status within the Beatus tradition, although we cannot now determine just what her role was.

While it is true that the decimated state of the Tábara Beatus (No. 5) seriously reduces its visual impact, the extraordinary pictorial richness of its successor, the Girona Beatus (No. 6), strongly suggests that it was conceived as a much grander project, one that marked a renewed creativity in the venerable scriptorium and the introduction of another generation of scribes and painters. New pictures linked to Touronian biblical illustration appear here, and three frontispieces present the Cross (this time in the guise of the Crucifixion), Christ in Majesty (see Fig. 44), and a cosmic scheme of enclosed circles. These are followed by scenes of Christ's Infancy and Passion, whose prototypes remain elusive. New Testament scenes before the eleventh century

37 Pérez 2010, 226-27.

38 Escorial, Biblioteca del Monasterio, Cod. A.I.13. See Díaz y Díaz 1979, 38.

39 Ferrer Dalgá 1993, 267-72.

40 Herrero de la Fuente 1988, no. 549. On the verb *depingere* as signifying writing, see also Carruthers 1988, 153. For a rejection of *depingere* as a word connoting anything but illumination, see Díaz y Díaz 1999, 66.

Figure 24 Omega and colophon. Girona Beatus, fol. 284. Museu de la Catedral de Girona, Num. Inv. 7(11)

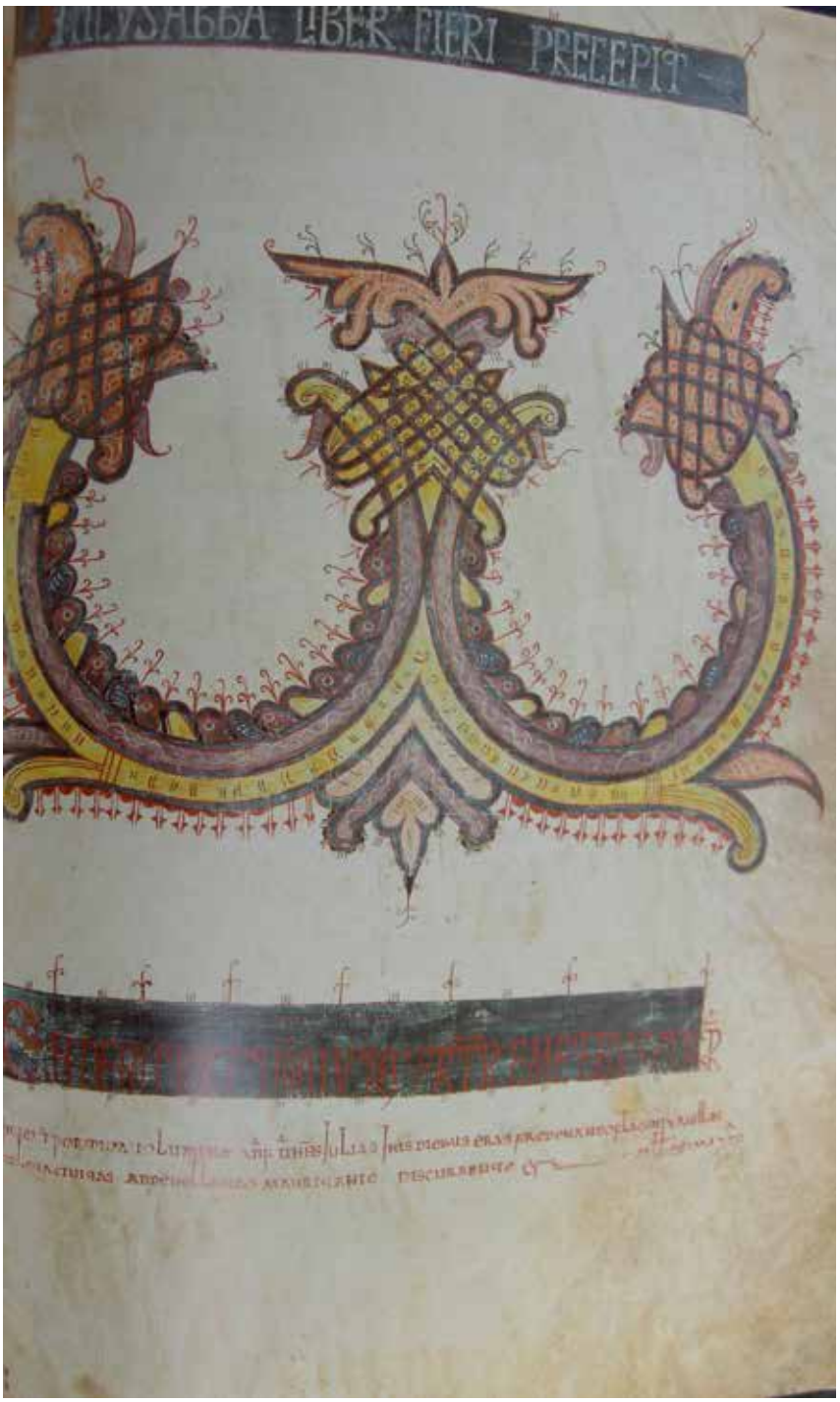


Photo: John Williams

Figure 25 Adoration; Flight into Egypt and Herod Wounded by his Horse; Herod Bedridden. Girona Beatus, fol. 15v. Museu de la Catedral de Girona, Num. Inv. 7(11)

Photo: John Williams

Figure 26 **Simurgh, Eagle, and Gazelle. Girona Beatus, fol. 165ᵛ. Museu de la Catedral de Girona, Num. Inv. 7(11)**

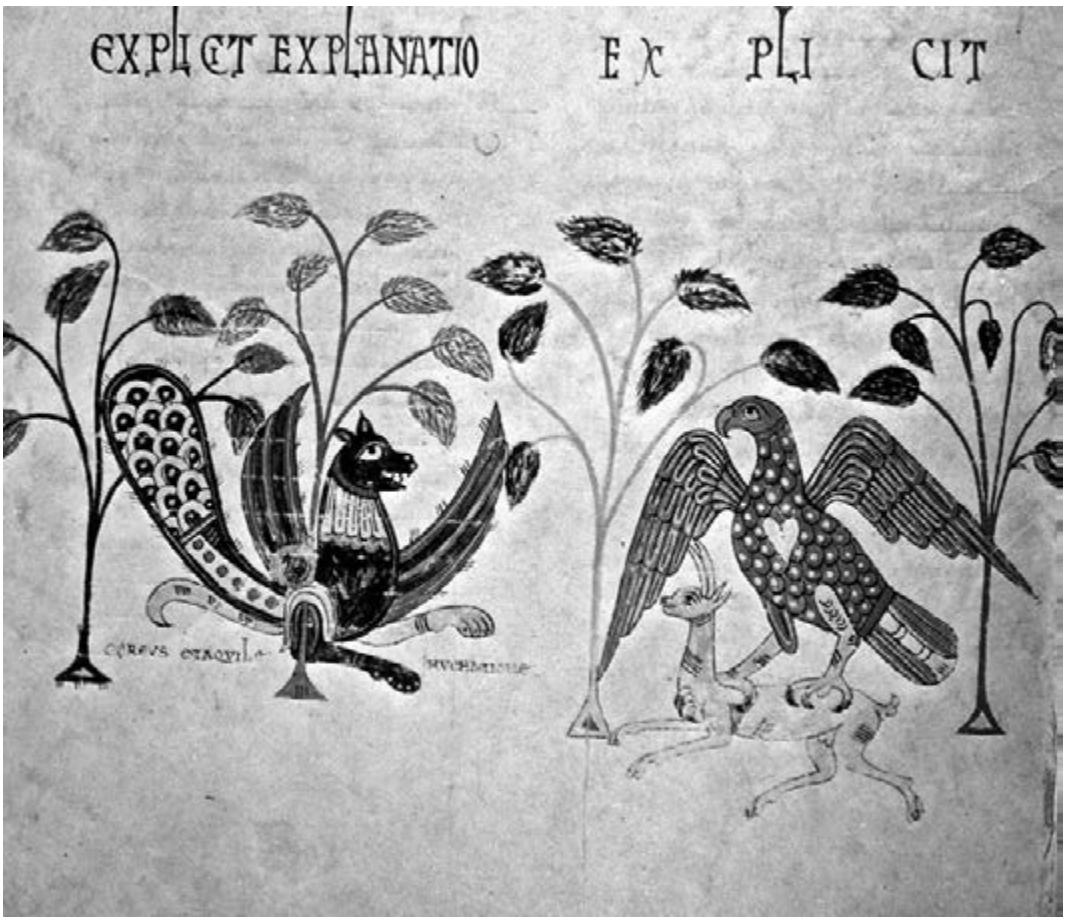


Photo: Hamid Shams

are rare in Spanish art, and those in the Girona Beatus are unexpectedly singular. They include non-biblical details and subjects that are without known counterparts inside or outside Spain. Exceptional episodes involving the life of Herod, for instance, are gathered on folio 15ᵛ (Fig. 25). The page begins at the top with the Adoration of the Magi. The middle register shows the Holy Family on their way to Egypt, where they encounter Herod, according to the inscription. Herod lies on the ground after his "horse kicked him and struck him in the thigh." While the source of this particular narrative is unknown, the scene in the bottom register, where Herod "is ill from the blow of his horse" and reclines on a bed, can be connected to the description of Herod's attempted suicide recounted in Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews* (XVII, vi) and *Wars of the Jews* (I, xxxiii). The fact that Josephus does not include any mention of Herod being attacked by his horse suggests that the illuminator of the Girona Beatus was using a model that already combined various sources, biblical and apocryphal. Otherwise one must imagine that Tábara had a library

Figure 27 Great Mosque of Córdoba, St. Stephen's Door, 855

Photo: Therese Martin

extraordinarily rich in resources from which the illuminator drew to create a new image.

In terms of style, the figures in the Girona Commentary differ significantly from Maius's copy in the design of drapery, employing formulas closer to those of the rest of Europe. The cultural horizons implied for Tábara by the Girona copy are difficult to reconcile with the monastery's isolated and modest nature. Was the presence of En, whose name is elevated even above that of Emeterius in the colophon, somehow key to the enrichment of subjects and styles, whether as artist or patron or both?

At the same time, the Girona Beatus displays the greatest number of iconographic and ornamental motifs borrowed from Islamic culture (though not style, as noted above), which are distributed throughout its generous margins (Fig. 26). Perhaps this is to be expected in a pictorial culture routinely labeled "Mozarabic." In fact, to a surprising degree, Christian architects of the tenth century in northern Spain adopted for their churches certain spatial formulas and motifs employed at the Great Mosque of Córdoba (Fig. 27). These Islamic architectural details – such as the horseshoe arch (of a proportion differing from those of the Visigothic culture of seventh-century Spain) and the *alfiz* (the rectangular framing of an arch) – are likewise found within the Beatus tradition. They appear not just as a means of designating an Islamic "other," but also within purely Christian contexts, as in the Morgan Beatus's depiction of Heavenly Jerusalem (see Fig. 36).

The ambiguous relationship between Andalusi images and Christian settings has inspired contradictory interpretations.[41] On the one hand, quotations of motifs of Islamic origin can be placed within a condemnatory context. A prominent example is seen in the illustration of the Feast of Baltassar, one of the episodes from Jerome's Commentary on the Book of Daniel, which came to be included in Beatus manuscripts (see Fig. 42). The setting of this scene beneath a large horseshoe arch made up of alternating red and white voussoirs would seem to identify the profane feast with the Muslims of al-Andalus, and especially with the Great Mosque of Córdoba (see Figs. 1, 27), giving the framework an apparently negative reading. On the other hand, for some scholars the presence of quotations from Islamic settings betrays a seductive beauty or exoticism too attractive to resist. There is yet another possibility to be taken seriously, however: this "Orientalization" might have been a neutral way of acknowledging the Middle Eastern setting of the events of the Apocalypse and of the biblical iconography based on the Book of Daniel. It should be noted, however, that the same features – horseshoe arch and alternating red and white voussoirs – were installed in the tenth-century Leonese church of San Cebrián de Mazote on the doorway used by the monks as they passed from cloister to choir, a context that calls for yet another reading of these features (Fig. 28). The ambiguity is nowhere more obvious and challenging than in the arresting image of a mounted warrior spearing a serpent or dragon in the Girona Beatus (Fig. 29; No. 6). While ancient tradition assigned the serpent a satanic identity that converts this image into an allegory of Christian triumph, the Orientalizing formulas – flying headband, shawl, and stirrups – employed for the rider have their closest counterparts in Sassanian and Coptic art. By implication, these details identify the warrior as an Andalusi, or at the very least as someone from the East. The *storia* of the facing illustration of the Angels restraining the Winds (Apoc. VII, 1-3) does not explain the warrior's appearance, nor does the commentary that accompanies it. However, the symbolic representation of Christian triumph over evil by means of figures battling serpents already had a long history and is found elsewhere in the Girona Beatus itself. Karl

41 Werckmeister 1993; Williams 2004.

Figure 28 San Cebrián de Mazote, Kingdom of León, tenth century

Photo: Hamid Shams

Werckmeister identified this serpent with the Christians in his interpretation of the image as a "biblical allegory of Muslim oppression," citing the exegetical tradition based on Matthew X, 16: "Behold I am sending you forth like sheep in the midst of wolves. Be therefore wise as serpents, and guileless as doves."[42]

If one imagines an unrelenting identification of Muslims as the "enemy," the warrior's Islamic appearance indeed seems hard to interpret in other than negative terms; however, the positive use of Islamic motifs elsewhere in the commentary points to a need for nuance. Although mounted warriors spearing serpents do not appear in the repertory of surviving Islamic art in the peninsula, warriors spearing lions do. Such themes have been recognized as part of the iconography of the "celestial hunt," symbolizing Paradise.[43] Elsewhere in the Girona Beatus, however, serpents have the common satanic identity, most compellingly in the full-page depiction of a bird, which represents Christ according to the accompanying text, attacking a serpent (Fig. 30). Outside the Iberian Peninsula, on the twelfth-century ceiling of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, where artists painted Islamic themes within a Christian setting, a mounted warrior spearing a serpent appears more than once.[44] In the Girona Beatus, a direct reference to warfare between Christians and Muslims can be read in the note attached to its colophon, which states that as the book was being completed, a Christian nobleman, Fredenando Flaginiz, was near Toledo, fighting the Muslims. Yet the ready adoption of Islamic formulas for a Christian book is not ultimately paradoxical. While warring between Christians and Muslims did take place, Christians more often battled other Christians, sometimes as allies of Muslims. Culturally, the Islamic world had no Western rival. Its arts offered Mediterranean constituencies a rich repertory of iconography and ornamental motifs that transcended ideological boundaries.

Although the earliest scholarly appreciations of "Mozarabic" painting tended to see it as a surrogate for an imagined lost Islamic painting, it was not in the realm of style that Islamic culture influenced the Commentaries, but in its iconography, especially themes of a celebratory and triumphal nature. This was true even for subjects based on Christian themes inspired by the Apocalypse. Thus the Adoration of the Lamb on Mount Sion (see Fig. 35) includes musicians whose closest parallels are found on contemporary ivory containers produced at the caliphal workshop in Córdoba (Fig. 31). The triumphant warrior of the Girona Beatus should thus be seen as a reflection of a shared, Mediterranean iconographic tradition.

If we accept that Maius created the new Beatus at Tábara around 940 and imagine that the Girona Beatus of 975 was the last copy made

42 Werckmeister 1997. For a counterview, see Williams 2004.

43 Shepherd 1978.

44 Monneret de Villard 1950, 45, Figs. 34, 58, 83, 236.

Figure 29 Mounted Warrior. Girona Beatus, fol. 134. Museu de la Catedral de Girona, Num. Inv. 7(11)

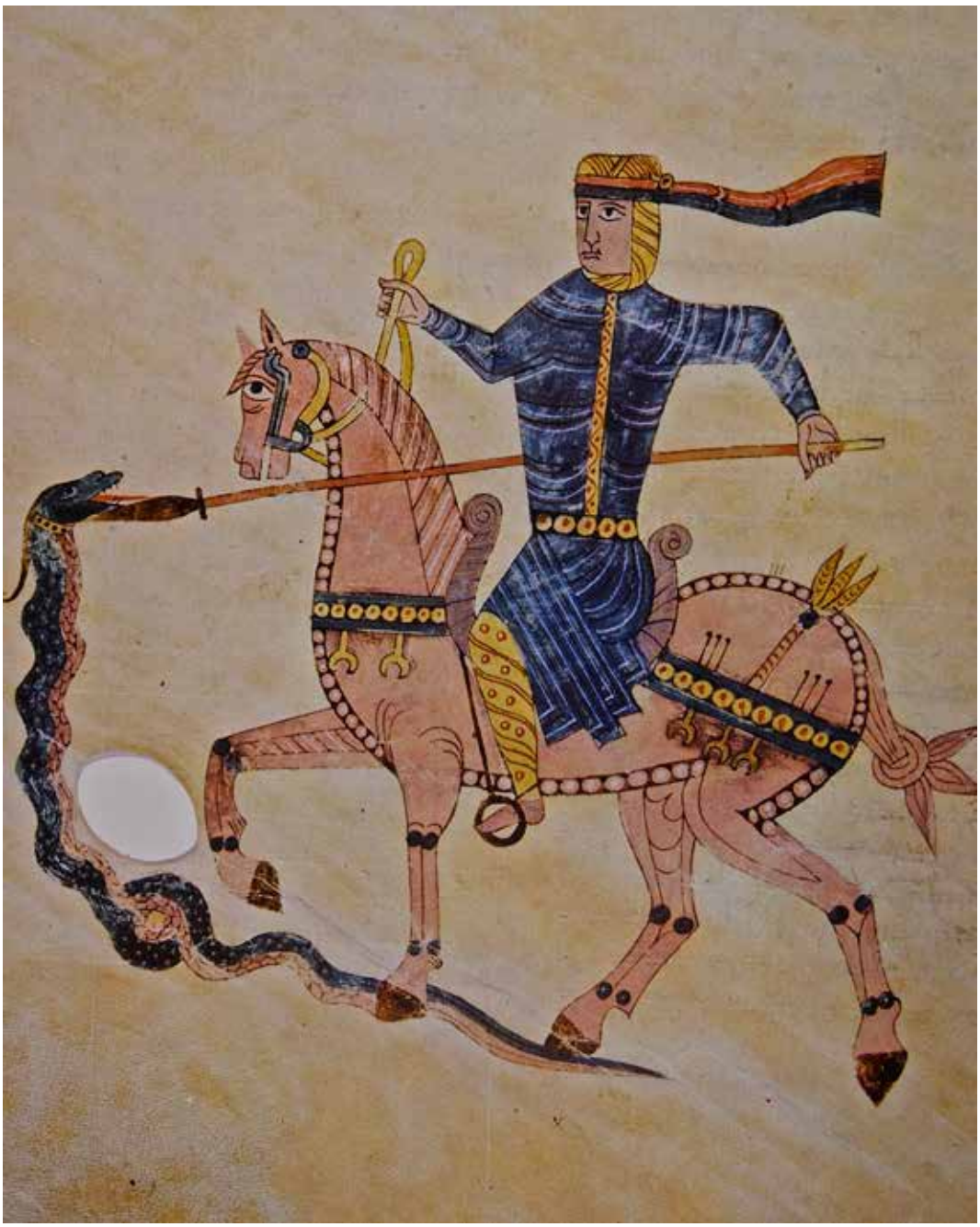


Photo: Hamid Shams

Figure 30 Bird Attacking a Serpent. Girona Beatus, fol. 18ᵛ. Museu de la Catedral de Girona, Num. Inv. 7(11)

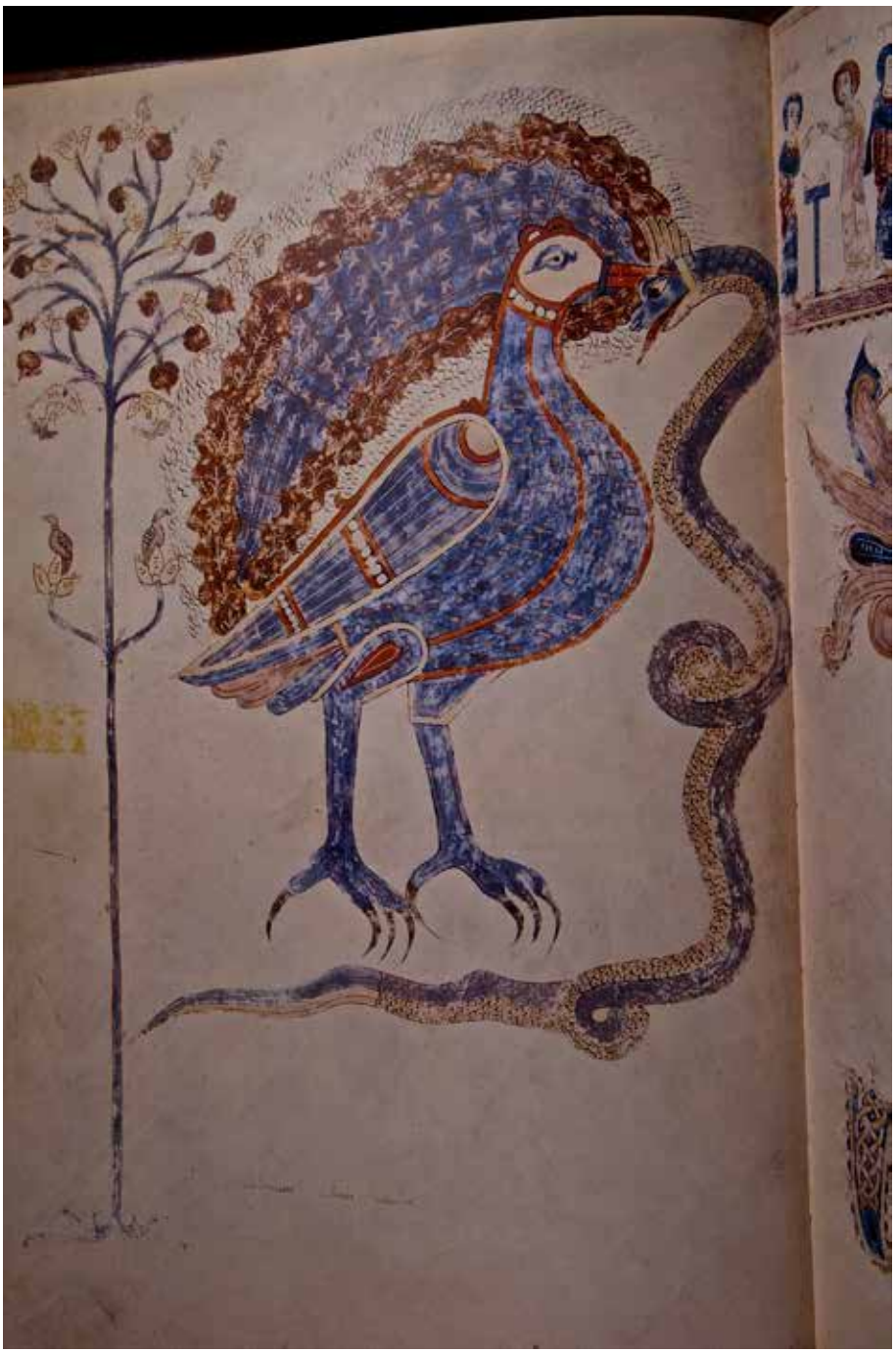


Photo: Hamid Shams

Figure 31 Ivory pyxis of al-Mughira, Córdoba, 968. Paris, Musée du Louvre, OA 4068

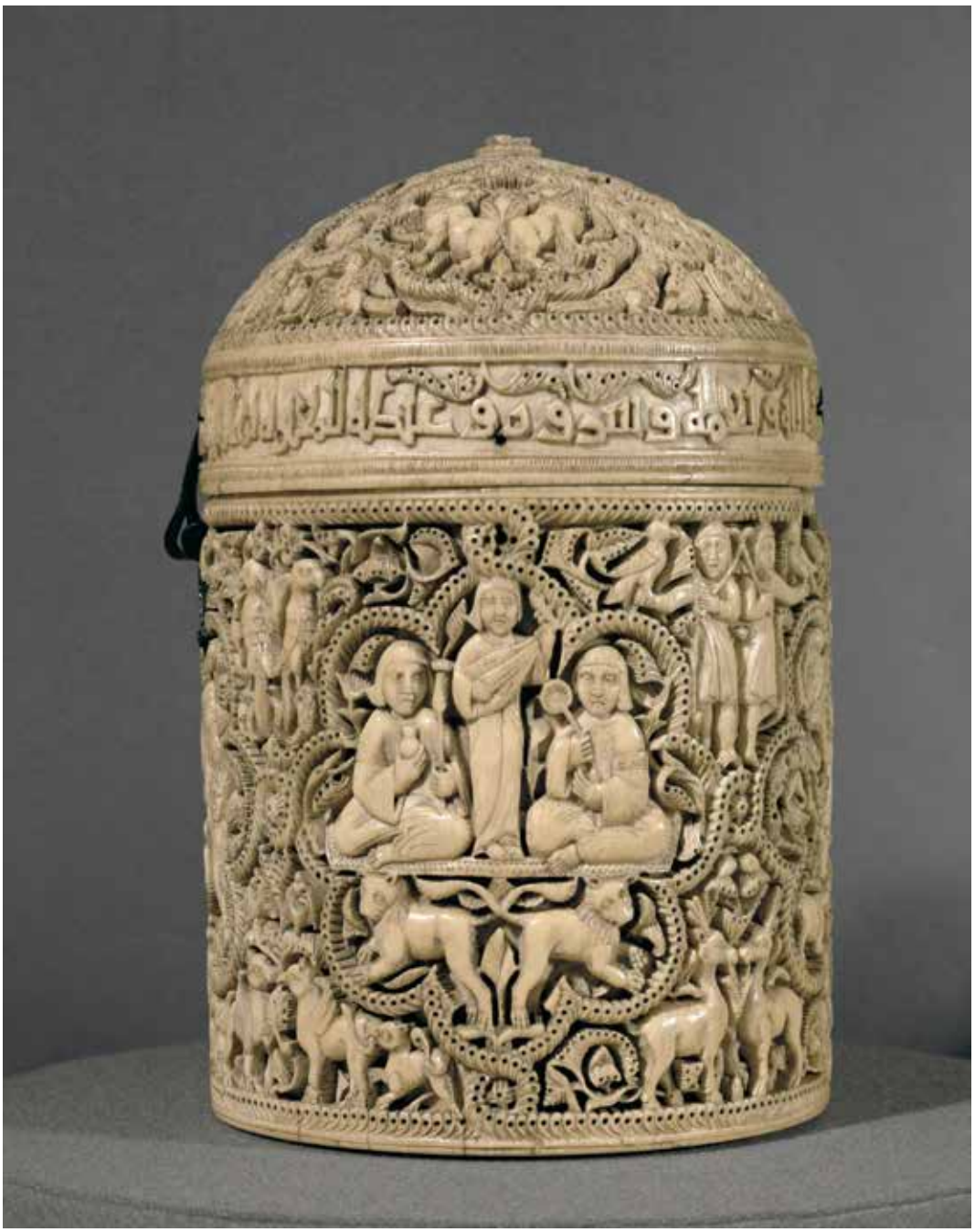


Photo: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY

there, we have for the scriptorium a recorded life of thirty-five years involving at least two generations. The need to call Emeterius to Tábara implies that he was in residence elsewhere, even though he identified himself as Maius's disciple. Tábara may have trained scribes for other sites at a time when monasteries were proliferating and the demands for liturgical books and spiritual reading multiplied. Eiminus, a scribe of these same years associated with manuscripts from San Millán de la Cogolla, may also have begun his career at Valeránica.[45] The picture of the specialized nature of copying and illuminating manuscripts that emerges thus highlights the role of scriptoria in the frontier culture of Spain around the millennium, and, within the scriptoria, the role of individuals with special talents. Scriptoria depended not only on the vitality of institutions, but also on the presence of talented individuals. Not every monastery could be expected to undertake the copying of books and the training of scribes. Still rarer would be a scriptorium with the skills worthy of illuminated manuscripts. Priest and monk as he was, Maius strikes us today primarily as a great artist. Florentius, too, had a clerical vocation, and he is associated with a script of exquisite refinement and with manuscripts resplendently endowed with illumination. Maius and Florentius belonged to a class of scribe that appreciated, sought out, and adapted artistic traditions. They communicated with professional colleagues from centers both nearby, as in the case of Tábara and Valeránica, and relatively distant, as in the case of Tours in north-central France.

Sahagún

Although the monastery of Sahagún produced several Beatus Commentaries, none of its scribes left the sort of colophon that would give us a sense of them as individuals, the way Maius and Florentius had done. Sahagún was one of the numerous monasteries founded or refounded early in the tenth century along the frontier with Muslim Spain.[46] It was settled by a dozen emigrant monks from Córdoba after the Asturian king, Alfonso III (r. 866-910), bought property on the River Cea. The name Sahagún represents an elision over time of the name of St. Facundus, who shared the dedication of the monastery with St. Primitivus. They were Leonese saints with a cult already flourishing in the seventh century. The benefit of royal interest would continue until the end of the twelfth century, and Sahagún even acted as the virtual capital of Alfonso VI (r. 1065-1109), with a palace, a thriving town, and eventually his mausoleum.[47] At its height, Sahagún was the largest monastery in Spain. Almost none of it survives today. Bernard de La Sauvetat, a former scribe in the grand Burgundian monastery of Cluny, was its abbot until he assumed the archbishopric of Toledo after its capture by Alfonso VI in 1085.[48]

Although Sahagún received donations of books, it likely had a scriptorium from nearly the start of its history. It may have been responsible for the early tenth-century fragment of a Beatus now at a dependency of Sahagún's, the female monastery of San Pedro de las Dueñas, only a few miles south of the men's community. Its text belongs to the same branch of the family tree of copies as the ones assignable to Sahagún.[49] The Dueñas Commentary may have been illustrated, but the remaining fragment is too partial for us to be sure.

45 Pérez de Urbel 1977.

46 Gómez-Moreno 1919, 202-06.

47 Senra 2011.

48 Williams 2012a.

49 Díaz y Díaz 1977; Suárez González 2009, 86f.; Gryson 2012, LXII.

In 1086 the monk Petrus copied at Sahagún a Commentary now in the cathedral of Burgo de Osma in Castile (No. 14). Although the Alpha frontispiece of the Facundus Beatus of 1047 (No. 11) reveals in Christ's drapery patterns a rejection of "Mozarabic" formulas and hints at an awareness of the emerging Romanesque approach (see Fig. 52), the Osma Beatus is the first Spanish copy to display a completely Romanesque style, with figures designed to suggest volume and movement in a convincing if highly conventionalized way (see Fig. 58). The fact that Martinus, the artist of the Osma Beatus, was following a Commentary belonging to the earlier branch of the family tree, the branch that had not been "Mozarabicized" at Tábara in the tenth century, must have facilitated the shift toward stylistic modernization. However, the first Commentary to display this new Romanesque style had already been painted a generation earlier in the middle of the eleventh century in France, the home of the style, at the Gascon monastery of Saint-Sever-sur-l'Adour, just north of the Pyrenees (No. 13, see Figs. 56, 57). Somewhat later, at the turn of the century, a copy that survives only in fragments (Valladolid, Archivo de la Real Chancillería) was written at Sahagún, but for some reason the spaces left for illustrations remained empty. The format of these pages is identical to that of the Osma Beatus.[50] In the second quarter of the twelfth century another, less ambitious, copy was made at Sahagún (No. 17), either from the Osma Beatus or a sister manuscript. It came to rest in Rome, apparently arriving in Italy by the twelfth century, as it served as a model for the Italian copy of the text now in Berlin (No. 19).[51]

In 1189 the only illustrated Commentary identified with Portugal was completed by the scribe Egeas in the Cistercian monastery of Lorvão; the copy is now in Lisbon (No. 23). Egeas, if indeed he was responsible for the illustration as well as the writing, took a rudimentary approach to the illustrations (see Figs. 73, 74). This may have led him to be particularly faithful to the model that served him, a Commentary in the family of the Osma Beatus from Sahagún. Just how this model reached Lorvão and its subsequent trajectory are unknown.

San Millán de la Cogolla

Although of the three major scriptoria San Millán de la Cogolla is here addressed last, it was by no means a minor player in the illustrated Beatus tradition. Indeed, it is linked, albeit tentatively, to both the earliest and the latest copies. San Millán was an important monastery on several counts. The anchorite Emilianus (hence San Millán) died in 574 in the hills bordering a fertile valley in the Rioja. Whether the fellow hermits attracted there by his sanctity established an early center that survived through the centuries is a debated issue, but in the tenth century the site blossomed, thanks to its strategic location between territory claimed by the kings of Navarre and of León-Castile, as well as to the popularity of the cult of St. Emilian. The tenth-century church erected against the hill that enclosed Emilian's cave partially survives (Fig. 32), but the terrain suggests that the residence of the monastery and its scriptorium would have been located elsewhere, perhaps on the lower site now occupied by the present monastic complex, which dates to the sixteenth century.[52] The Camino de Santiago passes only a few miles away.

In spite of its relative distance from Liébana, the birthplace of the Commentary, the Riojan

50 Williams 1992, 21-22; Shailor 1992, 45-49; Suárez González 2009, 55f.

51 Gryson 2012, XLVIIff.

52 Monreal Jimeno 1988; Arbeiter and Noack-Haley 1999, 347-49.

Figure 32 San Millán de la Cogolla, upper church, tenth-eleventh century

Photo: Hamid Shams

monastery of San Millán de la Cogolla played a key role in the history of the earlier branch of the text's family tree. It was a center of resistance to the invasion of the Roman rite,[53] and one has to wonder if its defense of the traditions of the Hispanic Church included a special attachment to the Beatus Commentary. Although it has never before been proposed, a connection with our earliest surviving witness to the Beatus tradition is worth considering: the fragment now at Silos (No. 1) may have originated at San Millán. It came to Silos from Nájera in the eighteenth century, protecting documents from San Andrés de Cirueña, a monastery founded in the first quarter of the tenth century. This is later than the date usually accepted for the Silos fragment, and there is no guarantee that the fragment itself was ever in Cirueña, but the fact that it is located only a day's walk from San Millán at least opens the possibility that the fragment originated at San Millán. Beyond the coincidence of physical location, the Silos text is closest to two San Millán copies, the Escorial and San Millán Commentaries (Nos. 9, 10).[54] Although this scriptorium is often assigned an original functioning date of the first quarter of the tenth century, there are good reasons to think it was established in the ninth.[55]

If the Silos fragment cannot be definitively connected to San Millán, at least four other copies have some claim to an origin there: Vitrina 14-1 in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid (No. 3), the San Millán Beatus (No. 9), the Escorial Beatus (No. 10), and another commissioned for the Aragonese monastery of Fanlo, which does not survive, but for seven of its pages we have seventeenth-century replicas (No. 12). The first three are tenth-century

53 Harris 2014.

54 Gryson 2012, LXI-LXII.

55 Olarte 1999, 136-38; see Díaz y Díaz 1979, 166-67 for a counterview.

copies; the Fanlo Beatus was commissioned in the middle of the eleventh century. If Vitrina 14-1 did originate at San Millán, it would confirm the monastery's special early link to the Commentary tradition, for it employs the primitive edition of Beatus's text. San Millán's early and exceptional role as disseminator of the Commentary is further confirmed by the Geneva Beatus (No. 29), for that Italian copy, from the middle of the eleventh century, was also based on the Commentary behind the Escorial Beatus (see Fig. 4).

In contrast to the situations at Tábara and Sahagún, no particular name dominates the history of the scriptorium at San Millán. On both textual and iconographic grounds the Escorial and San Millán Commentaries have been seen as copies of the same model, and both date to the late tenth century. Yet they are clearly by different scribes and employ different versions of the "Mozarabic" style, as was the case of the successive copies at Tábara despite a fairly short separation in time. The distinctive style of the Escorial Beatus (see Fig. 51) is evidence of its creation at San Millán, for certain formulas have counterparts in the great Book of Councils (now Escorial Cod. d.I.1), which was copied at San Millán in 993/4.[56]

The heightened degree of abstraction in the San Millán examples, in comparison to Maius's manner of designing figures at Tábara, has its best counterpart in the manuscripts of Florentius at the Castilian monastery of Valeránica, a site reduced today to a few fragmentary foundations. Brown and yellow, favored colors in the San Millán Beatus, are not uncommon in the León Bible of 960, which, as we saw above, was illuminated at Valeránica (fol. 15^{v}). Further, the clusters of short strokes distributed as a regular overlay of highlights are also found in the Bible of 960, although not so rigidly in units of three. In addition, the representation of Adam and Eve (see Fig. 50) that serves in the Escorial Beatus as a surrogate for the usual Map of the World is a virtual replica of the scene of the First Parents in the Bible of 960. These similarities strengthen the argument that the scriptorium of San Millán was influenced by that of Valeránica. Indeed, an apparent connection with Valeránica is a unifying theme in all four of the Commentaries associated with San Millán. Two frontispieces in the San Millán Beatus reflect types found in the Bible of 960, one of which is a framed title page for the beginning of John's text (fol. 1). Although the Bible illuminated in 960 in Valeránica does not employ such an introduction for its Apocalypse, the title page for the entire book (fol. 3^{v}) is comparable. Furthermore, the vine scroll that makes up its frame, like that of the Majesty page preceding it, is remarkably similar to that of the San Millán Beatus. The second frontispiece of the San Millán Beatus features a Cross (fol. 1^{v}). It appears beneath an arcade, unlike the only other tenth-century Beatus Cross page, that on folio 1^{v} of the 970 Valladolid Beatus (No. 4). The four arms of the San Millán Cross carry the symbols of the Evangelists. Once again it is the Bible of 960 that offers the closest parallel for the frame, for the arcade closely resembles those used in that manuscript's canon tables; the Evangelist symbols, rare in being full beasts rather than anthropomorphic types, are found on the Majesty page of the same Bible (see Fig. 18). Perhaps the most singular element shared by the 960 Bible and the San Millán Beatus is the representation of Jacob Wrestling with the Angel (Genesis 32, 24-29), which appears in the Beatus at the foot of folio 36^{v}. This scene is not found in any other copy of the Commentary. The miniature is inspired by the text of the prologue of Book II: "Israel is 'the man that sees God.' Jacob received the name of Israel [...]." Precisely the same pair of figures in the same pose, with Jacob's right thigh and shoulder held by the Angel, appears

56 Silva y Verástegui 1984, 68-72.

on the Jacob page of the genealogical tables of the Bible of 960 (fol. 8).[57]

The oldest of the Commentaries with a connection to San Millán is the Vitrina 14-1 Beatus in the Biblioteca Nacional de España in Madrid (No. 3). It was listed in an inventory of 1821 at San Millán, but textual corrections of a kind found in other works from the monastery suggest that the Commentary was already there around 1200.[58] The figural style and palette employed (see Fig. 37) resemble those of tenth-century manuscripts such as the San Millán Beatus and the Bible of 960 from Valeránica, and it has been suggested that the scribe Eximinus of San Millán may have begun his career at Valeránica.[59] Like the other three commentaries linked to San Millán, Vitrina 14-1 belongs to the Branch I family. Moreover, its text represents, along with the Saint-Sever Beatus, the first edition of the text. With no compelling evidence to assign Vitrina 14-1 elsewhere, the case for the monastery of San Millán, if not ironclad, is the best we have.

As the eleventh century gave way to the twelfth, the peninsula adopted the Romanesque style that marked the Gallicization of Hispanic culture. The relative proximity of San Millán to the Pyrenees, and its location just eight miles from the pilgrimage road to Santiago accelerated access to the new Romanesque currents. The early importance of San Millán in the growth of Romanesque painting in Iberia would be roundly confirmed if we knew for certain that this scriptorium was responsible for the prayer book Queen Sancha of León (d. 1067) commissioned in 1055 for her husband, Fernando I (r. 1037-65; Biblioteca Universitaria de Santiago de Compostela, MS 609 Res. 1). At the time, Fernando occupied the Rioja, a zone that included San Millán. The scribe responsible, Fructuosus, was certainly a Spaniard, and the prayer book displays a sophisticated Romanesque style that rivals any contemporary works from the other side of the Pyrenees (Fig. 33). The few parallels between the prayer book and the manuscripts known to have come from San Millán are significant enough to suggest that it also was made there.[60]

Later, confirmed products of San Millán attest to its role as a foyer for the Romanesque style. In the twelfth century, a monk at San Millán recalled a devastating raid by al-Mansur in the summer of 1002. This may have interrupted the completion of the San Millán Beatus (No. 9). In any case, with the resumption of the project in the early twelfth century, a different model based on the pictorial reform of Maius was followed; the added illustrations present a modern, Romanesque style (see Fig. 49). Clarity of color was replaced by a monochromatic tendency favoring a muddy green. The miniatures were now framed, but they scarcely contained the bulky figures. In contrast to the weightless and frozen figures of the tenth century, here they are dynamically posed and complexly structured of articulated subordinate parts with heavily emphasized contours. This is a Romanesque style, but one that differs from the earlier, mid-eleventh-century stages of that essentially foreign manner found, for example, in the Osma Beatus (No. 14). The pattern of white highlights on the garments, most strikingly manifest in the comb-like patterns on thighs, indirectly echoes Byzantine formulas, but directly reflects the influence of French Romanesque painting from the turn of the century. It was another sign of the trans-Pyrenean reorientation of peninsular culture. For some reason, the completion of the San Millán Beatus was followed by a break of some decades in commissioning copies of the Commentary, if the chance survival of examples can be relied on. However, San Millán would continue drawing on the foundations laid earlier in León and Castile to produce in the thirteenth

57 Silva y Verástegui 1984, 174-75.

58 Klein 1976, 24; Díaz y Díaz 1979, 228.

59 Pérez de Urbel 1977.

60 Williams 2011b, 415-20.

Figure 33 **Prayer book of Fernando and Sancha. Biblioteca Universitaria, Santiago de Compostela, MS 609 (Res. 1), fol. 6^{v}**

century a magnificent Bible with more than 125 illustrations.[61] In the meantime, as we shall see, San Millán may have had a role in the late revival of the Beatus tradition.

In the tenth century, Tábara was not so strategically placed as San Millán nor did it have the kind of saint's cult that attracted pilgrims. Its scriptorium was called into being by the demand for books generated by a new foundation, but also by the fortuitous presence of Maius, a monk of extraordinary artistic talent. At Valeránica the importance of a single personality to the emergence of scriptorial eminence is even clearer: it was a small establishment with only nine monks under Abbot Belasco at the end of Florentius's life. Valeránica's scriptorium withered quickly thereafter, though not necessarily because of the passing of its great painter/calligrapher. Although Sahagún was founded at more or less the same time as the nearby frontier sites of Escalada, Tábara, and Valeránica, its part in the Beatus history is linked to the primitive branch of that tradition rather than the "Mozarabic" phase initiated by Maius. This may point to a still earlier local history for Sahagún, but it is only in the eleventh century, with the patronage of francophile Leonese monarchs and the creation of the Osma Beatus, that we have certain knowledge of its part in the development of the Beatus tradition. At San Millán, the personality of an individual artist-scribe played even less of a role. Its location facilitated communication across the Pyrenees, and the popularity of the cult of Saint Emilian together with royal support led to fame, prosperity, and the longevity of its scriptorium.

Copies Made Outside the Peninsula

While the Commentary of Beatus was preeminently an Iberian artifact, four surviving copies were produced outside the peninsula – three in southern Italy and one much closer to Spain, just across the Pyrenees in Gascony. The motive and means behind the arrival in Italy of the models serving the Geneva Beatus (No. 29) and the fragmentary Milan Beatus (No. 28) by the middle of the eleventh century remain unknown, although other Visigothic manuscripts also found their way to Italy as well.[62] While the manner of composing illustrations in these two Italian Commentaries is eccentric in some instances (see Figs. 84, 85), both pictures and texts were certainly copied from a Spanish exemplar. This is not the case, however, for the illustrations of the Italian copy now in Berlin (see Figs. 67, 68; No. 19): although its text depended on the early twelfth-century Corsini Beatus from Sahagún (No. 17), the imagery relied on the artistic culture of Italy.

The three Italian copies are small, but the fourth foreign copy, produced at the monastery of Saint-Sever-sur-l'Adour (No. 13), is among the most spectacular of all the Commentaries in terms of size and pictorial splendor. Textually it represents, as does Vitrina 14-1 (No. 3), the very earliest edition of the text. The illustrations, however, exemplify the most advanced version of the reformed Commentary invented by Maius. Access to distinct editions of the text in a monastery outside the peninsula defies easy explanation, but the early history of the site provides a possible answer. Saint-Sever was founded in 988 by the count/duke of Gascony, Guillaume-Sanche, and would effectively serve as his religious and military capital at the end of the tenth century.[63] Its first inhabitants may well have been Navarrese monks. In any case, in 972-73 he had married Urraca, the daughter of García Sánchez of Pamplona (d. 970). She survived her husband and was a powerful patron

61 Williams 1965.

62 Reynolds 2012.

63 Mussot-Goulard 1982, 136f.; Klein 2014a, 20.

of the abbey, which sat near their residence.[64] Saint-Sever's possession of a copy with the earliest text of the Commentary may stem from this union. It is worth noting in this regard the Riojan location of San Millán de la Cogolla and its history of copies of the earlier editions of the text. If, as may well be the case, Vitrina 14-1 originated in San Millán, the fact that its text is the primitive one and the fact that it shares this distinction with the Saint-Sever Beatus may provide a clue for the origin of the model behind the Saint-Sever copy. Before going to Gascony, Urraca had been married to the Castilian count Fernán González (d. 970), who employed Florentius of Valeránica as his court scribe.[65] Moreover, there is evidence that Florentius executed the copy of the Commentary that served as the model for the Silos Beatus (No. 16), which employs the reformed format we know from the Morgan Beatus (No. 2). This Castilian background at least provided Urraca an opportunity to be aware of the new editions of the Commentary linked to Maius and Florentius. However, we must also reckon with the possibility that a first-edition copy arrived through the agency of Sanche-Guillaume (r. 1010-32). He spent his youth in Spain, being at San Millán de la Cogolla by 992, and residing later at the Navarrese court of García of Pamplona.[66]

The Last Flowering

The last flowering of the Beatus tradition was linked to the ascendancy of the kingdom of Castile and the spread of the Cistercian order. Castile began as a county within the older kingdom of León. Fernando I (d. 1065) had begun his rise as count and then briefly king of Castile before claiming the crown of the kingdom of León in 1037 through his marriage to the Leonese princess Sancha five years earlier. They became the first royal – rather than monastic – patrons of a Commentary when in 1047 the couple commissioned the Facundus Beatus (No. 11), establishing a type of royal patronage that would characterize the final copies a century later. After the reign of their great-grandson, Alfonso VII (r. 1126-57) and the division of the kingdom into León and Castile (until it was reunited as Castile-León in 1230), the center of gravity shifted from the city of León to Burgos, the capital of Castile. It was within the then-separate kingdoms of Castile and León during the respective reigns of Alfonso VIII (r. 1158-1214) and Fernando II (r. 1157-88) that five of the last seven Commentaries known to us were carried out. Alfonso VIII had turned the tide in Christian Spain's crusade, capturing much of al-Andalus from the Muslims at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212. Meanwhile, his marriage to Leonor (d. 1214), the daughter of Henry II of England and Eleanor of Aquitaine, fostered international artistic ties. The shift of political and cultural weight from León to Castile coincided with the decline of the Benedictine Order and the ascendancy of the reform-minded Cistercians.

In contrast to the stylistic homogeneity that characterized the "Mozarabic" school, the late Romanesque copies display diverse styles, sometimes even within the same manuscript. In some instances this is surely a sign of itinerant artists. A clear case for this conclusion is provided by the copy of the Bible of 960 that was completed in 1162 at San Isidoro in León by visiting artists. One of the illustrators was also responsible for frescos in a distant Aragonese church in Navasa (now in the Museo Diocesano

64 Lacarra 1972, 199-200; Cursente 2009, 15-16; Cabanot and Pon 2009, 40ff.

65 Williams 1970.

66 Mussot-Goulard 1982, 169.

de Jaca).[67] Colophons became rarer and tended to omit the names of scribes and sites, focusing rather on patronage. As in the case of the Cardeña Beatus (No. 21), some of these artists were from prestigious centers in northern Europe. These trends – the loss of colophons, the diminishing importance of monastic scriptoria, and migrant artists – make the assignment of these late copies to specific scriptoria speculative.

The earliest known exemplar to evoke the idea of a renaissance of the Beatus tradition is the splendid copy from around 1175, now in the John Rylands University Library in Manchester (No. 20). It has been identified conjecturally with the Commentary on the Apocalypse that appears in the 1821 inventory of codices sent to Burgos from San Millán de la Cogolla, which is described as being "in large format" and displaying "writing of the twelfth century."[68] While there are no details in the manuscript to confirm a link to San Millán, neither is there counter-evidence favoring any other site. Whether produced at San Millán or not, it seems to have been linked to Burgos in the nineteenth century, for the bishop of Burgos informed Konrad Miller, the great cartographer, that a copy had been taken in 1869 from the city by the provincial governor.[69] No other copy can be tied to this particular incident, and the date would make it available in time to be sold in 1870.

The Rylands Beatus, as part of the revival of the Beatus tradition linked to the ascendancy of the kingdom of Castile, is related iconographically to another Commentary that was also once in Burgos and is now distributed between the Museo Arqueológico Nacional in Madrid and the Metropolitan Museum in New York (No. 21). This Commentary has been commonly labeled the "Cardeña Beatus" after a nineteenth-century claim that it had been in San Pedro de Cardeña, a monastery outside Burgos. The claim, however, has been roundly disputed.[70] More credible is the identification of this copy with the Beatus transferred in 1821 from San Millán to Burgos, the city that apparently received the Rylands Beatus later in the nineteenth century.[71] There is no evidence confirming the execution of either of these copies at San Millán. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a reason for multiple copies to accumulate there. However, the Benedictine status of San Millán is not a mark against its possible authorship of copies destined for Cistercian convents; nor, at this date in the artistic culture, is the stylistic heterogeneity a telling mark against such an origin.

There are suggestions that the Rylands Commentary may have been based on the Tábara Beatus, for this tenth-century example also seems to have been connected to Burgos: it served as the model for the Las Huelgas Beatus of 1220 (No. 24), the later of the two copies today in the Morgan Library & Museum.[72] That copy was commissioned for the royally sponsored Cistercian convent just outside Burgos, Santa María la Real de las Huelgas. While its origin in a scriptorium in Burgos cannot be dismissed, the existence of a scriptorium at Las Huelgas is unsupported by any evidence, and part of the team involved in its Beatus executed works in Toledo.[73] The scriptorium responsible for the copy once in the convent of Cistercian nuns at San Andrés de Arroyo (No. 25), a dependency of Las Huelgas, also remains unknown. We can,

67 Yarza 1985, 385-86. Yarza hesitates to go beyond the participation of a single workshop, but to my eye the very same hand seems to be at work.

68 Andrés 1978, 543; Sánchez Mariana 2001, 34.

69 Miller 1895, 20.

70 Suárez González 2010a, 99-101; Suárez González 2010b.

71 Sánchez Mariana 2001, 30-34.

72 Williams 2003a, 19-20. For a counter-argument, see Klein 2002, 32-33; 2014, 8-9.

73 Raizman 2004; Raizman 2005.

however, affirm beyond doubt that the Las Huelgas Commentary was copied from the Tábara Beatus itself, for it includes a replica of the tower that distinguishes the Tábara Commentary (see Figs. 41, 77). The far-reaching and long-lasting significance of Tábara within the tradition is manifest, for only one of the representatives of this final blossoming of the tradition, the Arroyo Beatus (No. 25), belongs to the earlier branch of the family tree. The others descended from the revision of that branch that took place at Tábara under Maius, Emeterius, and En.

The Beatus Tradition: The End

The Cistercian copies from Castile represent the swan song of the Beatus tradition. After them, the Commentary ceased to play a crucial role in monastic culture as contemplative communities gave way to the preaching orders. The few copies made later were merely unadorned texts. Still, it had been a good, long run, and a pair of Commentaries confirms that these manuscripts continued to be used well after new production ceased. A marginal note of around 1500 on folio 12 at the beginning of Book I of the Lorvão Beatus (No. 22) states, "When Matins begin, start here." The same reminder appears on folio 17, with the addition that it is to be read in the refectory. Seventeenth-century glosses in the Las Huelgas Beatus (No. 24) also mark readings for mealtime in the refectory. Thus, folio 40 has "fourth day" written in the margin under the first portion of the *explanatio* of the Message to the Church of Ephesus. After the first thirty-six words, the word "quit" and a slash tell the reader to stop. In a similar fashion, forty words of the *explanatio* of the Church of Smyrna are set aside with a "take up" and a "quit" on folio 43^{v}. The same instructions occur in the *explanatio* of the Church of Thyatira on folio 42. "The fifth day" appears beside the *explanatio* of the Church of Sardis, and passages from the *explanatio* of Philadelphia and Laodicea are marked. It seems likely that the Commentary had been similarly exploited early in the history of the tradition.

As I reflect now, I am struck by the degree to which my earlier work was unsurprised by Maius's invention of a radically new relationship between the illustrations of the tradition and the text. This would have occurred as he perceived the extent to which works from the scriptorium at Tours had made visible a world where words summoned up familiar images, while also revealing a new kind of pictorial concept. I have on occasion referred to Maius as the Picasso of his time; I don't find that an exaggeration. Like Picasso, Maius was capable of making creative leaps beyond what anyone in his own cultural background might have imagined possible. Could just any scribe accomplish this? I say no. We are not even sure to what degree Maius would have been exposed to the Touronian illustrations, for not one manuscript from that location has ever been traced to the peninsula. However, as iconographic formulas testify without question, he must have seen the magnificent full-page illustrations that accompany the sacred texts produced there. Perhaps it was the result of a journey or several journeys across the Pyrenees and on to Tours, and many days devoted to devouring what was laid out before him at the scriptorium, taking their visual concepts and making them his own. Like Picasso, Maius had an incomparably fertile pictorial imagination, as was recognized by the title "master-painter." Still, I think I took it too much for granted. Although the text so patiently assembled by Beatus has sunk into obscurity, it is in large part due to Maius that the vibrant, stunning, and mysterious imagery of the Beatus tradition continues to awe, inspire, and resonate to this day.