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Extra-Apocalyptic Iconography in the Tenth-Century Beatus Commentaries on the Apocalypse as Indicators of Christian-Muslim Relations in Medieval Iberia

Emily B. Goetsch

Ph.D. History of Art
The University of Edinburgh
2014
Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signature.............................................................. Date..............................................
Abstract

This thesis is an iconographic study of the four earliest and relatively complete tenth-century manuscripts of Beatus’ Commentary on the Apocalypse: New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS M. 644 (the Morgan Beatus); Valladolid, Biblioteca de la Universidad de Valladolid MS 433 (the Valladolid Beatus); Girona, Museu de la Catedral de Girona MS 7(11) (the Girona Beatus) and La Seu d’Urgell, Museu Diocesá de La Seu d’Urgell MS 501 (the Urgell Beatus). As a part of the tenth-century revival of Beatus’ text that initially was penned in the eighth-century, these works were created in monastic centres during a period when conflict between the Christian kingdoms in the north and Islamic rulers in the south was at a peak, the manuscripts’ iconographic innovations reflect the social, political and religious circumstances of their patrons, creators and audiences.

While these manuscripts offer the possibility of furthering scholastic understanding of Iberia prior to the year 1000 the majority of past scholarship has been devoted to defining dates, stemma and the physical characteristics of the works. Debates over descriptions of style, labels and influence have overshadowed discussions of iconographic significance, which have begun to emerge only in the last few decades. Therefore, this thesis provides iconographic analysis of five under-studied scenes, which include the Mappamundi, the Four Beasts and the Statue, Noah’s Ark, the Palm Tree and the Fox and the Cock. While these images are just five of up to 120 included in the illustrative programmes of these manuscripts, they are the only scenes that illustrate the text of Beatus’ Commentary, rather than the narrative of Revelation. This is significant because these extra-apocalyptic scenes were selected and created specifically because of the messages within the Commentary that they enhance; the ideas promoted through these images are not restricted by the narrative of Revelation and therefore reveal much about the political, religious and social situation in the northern Iberian Christian communities that created them.
By discussing the visual elements of these five images in conjunction with iconographic traditions from other parts of western Europe, the Byzantine world, the Mediterranean and the Islamic world, this thesis will examine the Beatus illustrations and, on a larger scale, the production of these manuscripts, in relation to the historical struggles of the time. Informed by postcolonial theory, it will not only diverge from the standard ways of approaching these works, but also will bring new insight into the Christian perspective of Muslim occupation in medieval Iberia, suggesting that monastic communities were attempting to combat the Muslim threat by encouraging participation in and dispersal of the Christian faith in order to maintain Christian practices and beliefs on the Iberian Peninsula and furthermore to assert Christian dominance at the Judgment.
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Over the course of this project I have been extremely fortunate to meet and work with a number of outstanding people, whose scholarship is exceptional, but whose kindness and generosity have superseded even that. I will be perpetually grateful to them and this small note of recognition hardly does justice to the assistance and support that they have given me over the past several years.

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For Mom, Dad and Ben, with so much love.
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Chapter 1

Introduction
I. Thesis Background and Parameters

The chapters that are to follow address the function of and rationale behind the creation of the illustrated manuscripts containing Beatus' Commentary on the Apocalypse during the tenth century. Although the Asturian monk Beatus of Liébana initially penned his Commentary during the eighth century, the earliest extant works date to the tenth century when the tradition was revitalised. At this time illuminated editions of the text were produced in great number and featured new images that were added to the illustrative programme. This interest in the text and the adaptations made to the visual programme suggest that these works were endowed with specific ideas and significance pertinent to those creating and using them.

As such this thesis will examine a set of images from four of the earliest and relatively complete Beatus manuscripts:

- Morgan Beatus
  - New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 644
  - c. 940-945 AD
  - 38.7 x 28.5 cm
  - 300 folios

- Valladolid Beatus
  - Valladolid, Biblioteca de le Universidad, MS 433
  - 970
  - 35.0 x 24.0 cm

1 Relatively little is known about Beatus of Liébana and what is ‘documented’ in Juan Tamayo de Salazar’s Martyrologium Hispanum is uncertain at best. It is likelye that Beatus actually was given the title of presbyter and then later became an Abbot. Beatus lived in the monastery of San Martín de Turieno (now Santo Toribio de Liébana), which is located in Liébana, a valley in Asturias, which was colonised by Alfonso I during the middle of the eighth century and then settled by immigrants from areas of southern Iberia, which were under Muslim rule. It is commonly thought that Saint Beatus died in 798. During his lifetime, Beatus was probably best known for his involvement in the Adoptionism Controversy of the eighth century. A strong believer in the inherent divinity of Christ, Beatus spoke out against Elipandus, the Bishop of Seville, who sought to reinforce Christ’s humanity, emphasising Christ’s earthly lineage and asserting that Christ was adopted by God. Beatus’ Adversus Elipandum, remains as Beatus’ firm stand against the Adoptionism heresy. Further to this document, Beatus also wrote his Commentary on the Apocalypse during the eighth century, which stands as perhaps his longest lasting legacy. For more on Beatus and his life and work, see John Williams, The Illustrated Beatus: A Corpus of the Illustrations of the Commentary on the Apocalypse, Vol. 1 (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1994): pp. 13-15.

2 See Appendices 1B-1E for catalogue entries, descriptions, dates and provenances for these manuscripts.
While the manuscripts listed above contain the majority of possible images, including those that will be discussed primarily throughout this thesis, there are five other tenth-century editions of the Beatus Commentary which contain only a portion of the images from the illustrative programme:

- **Vitrina 14-1 Beatus**
  - Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Vit. 14-1
  - Middle of the tenth century
  - 34.5 x 25.7 cm
  - 144 folios

- **Tábara Beatus**
  - Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Cod. 1097B
  - 970
  - 36.0 x 25.5 cm
  - 168 folios

- **Vitrina 14-2 Fragment**
  - Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Vit. 14-2
  - Second half of the tenth century
  - 35.5 x 23.0 cm
  - 5 folios

- **San Millán Beatus**
  - Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, Cod. 33
  - Mozarabic section dated to the last quarter of the tenth century;
    Romanesque section dated to the first quarter of the twelfth century

- **Escorial Beatus**
  - Escorial, Biblioteca del Monasterio, & II.5
  - c. 1000
  - 33.5 x 22.5 cm
  - 151 folios
While these manuscripts do not contain a representative number of illustrations, they will be used for comparative purposes in order to uncover and explain major ideas and considerations that are relayed through the early imagery more accurately.  

Along these lines, it should be acknowledged that the Beatus tradition continued into the thirteenth century and that comparison between the earlier and later Beatus works is fruitful. Even though the later works differ greatly from the tenth-century manuscripts in terms of their forms and style, a product of the influx of Romanesque and European traditions which entered into the Iberian Peninsula during the eleventh century, the iconographic programme remained essentially the same throughout the centuries. In this thesis, comparisons between early and later scenes, which demonstrate distinct characteristics of the early material, will be used most commonly. In future studies, however, analysis of the maintenance of iconographic forms over three centuries could contribute greatly to an understanding of the links between the early and later Beatus manuscripts and could also help to explain the contributions of the early iconography to later traditions.

In addition to narrowing the temporal focus of this examination, this thesis will also examine a specific set of images. While the majority of the illustrations in these manuscripts are based on the narrative and text of the Book of Revelation, five scenes were based on the text of Beatus’ Commentary: the Mappamundi, the Four Beasts and the Statue, Noah’s Ark, the Palm Tree and the Fox and the Cock. These extra-Apocalyptic images will serve as the basis for the discussions that are to come in the chapters that follow.

Prior to addressing each of these images, however, this introductory section will establish historical, cultural and scholastic contexts for the creation and study of these manuscripts, rationalising and explaining further the approach taken throughout this thesis.

II. Historical Context

This section will outline the prominent status of the Book of Revelation within early medieval society and will explain its particular importance to Christians living in Iberia before the year 1000. The narrative, imagery and idea of Christian triumph conveyed through the Apocalypse proved to be popular statements for Christians

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3 See Appendix 1A for a complete list of the Beatus fragments and manuscripts.
throughout the early medieval world. Those elements offered moral messages, serving
as a ‘call to the elect to reaffirm their commitment to God’ and representing ‘an ethic of
patient endurance of evils until God brings his plan to completion’ by rewarding the
faithful at Judgment.⁴ The adoption of this Apocalyptic view of history brought with it
several factors that further contributed to the popularity of the Apocalypse amongst
early medieval viewers.

In one sense, embracing the idea that God had a general plan provided early
medieval audiences with a framework for understanding the course of history that
permitted and encouraged those living out that history to search for “‘signs of the
times,” for the significance of current events in relation to the coming end.”⁵
Additionally the dramatic and symbolic language and imagery that was used throughout
the narrative of the Apocalypse presented the possibility of multivalent understandings
of the text that could be interpreted according to the circumstances of those reading and
utilising the text.⁶ In particular, the continual contrasts between good and evil, which
are present throughout the Book of Revelation provided a mechanism for its adoption
by Christian communities who could view themselves as those worthy of salvation in
the fight against those opposing their views.⁷

⁴ Bernard McGinn, ‘Introduction: John’s Apocalypse and the Apocalyptic Mentality,’ in
The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages, ed. by Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn
⁵ Ibid., p. 9.
⁶ Ibid., p. 16.
⁷ This sentiment is articulated by Beatus in the opening line of his Commentary, which
explains that ‘At various times events of the Old Testament have been seen as
prophecies of the nativity of our Lord and Savior, or of his incarnation, passion and
death, as well as his resurrection, reign and judgment, by learned men in numerous
books, and the most renowned of the holy fathers with proverbial brevity have shown
that by the authority of the prophets the grace of faith is affirmed and the infidel’s
ignorance is proven.’ (‘Quaedam quae diuresis temporibus libris praenuntiata sunt de
natuittate Domini et Salvatoris nostril secundum deitatem uel de corporatione eius, de
passione quoque et morte, siue de resurrectione, regno atque iudicio, pro uiribus
scientiae ex innumerabilibus libris et sanctorum patrem nobiliissimorum et sanctorum
partum nobiliissimorum sententiali breuitate notata, pausa proferenda putauit, ut
profetarum auctoritas fidei gratiam firmet et infidelium inperitiam probet.’) John
Williams, ‘Purpose and Imagery in the Apocalypse Commentary of Beatus of Liébana,’
The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn
(London: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 217-233 (p. 218); McGinn, Introduction:
John’s Apocalypse and the Apocalyptic Mentality,’ p. 16; and Beatus, Sancti Beati a
Liébana Commentarius in Apocalypsin, ed. by E. Romero-Pose, vol. 1 (Rome: Typis
Officinae Polygraphicae, 1985), p. 3.
Such interest in the Apocalypse is manifested in a number of visual traditions from the late antique and early medieval periods. Beginning in the fourth century, Apocalyptic motifs relating God’s triumph and the benefits of heaven began appearing in conjunction with older Christian themes, leading to the creation of new types of imagery.  

This is evidenced in the late fourth-century mosaic from Santa Pudenziana in Rome (Figure 1.01) and then in fifth- and sixth-century mosaics from Rome and Ravenna, such as those in the Basilica of Saints Cosmas and Damian (Figure 1.02) and San Michele in Africisco (Figure 1.03). These mosaics incorporate varying combinations of images that include Heavenly Jerusalem, the Four Evangelist Symbols, the Lamb on the Mountain, the Alpha and Omega, Christ enthroned amongst seven angles, the seven seals, the seven candlesticks and the twenty-four elders, all features from the Book of Revelation.

Beyond these mosaics, there are a number of other monumental works that feature Apocalyptic themes. The carved programmes on Irish high crosses including the prominent examples of Muiredach’s Cross at Monasterboice (Figure 1.04), the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise (Figure 1.05) and the Market Cross at Kells (Figure 1.06), feature panels in Apocalyptic programmes. Similarly, it has been argued that one of the panels on the Ruthwell Cross bears inscriptions and images that indicate a maieistas scene and therefore warrant evaluation in relation to the text of the Apocalypse (Figure 1.07).

While there are significant numbers of monumental Apocalyptic works produced during these periods, the majority of Apocalyptic imagery can be found in manuscripts from that time. Such imagery occurs in illustrated bibles, editions of the New Testament

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10 While there are several Apocalyptic images on these works, there also are a number of instances where single representations of the Apocalypse appear. For details of this see Klein, ‘Introduction: The Apocalypse in Medieval Art,’ pp. 162-167.
11 For further detail on these crosses and their Apocalyptic significance, see Kees Veelenturf, *Dia Brátha: Eschatological Theophanies and Irish High Crosses* (Amsterdam: Sitchting Amsterdamse Historische Reeks, 1997).
and the Apocalypse, commentaries on the Apocalypse and, occasionally, other texts such as *City of God*. Although works such as the early ninth-century Carolingian Juvenianus Codex (Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS.B. 25.2) and the Bamberg Commentaries feature several Apocalyptic images and themes and therefore are important to recognise in any general account of Apocalyptic imagery, manuscripts containing full Apocalyptic cycles provide far more imagery and information pertinent to this study and will be discussed in greater detail.

In his account of medieval Apocalypses, Peter Klein separated these cycles into three families, each of which had particular influence on a specific area or time period. He categorised them as Late Antique and Early Christian Traditions, Early Medieval Cycles, and Romanesque Cycles, the first two of which will concern this discussion as the Romanesque Cycles were developed after the tenth century. While there are no remaining Apocalypse cycles from the Late Antique and early Christian periods, there almost surely were some in existence in the fifth and sixth centuries, as there are two separate traditions of Apocalyptic cycles that emerge from that time. An early Christian-Roman prototype is evidenced in the central European Apocalyptic cycles throughout the early medieval period and an early Iberian or North African prototype is apparent almost solely in Iberia through the Beatus manuscripts. Of the Christian-Roman prototype four are Carolingian Apocalypses:

- **Paris Apocalypse**
  - Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouv. acq. lat. 1132
  - Ninth century, northern France
  - 47 images (27 scenes of the Apocalypse and one ornamental letter)

- **Trier Apocalypse**
  - Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 31
  - c. 800
  - 74 full-page miniatures, 150 folios total

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Valenciennes Apocalypse
  - Valenciennes, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 99
  - 9th century
  - 39 illustrations, 40 folios, 27.2 x 20.1 cm

Cambrai Apocalypse
  - Cambrai, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 386
  - c. 900
  - 74 full-page miniatures, 150 folios total

Even though these works include fewer illustrations than the Beatus manuscripts and are solely based on the Book of Revelation rather than on a Commentary, the attention devoted to the text and its accompanying illustrations demonstrates how strong early medieval interest in the Apocalypse was. Through both the full-page size of the miniatures and their frequency, nearly every other folio, it is clear that the Book of Revelation was a valued and interesting narrative during the Carolingian period.\(^\text{18}\)

In addition to the aforementioned Carolingian Apocalypses, there is a prominent Ottonian Apocalypse:

Bamberg Apocalypse
  - Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MSc. Bibl. 140
  - 1001-1002
  - 57 miniatures, 106 folios

Similar to the Carolingian works, this manuscript also stems from a Roman type and reveals influence from both Late Antique and Carolingian traditions.\(^\text{19}\) The formatting draws close parallels to the Valenciennes Apocalypse in that there are full-page illustrations roughly every other page, which conflate several episodes from the narrative.\(^\text{20}\) Additionally, the style, which is similar to manuscripts produced at Tours, bears similarity to imagery found in the Trier Apocalypse.\(^\text{21}\) It has two main parts: the

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\(^{19}\) Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian Book Illumination*, p. 15.


illustrated Apocalypse, which includes fifty-seven gilded, full-page scenes of the Book of Revelation and a pericopes section with only five New Testament illustrations. While these two sections are considered to have both been included in the manuscript from its beginning, they are divided by a separately-quired double page on which Otto III is shown being crowned by Peter and Paul beneath four ‘peoples’ who are personified by crowned female figures that present gifts to Otto III. Given the appearance of Otto III in the manuscript, the Bamberg Apocalypse is considered to have been one of the Holy Roman Emperor’s manuscripts that subsequently passed through Henry II’s ownership and then onto Bamberg. As such, this work must be considered in the context of the Ottonian court, the power and glory of which is suggested through the extra-Apocalyptic image of Otto III himself.

The prominence of the Apocalypse in Iberia was officially recognised during the seventh century when the Book of Revelation was accepted into the Mozarabic liturgy. In 632 at the Fourth Council of Toledo it was decreed that ‘The Apocalypse is a canonical book and should be read from Easter to Pentecost; whoever objects, may he be excommunicated.’ Further to being accepted into the liturgy, Beatus’ Commentary on the Apocalypse held a place of unusual prominence as production of the illuminated text overshadowed that of even Bibles and these works essentially took the place of gospel books in Spanish libraries, which have almost no early medieval gospel books. As such, it is clear that the text of the Book of Revelation, which ‘provides a vivid picture of the triumph of the people of God over those who offered false prophecies and false


For the complete illustrative programme of the Bamberg Apocalypse, Mayr-Harting, Ottonian Book Illumination, p. 11.


As will be discussed later in this introduction, the term ‘Mozarabic’ is problematic. It is, however, commonly used to describe the medieval Iberian liturgy and therefore will be used in that context throughout this thesis. Additionally, characteristics of the liturgy of the Mozarabic Rite will be detailed shortly.


Ibid., p. 24.
claims to authority' contained ideas that were particularly valued by and meaningful to Iberian Christians.

Additionally, the introduction of the text during the Pentecostal season firmly placed the Commentary in the part of the liturgical year that was devoted to consideration of the Resurrection. In this way, the text draws associations with conversio, the ‘turning from a worldly to a spiritual way of life,’ that is ‘understood as a form of resurrection.’ This emphasis on salvation and spirituality is evidenced in the Mozarabic liturgy, which brings out these ideas from the beginning of the Pentecostal readings. For example, the Inlatio is also worded in a mystical way, discussing the meanings that are developed through Eastertide and then ultimately concluding with the lines:

O flame that in burning confers fruitfulness, whom every intellectual creature, vivified by it, confesses to be the Lord Omnipotent; participating in whose fire in more abundant measure the Cherubim and Seraphim, magnifying the equality of the Holiness Divine and the Omnipotence of the Trinity, never resting and never wearying in their office, amid the song of choirs of the celestial host, of crying aloud with everlasting jubilation, adore and glorify, saying: Holy, Holy, Holy.

Thus while the Mozarabic liturgy is often recognised for its colourful language, these texts reveal the mystical and spiritual style that was used to convey messages related to the triumph of the faithful after persecution during the Pentecostal season.

Further to the intrigue that early medieval societies found in the Book of Revelation, there were other factors that also contributed to Beatus’ writing of his Commentary.

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28 Ibid., p. 24.
Commentary. Namely, it was likely initially written in response to the Adoptionism Controversy that occupied Iberian Christians, including Beatus, during the eighth and into the ninth centuries. The adoptionists believed and preached that Christ was adopted into his position as the Son of God when he was baptised and therefore was not divine by birth. Beatus strongly opposed this perspective, believing in Christ’s inherent divinity and expressing his opposition to the possibility of Christ’s dual nature in his writings, which include his most prominent work, *Adversus Elipandum*, which he wrote in 785. This text was written at about the same time that Beatus was revising his Commentary on the Apocalypse and thus, as Kenneth Steinhauser argues, elements of his anti-Adoptionism position appear in the Commentary as well. The inclusion of such elements in the Commentary is not terribly surprising considering the Apocalypse and Beatus’ Commentary provided a warning against and suggested triumph over threats to orthodoxy. In essence, aspects of the Beatus Commentary were developed in a Christian community that was fraught with doctrinal disputes and, in the eighth century, contributed to Beatus’ favoured anti-Adoptionism stance.

Aside from this likely impetus for Beatus’ penning of the Commentary, it has also been suggested that Beatus developed his work in fear that the end of the world was approaching with the year 800. While there are proponents of this idea, the theory generally is not accepted. In addition to the Apocalypse having been an established part of the Iberian liturgy since the seventh century and having been canonical since the time

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33 For the text, see Beatus of Liébana, *Adversus Elipandum* (Turnholt: Brepols, 1984).
35 Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, p. 27.
of Augustine, Beatus’ text itself lacks the urgency that might be associated with the impending end of the world. Beatus fails to reference a date for a looming Doomsday, which suggests that the approach of the year 800 was not a strong motivation for the composition. The most specific reference to the end of time appears, rather unobtrusively, in the midst of the fourth book of the Commentary and reads,

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 a sackcloth and ashes for their destruction and the world’s but not strive to calculate the time.  

Despite the specific reference to twenty-five years, this section of text likely was copied directly from Tyconius’ earlier Commentary and therefore does not necessarily reflect Beatus’ belief in an approaching end. Furthermore, the placement of this line does not attract great attention as a marker of the time before Doomsday; the prediction of the end of the world was not introduced in the beginning, nor addressed at the end of the Commentary. Thus while a general sense of the end of the world may have been present around the time of composition, it is unlikely that Beatus developed his work to serve as a specific and literal warning of that time. Rather, Beatus’ text is more spiritual and allegorical than Doomsday-centric in nature. It stresses an intellectual approach through consideration of the problem of impending judgment rather than a

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41 For more on the uncertainty of the end of time and the history of its calculation, see Richard Landes, ‘Lest the Millennium be fulfilled: Apocalyptic Expectations and the Pattern of Western Chronography 100-800 CE,’ The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), pp. 137-211.
precise calculation of the end of time and thereby professes little more than a sense of 'mitigated millenarianism.'

As Beatus' text was developed allegorically, it had the potential to function meaningfully in different circumstances. The format which is evidenced in the tenth-century manuscripts almost certainly extended from the original Beatus manuscripts, which were made in the eighth century; more specifically, this format divided the Book of Revelation into twelve sections, with the text of the Apocalypse divided into sixty-eight storieae of around twelve lines each. These storieae are followed immediately by an illustration and then an explanatio consisting of several inter-woven passages that interpret the verses presented in that section. Thus despite the eighth-century context of the original Commentary, it could have been and likely was used in a different capacity during the tenth century. In spite of the maintained structural arrangement of the text, several images were added as a part of the revitalisation of the work during the tenth century, likely as a way of revealing new ideas and priorities. These added images consist of evangelist pages that show Angels Presenting the Gospels, the Genealogical Pages, eleven scenes from the Book of Daniel, The Four Beasts and the Statue, Noah's Ark, and the Fox and the Cock. Thus in addition to the increase in Beatus manuscript production and preservation starting in the tenth century, the illustrative programme was altered in accordance with the requirements and preferences of those producing these editions.

In terms of the tenth-century considerations, there are several theories which have been presented to explain their impact upon the production of Apocalypses.

Similar to the notions of impending Apocalypse around the year 800, the tenth-century Beatus manuscripts have also been understood in the context of the approaching end of the millennium. As was discussed earlier in relation to the possibility that 800 was

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42 Miguel C. Vivancos Gómez and Angela Franco, Codice de Santo Domingo de Silos (Barcelona: M. Moleiro, 2001), p.19.
43 Appendix 1F outlines the components of and divisions within the Commentary text.
44 John Williams, 'Maius y la Revolución Pictórica del Beato,' Seis Estudios Sobre Beatos Medievales, Coordinador Maurilio Pérez (León: Universidad de León, 2010), pp. 17-34 (p. 17).
46 For more on this see Peter K. Klein, 'Eschatological Expectations and the Revised Beatus', Church, State, Vellum, and Stone: Essays on Medieval Spain in Honor of John Williams, ed. by Thérèse Martin and Julie A. Harris (Boston: Brill, 2005), 147-171 (pp.
considered to be the year of the Apocalypse, the Beatus text does not emphasise the end of time, with the only specific reference occurring in the middle of the fourth book of the Commentary. Additionally, while production of the Beatus manuscripts certainly increased as the year 1000 approached, there was considerable debate surrounding the expiration of Christ's 1000-year reign on earth. Questions over when the 1000 years actually began and how that time was calculated contributed to the range of perspectives on the topic that are addressed by writers such as Bede, Haimo, Gauzlin, the Archbishop of Bourges, the Bishops of Verdun, Berengar and Wicfred and anonymous writers from York and Saint-Germain in Auxerre, among others.47 The mixed approach to the millennium problem also featured in the writings of more widely circulated theologians such as Jerome, Augustine and Tyconius. Each of these theologically and exegetically prominent writers, who approached the topic of the Apocalypse slightly differently, influenced and were incorporated into Beatus' text. This suggests that Beatus integrated more generalised Apocalyptic concerns of the era rather than specifically adopted ideas into his Commentary.48 Furthermore, in spite of this range of writers concerned with the impending end of time, there are only two extant tenth-century accounts from millennarianists, neither of whom was Iberian.49 Thus while the approaching year 1000 likely was a concern for those producing the Beatus manuscripts, there could be and likely are other reasons that also contributed to the revival of the Beatus Commentary during the tenth century.50

48 For further discussion of this, see Sylvain Gouguenheim, Les fausses terreurs de l’an Mil; attente de la fin des temps ou approfondissement de la foi? (Paris: Editions Picard, 1999), p. 65; and Klein, ‘Eschatological Expectations,’ p. 159.
50 Much has been written on possible connection between the production of these manuscripts and the year 1000, and admittedly there are varying views on it. While religious historians such as Guy Lobrichon and Johannes Fried advocate a millennarianist understanding of these works, art historians generally do not accept this point of view. For examples, in discussing Ottonian Apocalyptic manuscripts, Henry Mayr-Harting argues that link between the millennium and these manuscripts is too simple and that their illustrative programmes reveal other aims. Similarly John Williams and Peter Klein explain that the Beatus manuscripts were developed for social,
More specifically, the circumstances and concerns of northern Iberian Christians were particularly influential in the prominent production of the Beatus Commentary during this period. In order to get a sense of the tenth century in northern Iberia, particularly the region of Asturias-León, where all of these works were produced, it is necessary to look back to the eighth century when Christians fleeing Muslim rule in the south established themselves in the region (Figure 1.08). Prior to the Muslim Conquest, the region of Asturias likely was not heavily populated. In the middle of the eighth century, however, Alfonso I colonised the area and Christians from the Muslim-occupied south migrated north. They created and founded monastic communities in the mountainous and isolated regions of the Iberian Peninsula, which included sites such as Sahagún, San Pedro de Cardeña, Sts. Facundus y Primitivus and San Miguel de Escalada, among numerous smaller communities (Figure 1.09).

Furthermore, although the Leónese kings encouraged monastic emigration, were connected to the monasteries and were responsible for protecting the Catholic faith, the administration of such communities generally was left to the monks themselves. As such, the communities abided by the same Visigothic rules of Isidore and Fructuosus, adhering to the liturgy and practices of the Mozarabic rite, which was used with little question until the political and religious aims rather than out of fear for the millennium. For the details of these debates, see Guy Lobrichon, ‘Stalking the Signs: The Apocalyptic Commentaries,’ *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change, 950-1050*, ed. by Richard Landes, Andrew Gow and David C. Van Meter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 67-79; Fried, ‘Awaiting the End of Time around the Turn of the Year 1000,’ pp. 17-63; Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*; Williams, ‘Purpose and Imagery in the Apocalypse Commentary of Beatus of Liebana,’ pp. 217-233; and Klein, ‘Introduction: The Apocalypse in Medieval Art,’ pp. 159-199.

While it is not known, exactly where all of the extant Beatus manuscripts were made or where they were used, John Williams has analysed the style and colophons in each of the extant manuscript, offering the most convincing placements for these works. Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus*, Vols. I-V.


eleventh-century, when a different sort of programme of monastic revitalisation took place under Benedictine guidelines.\(^{55}\)

Despite being able to establish and maintain their own practices, the close affiliation between the Church and the monarchy was an important factor in the Christian communities. The king and his council were responsible for the establishment of bishoprics, the appointment and removal of bishops, the foundation of monasteries and the regulation of clerical morals.\(^{56}\) Therefore the political circumstances of that century, which centred around both the Christian North and the Muslim South making hegemonic claims to the peninsula, played a key role in the considerations of the Church during this period.\(^{57}\) Problematically for the Iberian Church, however, the beginning of the tenth century proved to be a politically tumultuous one. The Leónese kings experienced continual internal disputes, transitions in leadership and the constant threat of attack from the Muslim South under the leadership of the Córdoban caliphate, which was experiencing its golden age during this period.\(^{58}\)

The following paragraphs will outline key struggles between Iberian Christians and Muslims during the tenth century in order to further explain the historical context surrounding the production of these manuscripts and rationalise an examination of the early works.

As both Christians and Muslims were attempting to establish an all-encompassing reign in Iberia,\(^{59}\) skirmishes between the two groups were inevitable. The first half of the tenth century was filled with military struggle and political unrest, particularly within the Leónese kingdom.\(^{60}\) Towards the end of the century, however, changes in Islamic rule ended the period of peace that is considered to be the Córdoban golden age. While Abd al-Rahman III, Al-Hakam II and Ibn Abi Amir (known as Almanzor in Latin)


\(^{59}\) The title of *imperator* was developed during the tenth century as a way of referring to the Leónese kings and expressing the peninsular hegemony. For more on this, see O’Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, p. 121.

\(^{60}\) See Appendices 4A and 4B for a list of the Leónese kings and a list of caliphs.
had elevated Córdoban culture and society to new heights, the accession of Almanzor’s son, Abd al-Malik to the throne in 1002 brought great discontent and poor leadership.\textsuperscript{61} When Abd al-Malik died, possibly by poisoning at the hands of his brother Abd al-Rahman, contention for the caliphate and the uprising of rebels in the South continued to weaken the administration in al-Andalus. A once powerful and threatening enemy of the Christian North, by the end of the first decade of the eleventh century, the caliphate was losing its organisation and strength. While Muslim invasion remained a real and serious consideration for the Christian regions, the thriving culture of al-Andalus and the success and frequency of such raids was much reduced after Almanzor; the golden age had ended.

As the caliphate experienced decline around the turn of the tenth century, Christian leadership changed positively. Sancho III, better known as Sancho el Mayor, reigned between 1000 and 1033, uniting all of the Christian states except Catalonia during that time.\textsuperscript{62} Additionally, with Sancho’s reign León’s horizons were broadened beyond the Iberian Peninsula and the start of the eleventh-century marked the beginning of a period of integration into the rest of western Christianity. In order to combat what amounted to an eleventh-century ‘spiritual and disciplinary decline in conservative, isolated cenobitism’ the king made efforts to enforce ‘policies of internal development and territorial expansion through programs of monastic revitalization along “Benedictinizing” (i.e., “Europeanizing”) lines.’\textsuperscript{63}

In particular, Sancho el Mayor opened communication and exchange with France, embracing the region just North of the Pyrenees, increasing contact and monastic exchange with Abbot Odilo at Cluny, and initiating the tangible effects of the Cluniac reform by establishing the monasteries of Oña, Leyre and San Juan de la Peña.\textsuperscript{64} Sancho el Mayor also encouraged participation in the pilgrimage route to Santiago, improving

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\textsuperscript{61} O’Callaghan, \textit{A History of Medieval Spain}, p. 126.
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\textsuperscript{63} Gerli, \textit{Medieval Iberia: An Encyclopedia}, p. 581.
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\textsuperscript{64} See Figure 1.09 for a map with prominent monasteries marked. There is no study that comprehensively discusses Hispano-Cluniac history and therefore this discussion stems from a compilation of facts acquired from several sources that are not explicitly on the subject. Charles Julian Bishko, \textit{Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History 600-1300} (London: Variorum Prints, 1984); Rose Walker, \textit{Views of Transition: Liturgy and Illumination in Medieval Spain} (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1998), p. 24; Rahlves, \textit{Cathedrals and Monasteries of Spain}, p. 59; and Gerli, \textit{Medieval Iberia: An Encyclopedia}, p. 731.
\end{flushright}
the path through Álava and the Cantabrian Mountains and thereby facilitating the transmission of foreign ideas and practices such as French feudal traditions, elements of Romanesque style, and the Benedictine liturgy, into Iberia (Figure 1.10). As a result of the improvements in accessibility and the increased prominence of the Camino de Santiago, pilgrimage increasingly became an industry in Iberia, seemingly prompting the manufacture of Beatus manuscripts as an attraction to the monasteries and churches, which were constructed along the route. This is evidenced in the increased richness of both the material and illumination of the post-1000 Beatus manuscripts in comparison to the less opulent tenth-centuries editions, features that will be discussed further in the conclusion to the thesis.

Given the social and political shifts that occurred on the Iberian Peninsula around the turn of the millennium, a more specific consideration of the early Beatus manuscripts is needed. By examining the selected set of tenth-century editions mentioned earlier in this introduction, this thesis will evaluate the Beatus imagery within the context of tenth-century Iberia, seeking to explain the initial ideas and concerns of those revitalising the Beatus tradition in that century.

III. Cultural Context

In addition to the changing social and political circumstances in Iberia, a range of cultural interactions contributed to the creation of the Beatus manuscripts. Despite the relatively isolated regions of northern Iberia in which these works were produced, the monastic communities there had access to a broad range of textual and visual sources. These resources and connections will be discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

With regard to texts, library catalogues and sources referenced in Mozarabic texts reveal that Iberian monks were exposed to a variety of patristic literature. As there was very little by way of libraries prior to the eighth-century colonisation, it is likely that the monks and displaced clerics abandoning Muslim-ruled territories,

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66 For information on where, when and for whom these works were produced, see Appendix 1A. Additionally, see John Williams’ detailed descriptions of the manuscripts in Appendices 1B-1E, for information on specific features of the works and how they are attributed to different scriptoria.
particularly places such as Toledo and Seville, carried texts with them.\textsuperscript{67} From Beatus’ use of existing texts in his Commentary, it is clear that works composed by Irenaeus, Tyconius, Gregory of Elvira, Bachariarius, Jerome, Augustine, Fulgentius, Apringius, Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville, Cassian, Cyprian, Cyrillus, Eucherius, Filastrius, Justus of Urgell, Origen, Quintilian, Sallust, Virgil and Vergil Thapsensis were present and accessible in northern Iberia during the eighth century.\textsuperscript{68} Additionally, illustrated manuscripts of the works of Smaragdus, St Ildefonso of Toledo, Cassiodorus, Etherius, Ephraem, St Martin of Braga, St Caesarius of Arles, Paschasius of Dumium, Eucherius, Salvus Albeldensis, Leovigilgus and St Leandro of Seville offer another range of written works that clearly were valued enough to be reproduced and illustrated during or before the tenth century.\textsuperscript{69}

The few early library catalogues that remain reveal several additional sources that were available during this time in northern Iberian monastic libraries.\textsuperscript{70} In addition to the aforementioned writers, Paul Orosius’ \textit{Historiarum adversum paganos} and Boethius’ \textit{De Consolatione} appear in the eleventh-century inventory from Silos\textsuperscript{71} and works by Prudentius are listed in the inventory from the library in Oviedo from 884.\textsuperscript{72} While there is evidence of classical sources in the Silos inventory, including Sallust’s \textit{De bello Catilina et Jugurt}, catalogues from other Spanish libraries such as Burgo de Osma, Oña, Ripoll and Burgos include many more.\textsuperscript{73} The inventory at Ripoll of manuscripts in the library before 1064 includes listings such as the \textit{legem Romanam}, \textit{Donatum I} and writings by Juvenal (‘et alius de Juvenal’)\textsuperscript{74} and the Oviedo inventory of


\textsuperscript{68} Williams, \textit{The Illustrated Beatus}, Vol. I, p. 15.


\textsuperscript{70} See Appendix 11 for the early inventories from the libraries at Oviedo, Ripoll and Silos.

\textsuperscript{71} Ann Boylan, ‘The Library at Santo Domingo de Silos and its Catalogues (XIIth-XVIIIth Centuries, 1992),’ \textit{Revue Mabillon: Revue international d’histoire et de literature religieuses} 64/3, pp. 79-87 (p. 85).

\textsuperscript{72} Gustavus Becker, \textit{Catalogi Bibliothecarum Antiqi} (Bonn: M. Cohen et filium, 1885), p. 60.

\textsuperscript{73} Boylan, ‘The Library at Santo Domingo de Silos and its Catalogues’, p. 84.

\textsuperscript{74} Becker, \textit{Catalogi Bibliothecarum Antiqui}, p. 134.
882 includes the *Vita Vergili, Ovidii Nasonis, Eneidarum* and *Enedas*. Other political and historical documents such as the *Capitularem Karoli* from the Ripoll inventory and the *Martirologium Romense* also appear in these early inventories, demonstrating the wide range of access that Iberian monasteries had to textual materials.

Visually, northern Iberian artists also had a number of different resources to call upon as they developed their works. Even though the Iberian Peninsula was separate in many ways from Western Europe and the eastern Mediterranean world during the tenth-century due to both the geographic restrictions enforced by the Pyrenees and the Church’s maintenance of the Mozarabic liturgy, visual traditions and texts entered the Peninsula through invasion, political, economic and religious exchange of materials, and pilgrimage. This access to materials from throughout the early medieval world meant that Iberian Christians had a pool of stylistic and iconographic types to draw from, which included the visual traditions of Insular, Western European, Late Antique/Byzantine and Islamic worlds. The following sections will account for and provide evidence of the interactions between Iberian Christians and the regions listed above.

Examination of the Beatus manuscripts and other Iberian Bibles reveals that monastic communities such as Escalada and Valeranica had access to manuscripts from beyond the Pyrenees, likely through gifts or loans from other, longer-established monasteries. More specifically, links have been drawn between the northern Iberian monasteries and Tours as there is documentation of interactions between the Asturian court and the monastery of Saint Martin in Tours. For example, a letter from 906 attests to the Asturian king, Alfonso III’s interest in purchasing a crown from Saint Martin, which was left in need of funds after a Norman raid, and also mentioned that Alfonso III had a copy of Saint Martin’s *Vita* made, thereby introducing the manuscript

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77 It should be acknowledged here, towards the beginning of this thesis, that there are theoretical issues that arise when discussing these various interactions, particularly between Iberian Christians and Muslims. These concerns will be addressed later in this introduction.
78 The community of Escalada was settled in 912 by monks from al-Andalus and likely was the monastery for which the Morgan Beatus was commissioned. Valeranica, which has a large scriptorium, was founded at around the same time in an area south of Burgos in the Arlanza Valley. Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus*, Vol. I, pp. 93-94.
connections between the Iberia and Tours. Additionally, there is a known letter that supposedly was written by Alcuin, the Abbot of Saint Martin, to Beatus himself thanking him for his efforts in combatting the Adoptionist heresy; both men were adamantly opposed to Adoptionism. While this letter would appear to solidify the strong ties between the northern Iberian monastic communities and Tours, it should be examined cautiously as the only extant version of it is a copy that was made in Tours and that frequently has been considered to be a forged document designed to promote Santiago de Compostela. Nevertheless, the letter suggests the plausibility and value of the connection between Iberia and France during this period and is worth acknowledging as an indication of the ties between communities.

Further to the written documentation, a number of stylistic similarities between Iberian and Touronian manuscripts have been acknowledged. For example, manuscripts such as the San Isidoro Bible of 960 (León, R.C. de San Isidoro, 2) and a copy of *Moralia in Job* that is dated to the tenth century (Madrid, Bibl. Nac., 80) both contain capitals that suggest the presence of a Carolingian Franco-Saxon manuscript in the scriptorium. Similarly, decorative elements such as the floral and interlacing elements found in the initials from the Morgan Beatus have been linked to initials in Touronian works such as the illuminated Bible, Zürich, Zentralbibliothek, Ms. Car. C 1, 453v (Figure 1.11). Furthermore, the ninth century carvings of the evangelist figures

82The earliest scholar to draw international attention to medieval Iberian illumination was Arthur Haseloff, who worked in the early twentieth-century and recognised Carolingian and Insular influences in the Iberian manuscripts. Henry Yates Thompson followed shortly thereafter, developing his own observations on medieval Iberian manuscript imagery and forming similar conclusions to Haseloff. In describing these connections, Thompson wrote that ‘The rude Spaniard had seen Tours work, and in his barbaric way carefully imitated it.’ While these initial responses demonstrate a different approach to the sharing of visual elements, they show that the links between Iberian imagery and artistic work from other cultures were being drawn from the earliest stages of discussion on these topics. For more on this, see Henry Yates Thompson, *Illustrations from One Hundred Manuscripts in the Library of Henry Yates Thompson* (London: Chiswick Press, 1912); and Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus*, Vol. 1, p. 94.
from the Asturian church of San Miguel de Liño (Figure 1.12) bear close resemblance to iconography from Carolingian manuscripts.\textsuperscript{83}

Other northern traditions have also been identified as sources for different forms of early medieval Iberian art. Textiles and metalwork including the famed bejeweled Cross of Victory (Figure 1.13), which was a gift to Alfonso III but which is now housed in the Oviedo Cathedral, demonstrate a manufacturing technique that has been traced to northern craftsmen.\textsuperscript{84} Similarly the Arc of San Isidoro in León has been associated with Ottonian developments in door casting, as evidenced in Hildesheim (Figure 1.14).\textsuperscript{85} Extending further north-west, early scholars, such as Arthur Haseloff, have suggested that the figures from the Iberian manuscripts were inspired by Irish models\textsuperscript{86} and, more recently, affiliations with decorative elements such as scroll work, spiral motifs and loose interlace have been made with Irish illumination.\textsuperscript{87} Additionally, O.K. Werckmeister explains the Late Antique and Mediterranean style of figures and ornament in the Echternach Gospels by tracing such motifs through southern Iberian works.\textsuperscript{88}

Another critical connection that Werckmeister establishes in his discussion of the ‘Pre-Carolingian Figure-Style’ is the common Late Antique inheritance that is evident in works from Iberia and the British Isles alike. With regards to the Iberian elements, Werckmeister identifies, for example, motifs found on the carved capital at San Pedro de la Nave (Figure 1.15), which are also evidenced in antique caryatids and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Helmut Schlunk, ‘Entwicklungsläufe der Skulptur auf der Iberischen Halbinsel vom 8. Bis 11. Jahrhundert,’ \textit{Kolloquium über frühmittelalterliche Skulptur. Vortragstexte} Vol. 3 (Mainz-am-Rhein: P. Von Zabern, 1972), pp. 121-128 (pp. 127-128).\textsuperscript{83}
\item For other examples of Carolingian influence in different media, see Williams \textit{The Illustrated Beatus}, Vol. 1, pp. 93-5; and Helmut Schlunk, ‘The Crosses of Oviedo: A Contribution to the History of Jewellery in Northern Spain in the Ninth and Tenth-Centuries,’ \textit{Art Bulletin} 32/2 (1950), pp. 91-114 (p.113).\textsuperscript{84}
\item Williams, ‘Tours and the Early Medieval Art of Spain,’ p. 205.\textsuperscript{85}
\item \textit{Ibid.}, p. 197.\textsuperscript{86}
\item O.K. Werckmeister, ‘Three Problems of Tradition in Pre-Carolingian Figure-Style: From Visigothic to Insular Illumination,’ \textit{Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature}, 63 (1962-1964), pp. 167-189 (pp. 175-181).\textsuperscript{88}
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Roman ceiling paintings.\(^9\) This Late Antique and Byzantine connection is further developed by Werckmeister and also through other discussions of early medieval Iberian visual traditions. For example, the murals found in the Church of Santullano in Oviedo (Figure 1.16) present an extensive visual programme, which was constructed for Alfonso II (791-842). The style of these frescoes suggests a classical prototype, perhaps of Pompeian origin, was used in the design.\(^{90}\)

This Late Antique inheritance is a prominent component of other eastern traditions as well and contributes to the commonalities that can be established between early medieval Iberian art and that of the Islamic world. Before detailing this element of the shared visual culture, it should be acknowledged that any discussion of Muslim-Christian interaction in Iberia during the Middle Ages brings with it a range of questions and problems. While such issues will be addressed shortly, it is essential to recognise the significance of this aspect of the relationship between Iberian, North African and Islamic traditions before delving into further discussion of them.

One of the more frequently discussed aspects of the possible eastern influences on the Beatus Commentary is its North African foundation. It is commonly believed that Beatus relied on a North African prototype, likely a Tyconian model, to compose the work.\(^{91}\) Iberia’s geographic proximity to North Africa and the presence of Muslims in Iberia contributed to the influx of new styles and techniques practised by Iberian Christians. This is evidenced in the visual references to the Great Mosque of Córdoba that appear in a painted frieze in San Adriano de Tuñón, which was made around 891\(^{92}\) and in the Beatus manuscripts where, for instance, the scenes of Heavenly Jerusalem (Figure 1.17) and Balthassar’s Feast (Figure 1.18) from the Morgan Beatus reference the layout, crenellations and arches of the mosque.\(^{93}\)

\(^{99}\) Ibid., pp. 173-174.
\(^{92}\) García de Castro Valdés, Arte Prerrománico en Asturias, p. 75.
Those on the Iberian Peninsula also had access to visual traditions from cities and regions such as Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo and other Coptic centres in Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria through trade and pilgrimage. Much scholarly attention has been paid to the presence of Islamic style and iconography from the aforementioned areas in the Beatus manuscripts and, as such, the topic has been approached in a variety of ways. For example, José Camón Aznar has deciphered three major, representational styles that are found in the manuscript imagery: ‘rectilinear,’ ‘spiralform’ and ‘pouched.’ He suggests that the presence of these designs indicate a connection to ancient and Oriental traditions as they also appear in Coptic, Syrian and Sassanian art that is dated earlier than the seventh century. Similarly, the appearance of Sassanian decorative motifs such as the senmurv and the eagle attacking the gazelle (Figure 1.19) also suggests the incorporation of elements from the Islamic world. Though these are but two examples, they suggest the types of connections that are present in the vast amount of literature on Islamic elements featured in Iberian art and architecture.

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94 The connection between the Muslim presence in early medieval Iberia and the wider history of the regions surrounding the Mediterranean is very complex and cannot be fully explained in the limited space of this introduction. Marilyn Jenkins, however, developed a relatively clear and concise summary of the impact of the unifying Greco-Roman heritage in the region, as well as the transmission of those elements to Iberia through conquest and pilgrimage, for example. Marilyn Jenkins, ‘Al-Andalus: Crucible of the Mediterranean’, *The Art of Medieval Spain A.D. 500-1200* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1993), p. 72.


96 It is important to acknowledge that the term, Coptic, has become increasingly problematic in recent scholarship as it implies a separation between the Byzantine Empire and Egypt. Though terms such as Byzanto-Christian might be more appropriate, ‘Coptic’ remains the clearest way to refer to Christian, Egyptian material and so it will be used throughout this thesis. Camón Aznar, ‘El Arte en Los Beatos y el Codice de Gerona,’ pp. 21-23.


As was mentioned above, there are a number of concerns that arise from discussions of Christian-Muslim relations in early medieval Iberia and the debate over how Christians and Muslims interacted continues to rage. On one side of the discussion, scholarship experienced a wave of studies devoted to the theme of *convivencia*, which frequently sought to demonstrate that tolerance and acceptance were key attributes of Iberian culture during the early medieval period. Indeed this notion of acceptance has been used in discussions of art. For example, William D. Wixom and Margaret Lawson stated that the inclusion of Islamic decorative motifs in the Iberian *Apocalypses* indicates that ‘ongoing hostility between the Christian and Muslim worlds at the time is obviously not reflected in these borrowings’ and furthermore that ‘Islamic motifs and pictorial details’ were ‘curiously palatable’ to the Beatus artists. Furthermore, Mozarabs were known to have accepted and adopted aspects of Muslim culture, such as Muslim dress and aspects of Islamic architecture. Iberian art features horseshoe...

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100 While Wixom and Lawson attribute these animal motifs to Islamic influence, there are western examples of such zoomorphic images, such as those from the Corbie Psalter, which presents animal imagery with interlace. These features in the Psalter have been attributed to Merovingian and Insular animal themes, demonstrating that there are non-Islamic precedents, which could have contributed to the appearance of such motifs in the Iberian works. See Wixom and Lawson, ‘Picturing the Apocalypse,’ pp. 7-8; Bernard Meehan, ‘The Book of Kells and the Corbie Psalter (with a Note of Harley 2788),’ *Studies in the Illustration of the Psalter*, ed. by Brendan Cassidy and Rosemary Muir Wright (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 2000), pp. 12-23; Heather Pulliam, ‘Eloquent Ornament: Exegesis and Entanglement in the Corbie Psalter,’ *Studies in the Illustration of the Psalter*, ed. by Brendan Cassidy and Rosemary Muir Wright (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 2000), pp. 24-33; and Françoise Henry, *Irish Art During the Viking Invasions 800-1020* (London: Methuen, 1967), pp. 39-40.

arches, buildings with typical Islamic crenellations and even varying views of mosques, suggesting that they were common and accepted sights.\footnote{For more on this see Gregory B. Kaplan, ‘The Mozarabic Horseshoe Arches in the Church of San Román de Moroso (Cantabria, Spain),’ \textit{Peregrinations}, 3/3 (2012), pp. 1-18.}

In spite of these shared components, there is significant visual and textual evidence to suggest that Islamic elements were not used as a way of celebrating those forms or the culture from which they were derived. Rather, the exchanges tended to occur more often as a form of developmental borrowing of motifs, or, in instances of greater conflict, as expressions of Christian discontent with Muslim rule. This first point regarding development is best demonstrated through specific examples, and the horseshoe arch will be used here to explain this idea. The horseshoe arch historically has been understood as an Islamic feature, although more recently it has been acknowledged that the form was present during the Roman period in Iberia and changed with Muslim invasion.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 3-18.} More specifically, while it is unknown how the horseshoe arch reached the Iberian Peninsula, the form appears on Asturian funeral steles from the second century (Figure 1.20)\footnote{Vicente Lampérez y Romea, \textit{Historia de la arquitectura Cristiana española en la Edad Media}, Vol. 1, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1930), pp. 146-149.} and was used in church architecture beginning in the fourth and fifth centuries; examples of this include sites such as the Church of Marialba (fourth/fifth century) (Figure 1.21), the Church in Dehesa de la Cocosa (6\textsuperscript{th} century) and the Church of Milagro in Tarragona (6\textsuperscript{th} or 7\textsuperscript{th} century).\footnote{Theodor Hauschild, ‘La iglesia martirial de Marialba (León),’ \textit{Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia}, 163 (1968), pp. 243-249.}

While horseshoe arches were present on the Peninsula prior to the Muslim Conquest, recent studies by Gregory Kaplan have shown that Iberian churches began to change the proportions of the arches, creating larger super-elevations that are reflective of Peninsular Islamic designs (Figure 1.22).\footnote{Kaplan, ‘The Mozarabic Horseshoe Arches,’ pp. 10-12.} Examples of these proportions are found in Christian and Islamic structures alike, including Santa María de Melque (Toledo) (Figure 1.23), Santiago de Peñalba (León), San Cebrián de Mazote (Valladolid) (Figure 1.24), San Millán de Suso (La Rioja), the Alcázar of Córdoba and the Aljafería Palace in the city of Zaragoza.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 12.} Thus horseshoe arches are no longer considered to be specifically Muslim structural features, but rather demonstrate the impact of Muslim

invasion through slight adaptations in their proportions and forms, propagating a sense 
that such development was a process that amalgamated visual traditions based on the 
technological and aesthetic success of their combination, rather than the overall 
articulation of a message of political and social equity.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 3-18.}

Beyond this sense of gradual change through interaction, many visual and textual 
sources imply a more direct discontent with Islamic presence. Some of the strongest 
evidence of this comes in the recognition that the Beatus manuscripts were made in 
monasteries and scriptoria that were settled by the Christian communities fleeing 
Muslim rule. This migration to the North is encouraged through texts such as the 
\textit{Chronicle of 754} and the \textit{Chronicle of Alfonso III}, which was written in the early tenth 
century. These texts describe the ‘refugees’ that fled ‘to the mountains where they 
risked various forms of death’ and hardship.\footnote{Kenneth Baxter Wolf, \textit{Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain} (Liverpool: 
Liverpool University Press, 2011), pp. 43, 54 and 134.} In addition to the range of described 
battles against Muslim forces, which, according to the \textit{Chronicle of 754}, served as 
 attempts to ‘subdue the inhabitants of the Pyrenean mountains,’\footnote{‘...subuertere nititur Pirinaica inabitantium iuga...' Wolf, \textit{Conquerors and Chroniclers}, p. 118; and Jos José Eduardo López Pereira, \textit{Crónica Mozárabe de 754} (Saragossa: 
Anubar Ediciones, 1980), p. 102} these texts reveal 
other dimensions of Christian discontent. For example, the \textit{Chronicle of 754} explains 
that in 721, the Muslim leader Anbasah ‘burdened the Christians by doubling their 
taxes’\footnote{‘uectigalia Xpianis duplicate exagitans...' Wolf, \textit{Conquerors and Chroniclers}, p. 113; 
and López Pereira, \textit{Crónica Mozárabe de 754}, p. 88.} and that in 723 Walid was ‘seized with greed and a greater collection of money 
was made, east and west, by the generals he sent out than has been gathered by any 
king at any time before him. Realising that there was in him a perverse cupidity, large 
numbers of people removed themselves from this dominion.’\footnote{‘Deinde cupiditate prereptus, tanta collectio pecuniarum per duces Oriente et 
Occidente ab ipso missis est facta, quanta nullo umquam tempore in reges qui ante eum 
fuerrant extitit congreqate. Unde non modice populorum katerue cernentes in eo 
inprobam manere cupiditatem ab eius dicione suas diuidunt mentes.' Wolf, \textit{Conquerors 
and Chroniclers}, p. 114; and López Pereira, \textit{Crónica Mozárabe de 754}, p. 90.}

Even though Christians wrote these chronicles with varying degrees of accuracy, 
the texts suggest the sentiments of unease and dissatisfaction that were circulating in 
Christian Iberia prior to and during the creation of the Beatus manuscripts. Indeed, 
these concerns were suggested in one of the tenth-century editions of the Commentary.
An unusually specific colophon from the tenth-century Girona Beatus reads, ‘the book was successfully completed on Friday, 6 July. In those days Ferdenando Flaginiz was at Villas, the Toledan town, fighting the moors. The year was 975.’ Thus this thesis will consider the tenth-century Beatus imagery in relation to the political and religious tensions in the region of Asturias-León where the manuscripts were made.

More specifically, this thesis will examine the distinct set of extra-Apocalyptic images within the illustrative programme that emphasise ideas from the Commentary rather than from the Book of Revelation. Free from the narrative burdens of the Apocalypse, the features of these scenes have the potential to reveal ideas and concerns outside of the canonised text. Through comparative visual and textual analyses, it will demonstrate that these scenes were designed to express the importance of adhering to Christian belief and to offer assurance of Christian triumph at the end of time. Such messages would have been particularly poignant for Iberian Christians given the ongoing conflicts with Muslim forces that compromised their status on the Peninsula. As John Williams suggests,

At the time that Beatus wrote, John’s text offered a warning about, and assurance of victory over, enemies within the Church. It served equally well as a guarantee that the People of God would ultimately triumph over enemies outside the Church. The most threatening of these were, of course, the followers of Muhammad who occupied so much of the Peninsula. It is possible, even probable, that Beatus and his contemporaries thought of the Muslims when they read of the forces of evil in the Apocalypse, but one looks in vain for a concrete allusion to them in Beatus’ Commentary, even when the opportunity is offered.

In essence, Muslim occupation was a predominant concern when Beatus penned his Commentary as well as in the subsequent centuries when the extant works were produced. Therefore, though there are no explicit references to such concerns in the

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114 It has been acknowledged that the illustrations of the Book of Revelation from the Beatus manuscripts are closely associated with and exhibit particular details from the text. For further discussion of this, see Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus*, Vol. 1, pp. 32-33.

Commentary or in the illuminations it is likely that such messages of Christian defiance of and victory over Islam are implicit in many areas of these works and were considered to be so by those viewing them.

Thus in developing a web of supporting visual and literary material, it will be argued that the illustrative programme and formatting of the Beatus manuscripts were designed to draw parallels between tenth-century Iberian Christians and biblical figures, serving as powerful reminders of the end of time on earth and demonstrating how to achieve a place in heaven according to Christian ethos. In sum, it will be argued that these images deliver a deliberate message of Christian superiority during an era of Islamic threat.

IV. Literature on the Beatus Manuscripts

While the approach described above aims to consider this group of Beatus illustrations in a new way and to extend discourse on these manuscripts, it relies on the foundations established by earlier scholars. The Beatus manuscripts have long been of interest due to the prominence of their imagery and the number of manuscripts that were produced and preserved. Studies of the works, however, have remained relatively limited in their approach, dealing primarily with the identification and description of the images, issues of style, provenance and how the works relate to other manuscripts. Furthermore, while scholars such as Mireille Mentré and Hermenegildo García-Aráez Ferrer have examined the manuscripts through a more iconographical lens, these discussions are limited in their comparisons to other early medieval works and in their consideration of the circumstances surrounding production and consumption of the manuscripts. As such, the literature on these works can be categorised in three central ways: relatively generalised texts related to the stemma and history of the manuscripts as a group, facsimile editions that detail specific manuscripts, and shorter articles that begin to tackle and explain particular features of the illustrations.

The largest body of literature on these manuscripts, which concerns the history, style and physical qualities of these works will be detailed more specifically in this introductory section as a way of rationalising and establishing a context for the approach adopted in this thesis. A few shorter articles that fit into the latter two
categories as discussions of specific manuscripts or selected aspects of the works will also be addressed in this introductory section. The majority of these more precise and detailed studies, however, will be consulted in the discussions throughout the content chapters of this thesis.

With regard to the topics covered in the corpus of Beatus literature, establishing the dates, provenance and affiliated works has been of great interest since the beginning of Beatus studies. This is reflected in the work of scholars such as Léopold Delisle, Henry Sanders, Wilhelm Neuss, Peter Klein and John Williams, who have all debated the number of stemmae represented and the dates assigned to works in the Beatus tradition. In attempting to define the stemmae, or groupings of related manuscripts, and assign dates to each of the works, each of the scholars mentioned above contributed to the understanding of the development of the extant manuscripts. John Williams’ model, however, is the most recent and comprehensive (Appendix 3C). It breaks the manuscripts into three stemmae that are labeled as Branch I, Branch IIa and Branch IIb and provides the most thorough consideration of the visual and textual material in each manuscript in order to justify the dating scheme. Williams’ classifications and dates will be used, when necessary, throughout this thesis and his work is accordingly referenced with great frequency.

In addition to studying the connections between the manuscripts, the physical and stylistic qualities of these works have been discussed and analysed at length in these broadly themed texts. Many of the generalised volumes describe how these manuscripts were prepared, cataloguing their material makeup in terms of which parts


of the animals were used to make the parchment and which materials went into the ink and pigments.\textsuperscript{118} Again, the most recent and thorough documentation of the composition of each of the Beatus manuscripts can be found in John Williams’ five volumes of The Illustrated Beatus where he methodically documents the known history, size, features, materials, images and colophons present in each of the twenty-six extant fragments and manuscripts.\textsuperscript{119} Williams systematically accounts for the various details of these works and these volumes will be heavily relied upon throughout this thesis as they provide the most thorough account of the extant manuscripts.

Despite having documentation of the physical details of and connections between the Beatus manuscripts, there remain critical features that are not as easily labeled or defined. As in almost any field, the scholarship on medieval Iberia has long embraced debates over how to describe the works appropriately. In particular, attempts to articulate the style of these manuscripts have been couched in geographic terms such as ‘Leónese’ as well as in more generalised and confused labels such as ‘Mozarabic.’\textsuperscript{120}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{118} The work of Peter Klein and Wilhelm Neuss offer the earliest cataloguing of this information, while more recent scholarship can be attributed to scholars namely Margaret Lawson. More specifically, see Peter Klein, Der ältere Beatus-Kodex Vitr. 14-1, Vols. 1 and 2; Wilhelm Neuss, ‘Probleme der christlichen Kunst in maurischen Spanien des 10 Jahrhunderts’, Neue Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte des 1 Jahrtaudends: Frühmittelalterliche Kunst, (Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christlichen Archäologie, ed. A. Alfoldi) I/2 (1954), pp. 249-284; and Margaret Lawson, ‘The Techniques and Materials of the Beatus: A Conservator’s Inquiry,’ The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), pp. 47-54.

\textsuperscript{119} Williams, The Illustrated Beatus, Vols. 1-5.

\textsuperscript{120} Problematically, such terms are laden with hidden values and ideas. For instance, ‘Leónese’ suggests a style that was developed by monastic scribes as a form of cultural revival in places that were greatly impacted by Muslim Conquest, such as Asturias-León. The term, however, is geographically limiting, unstable and unable to account for the frequent changes in regional power and boundaries. Another problematic and more generalised term, ‘Mozarabic,’ was coined in the 1919 by Manuel Gómez-Moreno in reference to Christians living under Muslim rule. Frequently, however, the term is applied the Beatus illuminations and other works created in the northern kingdom of Asturias, within the boundaries of Christian Iberia. Additionally, as John Williams suggests, there is a presumptuous element in describing Iberian art as Mozarabic, as the label implies that the most essential element of the style was brought to the freer northern parts of Iberia and therefore does not allow for much consideration of other, critical traditions. In spite of these objections, the definition and expectations of the term have been broadened into a general designation for Christians in early medieval Iberia on the assumption that their work and culture was shaped explicitly by their coexistence with Muslims, therefore the title applied to manuscripts made from the tenth-century to around 1100 is Mozarabic. The following sources offer further
While these specifics are important, scholars have strayed from these debates in favour of addressing the material itself more closely, attempting to explain rather than name stylistic characteristics. Accordingly, this thesis will not overly engage with questions of terminology, nor will it coin new terms to label the style of the early Beatus manuscripts.

Even though determining the most viable terminology for this discussion is not a priority, it is, however, important to establish the attributes of Mozarabic style present in these manuscripts. Aesthetically, the Beatus illustrations have been described as ‘easily distinguishable in their exploitation of colour and the suppression of linear and plastic values from those issuing from scriptoria elsewhere in Europe.’ As the imagery is composed of vibrant scenes that were frequently executed in a full-page format, set against bright planes of colour and often placed within painted frames, colour has dominated discussions of style. As Georgianna Goddard King suggested, ‘there is nothing like it [the colour used in the Beatus images] in all early medieval manuscripts that have survived.’ Considering the prominence of colour, the topic has been tackled in a number of ways, including from a formal perspective with analysis of colour patterns and differentiation between non-naturalistic hues.


In addressing this dimension of the images, however, discussion in this thesis will develop from the work of scholars, namely Elizabeth Bolman and Mireille Mentré, both of whom have written on the issue of Beatus colour convincingly and recently. While Bolman’s ideas will be detailed much more thoroughly in later chapters, it should be acknowledged here that she offers insight into the functional and symbolic qualities of colour in these works, which will be central to understanding the specific scenes addressed throughout this thesis. Similarly, Mentré, who has been one of the relatively few art historians to begin assessing these manuscripts iconographically, addresses the prominent role of colour and its relevance to space as it is represented in the illustrations, ideas that will also weigh heavily on later discussions of the Beatus scenes. By identifying themes in Beatus’ text and in the writings of Etherius, she persuasively suggests that colour was used in the Beatus manuscripts as a way of transcending the physical in order to enter into the realm of spirituality through meditation and cogitation of the text; it was a way of helping ‘the reader at prayer to relinquish the comfort of natural perception in order to attain a more spiritual way of seeing.’ She suggests that, ‘It is probably this need for detachment from the physical, and progression towards a higher, suprahuman vision of the divine mysteries that best explains the use by Mozarabic painters of strident colours, far removed from any encounter in the world of sense perception.’

While this thesis will not address this topic to the same degree or in the same manner as Mentré, this notion of transcending physical space through the consideration of time and space in the Beatus imagery have been raised largely in relation to the mappaemundi. For examples of different approaches to this topic, see Wixom and Lawson, ‘Picturing the Apocalypse,’ p. 9; David Woodward, ‘Reality, Symbolism Time and Space in Medieval World Maps,’ Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 75/4 (1987), pp. 510-521; Evelyn Edson, ‘World Maps and Easter Tables: Medieval Maps in Context,’ Imago Mundi, 48 (1996), pp. 25-42; Evelyn Edson, Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed their World (London: The British Library, 1999); and J.B. Harle, ‘Silences and Secrecy: the Hidden Agenda of Cartography in Early Modern Europe,’ Imago Mundi, 40 (1988), pp. 56-76.

of and meditation on an image is a critical element in understanding various aspects of these and other early medieval manuscripts. A number of scholars including Laura Kendrick, Peter Brown, Herbert Kessler, Jean Leclercq and Michelle Brown have emphasised the importance of image in reading and considering Christian text and their studies will contribute to the arguments put forth in this thesis.128 As Michelle Brown suggests, the book occupied a central position in liturgical space and was in itself a sacred space – ‘a tabernacle of the Word and a place for the enshrinement and contemplation of ideas.’129 Beyond the physical connections between the book and space, the intellectual conception of space is also critical to the functionality and importance of these manuscripts. In her extensive study of image reception in medieval manuscripts, Suzanne Lewis acknowledges that illuminations ‘exist within their frames as representations of the text and as pictorial signifiers of an inner world,’ helping to mediate the optical (physical) perception of the written/illustrated page to the intellectual realm of thought and idea.130 Brown relates a similar idea, arguing that the book itself served as a ‘place for the enshrinement and contemplation of ideals’ and that images, more specifically, acted as ‘portals of prayer.’131 Therefore the book and its

129 Michelle Brown primarily discusses gospel books in her article, though she also references writing and sacred texts more generally; this suggests that her ideas can be applied to other types of books. Additionally, Brown outlines a range of connections between the book and space, citing its talismanic functions, the idea of the materialisation of the text and the spatial implications of the illustrations. Brown presents a compelling argument, which will become very important in discussions later in this thesis. Michelle Brown, ‘The Book as Sacred Space,’ Sacred Space: house of God, gate of heaven, ed. by Phillip North and John North (London: Continuum, 2007), pp. 43-63.
painted images functioned as a way of accessing a sacred realm, if only intellectually, through contemplation and meditation.\textsuperscript{132}

These ideas are particularly relevant to the Beatus manuscripts and to the discussions that will ensue as Beatus noted in the preface to the Commentary that he developed the text ‘for the edification of the brethren.’\textsuperscript{133} As such, it is most likely that the manuscripts were reserved for viewing by those in the monastic communities in northern Iberia and furthermore that ruminatio and meditatio were integral to their function.\textsuperscript{134} Therefore, this thesis will rely on the hypothesis that such illustrated works were designed to transport the viewer intellectually, allowing them to contemplate the images, consider the messages promoted through them and spiritually transcend the space of this world.

Given the potential of the image to guide viewers into contemplation, this thesis will analyse the forms, placement and iconographic precedents used in the creation of the Beatus illustrations in order to suggest the ideas that are promoted through them. The aim is not to show the direct copying or inheritance of specific forms from earlier traditions, but rather to demonstrate where the Beatus illustrations are different from or similar to earlier Late Antique and early medieval representations of comparable scenes in their visual emphases. After addressing the particulars of the extra-Apocalyptic imagery, this thesis will attempt to explain the relevance of their stylistic properties and placement, contextualising them within tenth-century Iberia.

Using this largely comparative approach assumes a level of cultural and intellectual exchange. In terms of early medieval Iberia, this topic has been broached largely with regard to encounters between Christians and Muslims.\textsuperscript{135} Despite the


\textsuperscript{133} ‘te petente ob aedificationem studii fratrum tibi dicavi.’ It is unclear from this reference whether Beatus intended the brethren to view the text collectively or individually, though in either case cogitating on the image would have been a central function of the manuscripts. Beatus, \textit{Sancti Beati a Liébana Commentarius in Apocalypsin}, p. 5; and O.K. Werckmeister, ‘The First Romanesque Beatus Manuscripts and the Liturgy of Death,’ \textit{Actas del Simposio del ‘Comentario al Apocalipsis’ de Beato de Liébana}, Vol. 2 (Madrid: Joyas Bibliográficas, 1980), p. 167.

\textsuperscript{134} Leclercq, \textit{The Love of Learning}, pp. 90-95.

\textsuperscript{135} The level of interest in these topics as they apply to the Beatus manuscripts is evidenced in the number of essays from the only conference volumes dedicated solely
prominence of scholarship on Christian-Muslim interactions, however, there are problems that come with looking at the art based on such simple dichotomies or similarities. On a fundamental level, as Jerrilynn Dodds perhaps most eloquently explains, the act of thinking singularly about these interactions encourages the 'scholarly habit of thinking that still sees many relationships between divergent cultures and their arts in terms of influence.' She further suggests,

The word “influence” functions in these circumstances as an appendage of the word “power,” and in the early medieval period its use to describe the exchange of artistic forms literally creates an unequal relationship between the parties involved, one in which the donor culture is—actually or in memory—more sophisticated and politically powerful than a passive or insipid receiver culture (which has in reality actively chosen a new form). This passivity, this assumed permeability to the art of another discipline (Islamic art), then becomes the justification for the marginalization of the early medieval art of the Iberian Peninsula: its failure to resist the seduction of the other.

Therefore constantly referring to the impact of appropriation presumes a weakness or lack of ingenuity on the part of Iberian Christians, denying the complexity of a tradition that reached far beyond the realm of Muslim political influence, drawing on a much deeper pool of conventions to form a style that was distinctly Iberian. Thus while Islam was a culturally and socially integral part of early medieval Iberia, assuming its own regional character partly because of its interactions with the mixture of cultures on the Peninsula, it has too often served as an easy and exotic solution to explain the immediately unexplainable. As such, though this thesis certainly will reference elements that are identifiably Islamic, every effort will be made to do so in a manner that considers evidence that is indicative of a well-rounded expression of cultural interactions and beliefs in Iberia.

to the Beatus manuscripts, the first and second volumes of Actas del Simposio del ‘Comentario al Apocalipsis’ de Beato de Liébana.

136 Dodds, Architecture and Ideology, p. 3.

137 Many of the same ideas expressed above by Jerrilynn Dodds in terms of medieval art on the Iberian Peninsula are pillars of Michael Baxandall’s work. His discussion of ‘The Period Eye’ particularly addresses factors that impact the viewing and understanding of art. For more, see Michael Baxandall, ‘The Period Eye,’ Painting and Experience in fifteenth-century Italy: a primer in the social history of pictorial style (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 29-57; and Dodds, Architecture and Ideology, p. 3.

138 For more on ‘influence,’ see John Lowden and Alixe Bovey, Under the Influence: The Concept of Influence and the Study of Illuminated Manuscripts (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).
Such efforts will be bolstered by a consideration of translation and post-colonial approaches to the topic. Though medievalists in general and Hispanists more specifically have hesitated to interpret this period in Iberian history through postcolonial or translational lenses, progress is being made in this area and this thesis is in line with such emerging ideas. As the Christian realm of tenth-century Iberia was subject to what David A. Wacks terms a form of “porous “border thinking,” it is important to consider how cultural elements were transferred and adapted into those Christian regions in order to grasp how text and image were understood. Furthermore, it is necessary to evaluate the impact that Muslim invasion and colonisation had on Iberian culture and what the aftermath of such annexation was on the Iberian Peninsula.

Thus while scholars including Mireille Mentré and Jacques Fontaine have begun to ‘discern in the text of Beatus' Commentary the core of a theology of contemplation’ and Werckmeister has explored different possible uses of the manuscripts, there is still much work to be done in terms of conducting in-depth examinations of specific images in relation to the whole of the illustrative programme and the function of the manuscripts. Therefore, this thesis will build on earlier studies, relying on pre-established principles, though approaching the topic in a new way and with different priorities. It will demonstrate that the extra-Apocalyptic imagery intimates ideas of

139 Admittedly this is an extremely cursory discussion of translation and postcolonial theory. The following sources, among numerous others, provide more background of these theories: Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinsson, Translation—theory and practice: A Historical Reader (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Douglas Robinson, Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche (Manchester: St Jerome Publishing, 1997); Jeanette Beer, ed., Translation Theory and Practice in the Middle Ages (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1997); and Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Deanne Williams, eds., Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).


141 Ibid., p. 89.

142 The term ‘postcolonial’ is a rather nebulous term, but the following sources lend some insight into the academic and cultural circumstances which led to the initial emergence of such ideas: Leela Gandhi, Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1998); and Kabir, Ananya Jahanara and Deanne Williams, ed. Postcolonial Approaches to the European Middle Ages: Translating Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Christian salvation and triumph while suggesting the perils of the Islamic heresy. As Umberto Eco suggested in his essay, ‘Waiting for the Millennium,’ which addresses the creation of the Beatus manuscripts in the tenth century, ‘Every millennium has the Apocalypse it deserves.’ Along these lines, this thesis will seek to show that this Apocalypse of sorts was, for tenth-century Iberian Christians, the threat of Islamic presence to the physical and theological security of the faith on the Iberian Peninsula.

Chapter 2: The Form and Function of the Beatus

Mappaemundi
These are the twelve hours of the day, which are illuminated by the sun which is Christ. They are the twelve gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, by whose means we may enter into the beatific life. They are the first apostolic Church, which we firmly believe to be founded on Christ, the Rock. They are the twelve thrones that judge the twelve tribes of Israel. This is the Church extending through out the whole earthly globe. This is the holy and elect seed, the regal priesthood, that was sown over the whole world. They were few, but select. The picture appended to the text more clearly illustrates the grains sown in the field of this world, that the prophets prepared and sowed there. And from these few grains, many harvests have grown. We believe in and hold fast to this Church, and whoever shall preach anything beyond it, may not be a Christian, but will be anathema forever maranatha, that is, damnation at the coming of the Lord.

‘Hi sunt duodecim horae dei, quae per Christum solem inluminantur. Hi sunt duodecim portae caelestis Iherusalem, per quas ad uium beatam ingredimur. Hi sunt prima apostolica ecclesia, quam credimus fortissime supra Christum petram fundatam. Hi sunt duodecim throni iudicantes duodecim tribus Israhel. Haec est ecclesia per uniuersum orbem terrarum dilatata. Hoc est semen sanctum et electum, regale sacerdotium per uniuersum mundum seminatum. Rari fuerunt, sed, electi. Et de his paruis granis multa seges surrexit. Hanc ecclesiam credimus et tenemus, et qui supra euangelizauerit quam isti, non christianus sed anathema in perpetuum erit maranata, id est, perditio in adventum Domini.’

Description of the Placement, Style and Features of the *Mappaemundi*

**Function of the Image:**

- To illustrate the Mission of the Apostles, which is addressed in the Prologue to Book 2 of the Commentary

**Placement in Manuscript:**

- Beginning of the Prologue to Book 2 of the Commentary, which addresses and defines the Church and its spread throughout the world
- Occurs before and juxtaposes against discussion of the Synagogue in the latter portion of the Prologue to Book 2 of the Commentary

**Direct Textual Link:**

- The illustration is actually referenced in the Beatus Commentary text

**Physical Characteristics:**

- The first double-page scenes in the Beatus illustrative programme
- Occupies the majority of both pages
- An ocean border surrounds the central image of the world, containing fish, boats and islands
- The interior landmass is mostly made of up blank parchment, with mountains, rivers, text and an image of Adam and Eve painted onto it
- The map is oriented to the east (Asia), which is represented at the top of the map and marked by an image of Adam and Eve in Eden
- Europe and Africa occupy the lower portions of the *Mappaemundi*
- A fourth region of the world—the antipodal zone—is demarcated by a thin vertical border, on the southern (right) side of the map; according to Isidore's *Etymologies*, this region becomes the home of the Sciapodes
- Three main bodies of water are represented on the image—the Mediterranean in the centre, and the Nile and the Don Rivers, which extend out from the Mediterranean to the right and left, accordingly
- Smaller Rivulets are also included on the map
- Mountains are represented as triangular or conical shapes of varying colours and textures
Position of the *Mappamundi* in the Morgan Beatus

**Commission to Write**  
*Book I of the Commentary*

12 uninterrupted pages of text explaining the Commission to Write and beginning the Prologue to Book II

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**Mappamundi**  
*Beginning of Prologue to Book II*

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**Four Beasts and the Statue**  
*Second Half of Prologue to Book II*

11 pages of uninterrupted text in the Prologue to Book II, transitioning from a discussion of the Church to a discussion of the Synagogue
Position of the *Mappamundi* in the Valladolid Beatus

- Commission to Write
  - Book I of the Commentary
- *Mappamundi*
  - Beginning of Prologue to Book II
- Four Beasts and the Statue
  - Second Half of Prologue to Book II

32 uninterrupted pages of text explaining the Commission to Write and beginning the Prologue to Book II

10 pages of uninterrupted text in the Prologue to Book II, transitioning from a discussion of the Church to a discussion of the Synagogue
Position of the *Mappamundi* in the Girona Beatus

**Commission to Write**
*Book I of the Commentary*

**Mappamundi**
*Beginning of Prologue to Book II*

**Four Beasts and the Statue**
*Second Half of Prologue to Book II*

35 uninterrupted pages of text explaining the Commission to Write and beginning the Prologue to Book II

12 pages of uninterrupted text in the Prologue to Book II, transitioning from a discussion of the Church to a discussion of the Synagogue
Position of the *Mappamundi* in the Urgell Beatus

- **Genealogical Tables, Prefatory Material**
- **Mappamundi**
  - Beginning of Prologue to Book II
- **Initial I, Beginning of Preface**

2 pages, one with image of a Bird and Serpent, one blank

2 Pages to the Beginning of the Text of the First Preface
I. Scholarship on the Beatus Mappaemundi

The Beatus maps (Figures 2.01-2.04) comprise an exceptional tradition within early medieval cartography. The text of the Beatus Commentary refers directly to the image of the map: ‘And how [the Apostles] reap with their sickles these grains of seed throughout the field of this world, which the prophets prepared, the following picture shows.’¹ This explicit reference demonstrates that the Mappaemundi almost certainly were included in the original editions of the Beatus manuscripts from the eighth century and furthermore suggests the notability of the illustration. The importance of these images within the illustrative programme is also evidenced by their placement and formal qualities.² This chapter will address the stylistic details of the Mappaemundi in comparison to earlier and contemporary cartographic scenes. It will explain and contextualise their visual properties in terms of the social, cultural and religious dimensions that surrounded the production and use of the Beatus manuscripts in the tenth-century northern Iberian monasteries.

As these images are unique, general cartographic studies often refer to their qualities and context. Such accounts include Leo Bagrow’s History of Cartography, the first two volumes of J.B. Harley and David Woodward’s series on The History of Cartography, John Rennie Short’s The World Through Maps: A History of Cartography and Evelyn Edson’s Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Map Mapmakers Viewed their World, among numerous others.³ While these survey texts comprise the bulk of works that address the Beatus Mappaemundi, there are a few more specific discussions of the Beatus maps that are worth noting. Several of the descriptive volumes that

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² The placement, context and function of the Beatus Mappaemundi will be discussed in greater details on pp. 50-52.

accompany the various Beatus facsimiles address the details of their respective maps and explain that the illustrations were included in the manuscripts to provide an image of the Mission of the Apostles, which is discussed in the Commentary text immediately preceding the image.⁴

More recently, studies have begun to emerge which suggest that the features of the Beatus maps reveal more than just the Mission of the Apostles. For example, Alessandro Scafi’s discussion of the Beatus maps in his book, *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth*, raises the possibility that the Beatus images represent the Christian perspective on all of history. Scafi reasserts the importance of the image’s connection to the dispersal of the Word by the apostles, noting that these are images of a world throughout which Christianity had already been spread and was dominant.⁵ Scafi’s analysis primarily focuses on the inclusion of Adam and Eve scenes, which represent the beginning of time, and the Apocalyptic context of the manuscripts, which lends an imposing sense of the end of time. While these ideas are inherently important to this chapter, Scafi’s discussion does not address the details of the maps in full, nor does it relate the images to others in the manuscript. Additionally, his analysis does not address the significance of these scenes to the monastic viewers, an element that is central to this discussion.

While Alessandro Scafi’s work on these maps lacks a more specific contextualisation of these scenes, Jessica Sponsler did address these issues, to an extent, in her doctoral thesis on the Girona Beatus; she completed her thesis in 2009 and it is entitled *Defining the Boundaries of self and other in the Girona Beatus of 975*.⁶ Sponsler’s analysis of the Girona map is relatively short; pages sixty-one to sixty-seven suggest that the details included on the map were indicative of the circumstances, priorities and

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interests of those creating, using and viewing the works. More specifically, she suggests that the locations rendered on the Girona image were meant to invoke the Asturian monks’ heritage in al-Andalus, implying the political role of the clergy in creating the ideological foundations of the Reconquista and furthermore asserting the balance between ecclesiastical and secular rulers.\(^7\) Again, Sponsler’s work on the Girona image provides further analysis of these scenes and will be useful to this discussion. Her argument, however, is limited and relates only to one image, while analysis of several manuscripts reveals that there are compelling similarities between the tenth-century \textit{Mappaemundi} which have the potential to reveal more about the society at large. Additionally, Sponsler does not address the range of geographical and topographical details included on the map and does not explain how the image functions within the context of the illustrative programme, aspects that will be developed throughout this chapter. Thus, again, while Sponsler’s work has advanced the study of these images, additional considerations are necessary and will be pursued here.

In order to develop these additional levels of analysis and explanation, this chapter will examine the prominent yet frequently overlooked details of this group of tenth-century maps. While considering these elements, which include format, size, structure and the emphasis on specific features, comparisons will be drawn between earlier cartographic types and the tenth-century Beatus \textit{Mappaemundi}. Such connections between the Beatus images and earlier maps have been discussed previously in relation to the Isidoran and Orosian models of the world.\(^8\) This chapter, however, will expand the range of comparison, as there are visual and ideological aspects of other early cartographic traditions that were incorporated into and lend meaning to the Beatus maps. Therefore, maps from Classical, Byzantine, Islamic and Western European traditions that could have been accessed through trade, pilgrimage,

\(^7\) Sponsler argues that Toledo was included on the map because of its historical and symbolic importance to the monks that emigrated to the north and still would have considered Toledo to be the centre of Christian life in Iberia. Additionally, she suggests that Santiago was included because of the interest that the Leónese kings took in the area beginning in the tenth century. Thus the combination of these two sites provides the location of the beginning of Reconquest and the site of continued Christian existence in Iberia, thereby presenting the initial sites of re-Christianisation in Iberia, ideas that coincide with the context of the Mission of the Apostles. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 61.

invasion and other forms of encounter will be consulted for comparative purposes. By acknowledging the specific forms and functions of earlier maps in relation to the Beatus images, the discussion that follows will suggest the larger ideas that are projected through the details, structure and placement of the Beatus Mappaemundi.

II. Context, Placement and Format

The prominence of the Mappaemundi in the tenth-century Beatus manuscripts was innovative, as no other Apocalypses made in or before the tenth century contain maps. Furthermore, in comparison to extant maps from the same period, the Beatus images are distinct because of their large size, detail and placement within the illustrative programme. Out of the sixty-eight scenes that comprise the Beatus programme, the map is the first and the largest of only five images that are based on Beatus’ Commentary text rather than on the text of the Book of Revelation. Furthermore, it is one of only two non-biblical additions to the programme. Thus, as a distinct tradition within early medieval cartography, the specific context of these images within the manuscripts, as well as their form and features, reveal ideas relevant to their early medieval Iberian creators and viewers.

The Beatus Mappaemundi occur in the prologue to the second book of the Beatus Commentary. The Second Book addresses the seven churches from Revelation 2 and 3 and this Prologue to the Second Book seeks to define and explain the Church and its opposition, the Synagogue, in order to establish their qualities for references

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9 See pp. 20-26 of the Introduction chapter for additional information on Iberian connections to other artistic traditions.
10 Prominent Apocalypses that were made before 1000 include Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, nouv. acq. lat. 1132; Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 31; Valenciennes, Bibliotheque Municipale, MS 99; Cambrai, Bibliotheque Municipale, MS 386; and Bamberg, Staatsbibliotek, Bibl. 140. For more details on these manuscripts see page 8 of the introduction to this thesis.
11 Snyder explains that the Trier Apocalypse and the Beatus manuscripts likely shared a common prototype. Despite their connections, there is no textual reference in the Trier manuscript to necessitate the inclusion of a map, nor is there a precedent for such an inclusion. James Snyder, ‘The Reconstruction of an Early Christian Cycle of Illustrations for the Book of Revelation: The Trier Apocalypse,’ Vigilae Christianae, 18/3 (1964), pp. 146-162.
13 Ibid., p. 51.
throughout the rest of the Commentary. Beatus clarified this by explaining that this prologue was written ‘concerning the Church and the Synagogue so that you, O Reader, may know in the fullest way what their respective characteristics are and who may be regarded as dwelling in each.’ At the start of this section, Beatus described the Church, noting that,

Church is a Greek word, that in Latin is translated *convocation*, because she called all men to her. Catholic, that is, universal... according to the whole. For unlike the small assemblies of heretics, limited to some parts of regions, it is spread expansively throughout the whole earthly globe. The Apostle affirms this, saying to the Romans: “I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world” (Romans 1:8). It is also called universal, from the word one, because it gathers all into a unity.

Beatus later expanded on these themes through a discussion of the Mission of the Apostles, the text with which the map images correspond.

It is notable that the *Mappaemundi* represent the Mission of the Apostles because images of the Mission were relatively unusual during the early medieval period. There are a few early Ottonian scenes of the Mission, such as the carved ivory book cover, which was made between 970 and 980 (Figure 2.05) and the image from the Abdinghofen Gospels, Berlin, Stiftung Preufischer Kulturbesitz Kupferstickkabinett, Ms. 78 A 3, folio 1v (Figure 2.06), which was made in Cologne around 1080; these examples, however, are very rare. Thus, as the Beatus *Mappaemundi* were developed when Beatus first wrote the Commentary in the eighth century, they are critical, early examples of

14 There are four prologues within the Beatus Commentary that introduce sections of the Commentary text. See Appendix 1F for the structure of the divisions within the manuscripts and placement of these prologues.


Illustrations that show the extension of Christianity throughout the entire world and the authority of the Church, whose followers will be rewarded at Judgment. In other words, the map image reaffirms and elaborates on ideas of Christian totality and triumph that are articulated in the text, in an unprecedented way.

Additionally, the unusual reference to the image in the text demonstrates a specific interest in the illustration, which is mirrored by its placement within these manuscripts. The Mappaemundi are the first double-page scenes in these illustrative programmes and thereby have a commanding presence amidst the columns of text and other vertical images that surround them. The image preceding the maps in the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell manuscripts is that of the Commission to Write (Figure 2.07) from Revelation 1:10-20; the Girona manuscript includes an extra image of the apostles just before the map itself. Located in the first book of the Beatus Commentary, the Commission to Write scenes illustrate the text from Revelation 1:10-11, which explains, ‘And I heard behind me a loud voice, like a trumpet, saying unto me: What things thou seest, write in a book, and take back to Ephesus, and Smyrna, and Pergamos, and Thyatiram and Sardis, and Philadelphia, and Laodices.’ In interpreting this text, Beatus explained that,

This is the book, in which the apostle is ordered to write down what he saw; he is instructed to impress it on the hearts of his listeners and also that they should retain it in their memory...And John is told to whom he is to direct what he has written: ‘send it to the seven churches.’ As we have already said...there is but one Church in this age of the whole world, that is, from that time which we have described until the end of this world.17

Thus the image preceding the Mappamundi establishes the sense of a single universal Church to which John’s message was distributed, though this concept is further emphasised and developed through the text and image of the large, extra-Apocalyptic Mappamundi.

17 ‘Hic est liber in quo scribere apostolus quae uiderat admonetur, audiendum cordibus inculcare uel in sua docetur sentire memoria...Et quod scripsit Iohannes quo dirigat admonetur, “Mitte, ait, septem ecclesiis.” Cum unam ecclesiam in totius mundi aetatem, id est, ab illo quod dictum est tempore usque ad consummationem saeculi esse iam diximus, nunc quod specialiter ipsarum ecclesiarum nomina disserit, quid in se intellegentiae habeat uideamus.’ Beatus, Sancti Beati a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin, Vol. 1, pp. 101-102; and Beatus, ‘English Translation,’ p. 391.
In contrast, the rendering of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* (Figure 2.08), which follows the *Mappamundi*, is visually and ideologically distinct from the map. The illustration of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* follows after about a dozen pages of text in each of these manuscripts, appearing in the second half of this prologue, which addresses the Synagogue, evil and heresy. More specifically, the illustration corresponds to the subheading, ‘Beasts,’ where the evils of such creatures are explained. Even though *The Four Beasts and the Statue* is positioned slightly differently in each of the manuscripts, factors that will be addressed in the next chapter, the image provides a striking contrast to the *Mappamundi*. Lacking the structure, borders and orientation of the maps, the images of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* lack the order and clarity provided in the cartographic scenes. They also occupy only a portion or portions of pages, lacking the total coverage that is evidenced in the *Mappamundi*. Thus the maps are visually distinct from the images that precede and follow them.

In addition to their distinct status within the visual programme of these manuscripts, the Beatus maps also are set apart from most early medieval maps. The Morgan, Valladolid, Girona and Urgell maps (Figures 2.01-2.04) are about 38 cm x 27cm, much larger than the vast majority of other early medieval maps, which are small, diagrammatic and marginal in their placement. The most common medieval maps are the Zonal (Figure 2.09) and T-O varieties (Figure 2.10), which most commonly appear in the margins of texts and generally are only ten or fifteen centimeters in diameter. Significantly, three of the Beatus manuscripts include T-O maps in the genealogical trees; these include the Tábara Beatus (Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, MS 1097B, folio 0v; (Figure 2.11), the Girona Beatus, (Girona, Museu de la Catedral, Num. Inv. 7(11), f. 10v; Figure 2.12) and the Rylands Beatus (John Rylands University Library MS 8, folio 8v; Figure 2.13), made in 970, 975 and 1175.

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18 For the specifics of the pages in between the images, see the placement pages provided at the beginning of this chapter, on pp. 46-49.
19 The Morgan, Valladolid, Girona and Urgell maps are 38.7cm x 28.5cm, 35.0cm x 24.0cm, 40.0cm x 26.0cm and 40.2cm x 26.5cm respectively.
20 Zonal maps were developed from geographic descriptions in Orosius’ *History Against the Pagans* and most commonly appear in his *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*. T-O Maps are based on Isidoran descriptions and most commonly are found in the *Etymologies* or *De Natura Rerum*.
21 While there is a known T-O map with a sixty-four-centimeter diameter in a fifteenth-century printed version of the *Etymologies*, these maps generally range from ten to fifteen centimeters.
respectively. When compared to these marginal maps in the manuscripts, the extension of the Beatus Mappaemundi over two complete folios presents a much more striking image of the evangelised Christian world.

This visually dominating aspect of the Beatus maps can, in part, be attributed to their shape and integration into these works. Each of these four maps is primarily rectangular in shape, though there are slight variations, which have been explained by art historians as evidence that they stem from the different texts and models, which were used in the development of the images. These differences are most apparent in the adoption of straight versus wavy lines and hard versus softer edges. For instance, the map in the Morgan Beatus (Figure 2.01), which is dated to around 940/945, making it the oldest extant Beatus Mappamundi, is contained within a rectangular border, the sides of which appear as a cross-section view of the ocean surround, culminating in hard and precise corners. This pronounced border clearly distinguishes the core of the image from the exterior strip of the parchment page that surrounds the scene. A similar structure is seen in the latest of these four illuminations, that from the Urgell Beatus (Figure 2.04) which is dated to the last quarter of the tenth century. In this image, however, the borders ripple slightly and the corners are not as definitely formed, but rather are composed of softened angles. The sides and corners of the Valladolid and Girona map illuminations (Figures 2.02 and 2.03) are even more rounded, with corners that slope much more dramatically and sides that oscillate.

Despite these distinctions, the Morgan, Valladolid, Girona and Urgell maps are actually quite similar in their overall shape, especially considering the much more circular or oval Beatus maps produced later. For example, the map from the Saint-

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23 Williams, Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination, pp. 7-32. For a brief discussion of the possible influences and also for a discussion of how illuminators were forced to follow the prototypes available to them, see Edson, Mapping Time and Space, pp. 157-158 and Mireille Mentré, La Peinture Mozarabe (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris Sorbonne, 1984), p. 69.
24 The general rectangular form with curved corners seen on these maps and a number of other early medieval mappaemundi, extends from Ptolemy's description of the world in Geography. While there are no images of the world according to Ptolemy's theories, which were written in the second century BCE, images produced as early as the thirteenth century, such as the map of the inhabited world from Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urbinas Graecus 82, fols. 60v-61r (Figure 2.14), illustrate the ideas developed in this text. For more on these connections, see David Woodward, ‘Medieval
Sever Beatus (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms lat. 8878, folios 45v-45r, Figure 2.22), which was produced in the eleventh century, is clearly oval in form while the Turin Beatus map (Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, Sgn. III.1, folios 45v-46r, Figure 2.23), made during the twelfth century, is circular. Two of the latest maps, those from the Beatus of Navarre of the late twelfth century (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouv. Acq. lat. 1355, folios 24v-25r, Figure 2.24) and the Las Huelgas Beatus of 1220 (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 429, folios 31v-32r, Figure 2.25), are even less rigidly defined in their shape. The Beatus of Navarre is almost rendered as if in four lobes and the Las Huelgas Beatus conveys a generally oval shape though the sides undulate throughout.

Thus the tenth-century Beatus maps were rendered as complete and self-contained entities of essentially rectangular form. Using the shape of the rectangle in such a prominent way was unusual in early medieval art, perhaps because the shape lacked the symbolic associations present in the more common circular cartographic types that have been discussed throughout. Certainly there are examples of rectangular cartographic images, which were produced during the Late Antique and early medieval period that could lend meaning to the shape, such as the ‘on’ Map from London, British Library, Cotton MS. Tiberius B.V., fol. 56v (Figure 2.15) and the illustration of the Tabernacle in the Codex Amiatinus (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Ms. Laur. Amiatino 1, folios 2v-3r, Figure 2.17), which is based on Cassiodorus’ models and takes a rectangular form over two pages. Despite these examples, however, this sort of representation is uncommon and the size and prominence of the Beatus mappaemundi further distinguish them from similar maps. Cassiodorus even seems to acknowledge the exceptional nature and form of the Tabernacle image as it is the only illustration that he mentions in his Institutiones, identifying it twice in that text and then again in his

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Therefore, that the Beatus Mappaemundi made during the tenth century are rectangular is revealing and deserving of consideration.

From a functional perspective, the rectangle was used in instances where the form would allow the image to occupy a maximum amount of space possible. On a large scale, the floor mosaic known as the Nicopolis world map (Figure 2.18), which was made in the sixth century, demonstrates this. This Byzantine image presents the world before the creation of man, with birds and plants occupying the core of the mosaic. This image remains in situ, filling the entire floor of Room X in the Basilica of Saint Demetrius in Nicopolis and is 2.35 X 3.01 meters in length and width, respectively. Defined by a rectangular oceanic border, the scene fills the extent of the floor, dominating the area.

Several manuscript illustrations from the early medieval period also embrace the rectangular form. Examples of this include the world map developed by Cosmas Indicopleustes in the sixth century (Figure 2.19) and the Peutinger Table (Figure 2.20, Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Codex Vindobonensis 324), which is a twelfth or early-thirteenth-century copy of a map of Roman roads, which was probably made between 335 and 366 AD. In the case of Cosmas’ world map, which is preserved only in three manuscripts and was developed from a mixture of classical representations of the world, with particular ties to the work of Ephorus, the rectangular border extends the width of the page, completely dominating its lower section. Although the image shares the page with the text above that explains the image and is not given an entire folio, the map boldly occupies the space that is free of text, leaving no blank space caused by rounded edges.

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29 Dilke, ‘Cartography in the Byzantine Empire,’ p. 262.
Similarly the Peutinger Table, which extends 6.75 meters in length and 34 centimeters in width, shows around 70,000 Roman miles throughout Europe, India, Persia and North Africa. By using the full area of the parchment and maintaining the rectangular form, the artists were able to render a range of details, including towns, harbours, altars, granaries, staging posts, spas, settlements and tunnels, marking distances between segments of road, large rivers and forested areas also are marked. Each of these elements serves an important function in offering spatial and directional guidance, showing viewers how the roads worked together and where landmarks were in relation to one another. In this instance the format and shape of the Peutinger Table allows it to convey a maximum amount of information without losing space on which to render details. Therefore, while different from the Beatus maps in function and size, these examples demonstrate how the rectangle was used to allow images to fill a dedicated space.

The relatively comprehensive covering of parchment is a key aspect of the Beatus maps, which were designed to assert the extent of the Christian world. Additionally, however, this sense that the Mappaemundi were developed as complete and dominating images is furthered when considering how these images were integrated into the illustrative programmes of these manuscripts. In the richer Morgan and Girona manuscripts, blank pages flank the maps, further suggesting that the image is an entity in and of itself; the Morgan Beatus includes four blank pages before and after the image while the Girona Beatus includes two blank pages just before the scene and an additional illustration of the twelve apostles before those blank pages. These extra pages (Figure 2.27) separate the maps from surrounding text and illustrations, disrupting the otherwise flowing narrative and proving to be an expensive and unusual addition considering the cost of parchment, the forced break in the narrative and the fact that much of the interior of the map is blank and therefore would not require an extra page to prevent the pigment from bleeding through the page. For someone viewing these manuscripts, this extra inclusion would create a pause before and, in the

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31 Ibid., p. 238.
case of the Morgan Mappamundi, after the image, emphasising consideration of it as the viewer made his way through the folios.  

While the four blank pages that precede and follow the map in the Morgan Beatus are unprecedented, there are other instances where empty parchment was left before images. Similar to blank pages around the maps, these empty extra inclusions appear to mark significant changes or moments in the text. In the Girona Beatus, folios 7v and 8r that precede the genealogical tables are blank, as is folio 20r, which precedes the start of the Commentary text. Both of these blank pages seem to set up prominent sections of the manuscript’s text for viewers. Folio 221r also is blank and precedes the text from the beginning of Revelation 19, which describes the City of God. Again, this portion of text would have been a compelling section to emphasise as it announces the glory of God and acknowledges those most faithful to him. Similarly, the blank folio 230r, just before Heavenly Jerusalem, also heightens the attention given to this image, which shows the pinnacle of the text of Revelation and, in the Girona Beatus, occupies two pages as well. In each of these instances, the blank folios appear either before significant sections of the manuscript or before pages conveying messages related to the history, authority and unity of the Church.

That these empty pages were used to signal an important page rather than serving another more practical purpose is suggested by several factors. Perhaps most fundamentally, the blank pages were included before both text and illustration, suggesting that they were not just a mechanism to prevent illustrations from bleeding through the parchment onto one another. Additionally, there are illuminations that were executed on opposite sides of a sheet of parchment, which also suggests that the artists were willing to put illustrations back to back. Examples of this include folios 189r and 189v-190r and 203v to 203r in the Girona Beatus. Therefore, the way the blank pages were inserted into the Girona Beatus suggests that they were included to mark certain points rather than to accommodate the inclusion of illustrations.

Similar to the Morgan and Girona maps, the Urgell Mappamundi is also emphasised, although it occupies a different position in the illustrative programme than the other maps. The Urgell scene appears in the prefatory material of the manuscript.

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32 The blank recto pages after the evangelist miniatures in the Linsisfarne Gospels could serve a similar purpose, though this has not been examined or discussed in depth.  
33 See Appendix 6I for text of Revelation 19:1-10.
after the genealogical tables but before the preface of the first book of the Commentary. In spite of its unique placement, the Urgell *Mappamundi* is still emphasised within the context of its surroundings. Following eight pages of genealogical tables (Figure 2.28) that depict the genealogy of Christ, starting with Adam and Eve, and begin at the top of the folios and extend down, the *Mappamundi* stands apart from folios 1v-5r in its horizontal orientation. Additionally, while the folios dedicated to the genealogical tables are filled with small circles and text marking the members of each generation, the *Mappamundi* offers a comparatively large amount of empty parchment. Therefore, visually, the Urgell *Mappamundi* appears as a defined component of the material that opens the manuscripts. Additionally, the genealogical tables assert the history and totality of the Church and its enduring presence, ideas that support the map as a distinct representation of the complete Christian world.

Despite these differences in the placement of the Morgan, Valladolid, Girona and Urgell maps, their shared position as the first double page images helps to assert the sense that they were designed to suggest totality. This is made more apparent when they are considered alongside other double-page scenes. The other illustrations rendered over two pages also tend to feature narratives from the Book of Revelation that express ideas of totality and completion; these include: the *Sealing of the Elect* (Revelation VII: 4-12), the *Woman Clothed in the Sun* (Rev. XII: 1-18), the *Burning of Babylon* (Rev. XVIII: 1-20) and the *Last Judgment* (Rev. XX: 11-15). For instance, *The Sealing of the Elect* (Figure 2.27) as described in Revelation 7:4-12 explains,

34 Folio 1r shows Noah and his descendants, all of whom are addressed in Genesis 10: 21-31; folio 1v accounts for Abraham and his descendants as described in Genesis 21: 1-3; folio 2r shows the descendants of Isaac from Genesis 25: 19-26; folio 2v presents the descendants of Jacob with Leah and Zilpa as addressed in Genesis 29: 32-35 and Genesis 30: 9-13; folios 3r and 3v presented the descendants of Jacob and Rachel from Genesis 30: 3-8, 22-24 and Genesis 35: 16-18; folio 4r shows the descendants of David and Bathsheba that are described in I Chronicles 3: 5-9; folio 4v offers the descendants of Salomon; and folio 5r shows the immediate forefathers of Christ that are described in Matthew 1: 1-16 and Luke 3: 23-31.

35 *The Sealing of the Elect* is spread over two pages in the Girona, Urgell and Morgan Beatus manuscripts but not in the Valladolid Beatus manuscript. *The Woman Clothed in the Sun* takes up two pages in all of these manuscripts while the *Last Judgment* occupies the full two-page spread in Morgan, Urgell and Valladolid but is missing from Girona. Even though the images do not take up two pages in each of these manuscripts, the execution over two pages is unusual enough to consider significant even if the formatting only occurs in two of the manuscripts, as in the case in *The Woman Clothed in the Sun.*
And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel...

After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.

Thus the Sealing of the Elect shows all of the varied faithful who were sealed or secured within the Church at the end of time. Beatus explained in Book IV of the Commentary, at the beginning of his explanation of the 144,000, ‘One hundred and forty four thousand means the Church in its entirety,’ and thus the double-page image of the Sealing of the Elect represents the complete, enclosed body of the Church at Judgment.

The narrative of The Woman Clothed in the Sun as expressed in Revelation 12: 1-18 (Figure 2.30) lends a cosmological sense of entirety in describing the ‘woman with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.’ In discussing The Woman Clothed in the Sun, Beatus wrote that,

...she is the ancient Church of the patriarchs, the Prophets, and the holy Apostles...'Clothed with the sun,' that is, revealed in her good works, by which she sustains hope of resurrection in Christ, the light of clarity and glory of the promise. The moon is wont to shine at night: it is the Church, that cannot be seen by the wicked in the darkness of this world.

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37 ‘...quae est antiqua ecclesia partum et profetarum et sanctorum et apostolorum...Sole autem amicta, id est, in bono opere manifestata, per quem spem resurrectionis es ipso lumine claritatis expectat et gloriam repromissionis. Luna uero in nocte lucere solet: ecclesia est, quae in tenebris istius saeculi a malis uideri non potest.’ Beatus, Sancti Beati a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin, Vol. 2, pp. 99-100 and Beatus, ‘English Translation,’ p. 511. A similar interpretation is offered by Bede in his Commentary on the Book of Revelation, Bede addressed Revelation 12:2 by discussing the woman in terms of the Church, later explaining that the ‘Church ever brings forth Christ,’ the man child who was ‘to rule all nations with a rod of iron.’ (‘Et peperit puerum masculum. Semper Ecclesia, dracone licet adversante, Christum parit. Masculum autem dixit victorem diaboli qui feminam vicerat. Nam quis filius nisi masculus? Quis recturus est omnes gentes in virga ferrea, inflexibili justitia regit bonos, confringit malos. Quod in superioribus etiam Ecclesiae promittitur: Dabo ei potestatem super gentes, et reget eas in virga ferrea. Nam et Ecclesia quotidie gignit Ecclesiam, mundum in Christo regentem.’) PL 93.0166D and Bede, Commentary on the Book of Revelation,
The Commentary continues by suggesting 'Her crown of stars is the saints. And upon thy head a crown of twelve stars, meaning the twelve tribes of Israel in Christ. The Church...is founded on the number twelve.'\(^{38}\) Furthermore, Beatus explained,

> And the woman brought forth a man child, that is, one strong for battle to be victorious...Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Certainly also, his nascent body, that is, the Church, has the power to rule with a rod of iron: for whatever has become spiritual and made like unto God, according to the Apostle, “Judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.’ (1 Corinthians 2:15). As the Lord Himself says: 'he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end to him will I give power over the nations.'\(^{39}\)

Thus in the context of the Beatus Commentary, the Woman Clothed in the Sun represents the whole Church and the Man Child suggests Christ who will rule over all.

The double-folio image of the Last Judgment, which is described in Revelation 20:11-15 (Figure 2.31) also presents the event at the end of time that all will experience. On the verso page, it shows Christ enthroned, flanked by angels at the top and the bodies of the damned writhing around in the lower section. Individuals pondering their fate occupy the centre of the image. In presenting this combination of figures, the two-page spread devoted to God's judgment suggests the range of possible outcomes for humankind and thereby accounts for all of humanity. With regards to the results of judgment, Heavenly Jerusalem (Figure 2.32) was included between three and six pages after the scene of Last Judgment. In the Girona Beatus, Heavenly Jerusalem was conceived as a double-page scene,\(^{40}\) which is fitting considering its description. As Beatus explained at the end of the twelfth and final book of the Commentary, 'By this


\[^{40}\] One of the pages of the illustrations has been torn out and is no longer extant.
Jerusalem he [John] means the Church...He recapitulates from the beginning, saying: “and I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.”  

Beatus further wrote that ‘The new heaven is the new Church: since from that time when Christ assumed flesh, He created a new heaven, and a new earth. By heaven we refer to the spirit, and by earth to the flesh.’ Thus, as Heavenly Jerusalem overtook the whole of the earth, it is marked by totality.

Despite this sense that Heavenly Jerusalem presented the complete heavenly Church on earth, it is rendered on one page in the Branch Ila Morgan, Valladolid and Girona manuscripts. Instead, an image of The River of Life Flowing from the Throne of God (Figure 2.33) is directly next to Heavenly Jerusalem; these two scenes occur on folios 222v and 223r, 182v and 183r, and 186v and 187r in the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell manuscripts respectively. Thus while the image of the Heavenly Church is illustrated on a single page, the triumph of Christ and the waters of life that nurture the faithful are shown beside it. As the Commentary suggests towards the end of its discussion of the form of Heavenly Jerusalem, “The throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it.” The throne of God is the seat of God, that is, the Church, as witnesses the Prophet, who says: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (Psalm 44:7); surely now and world without end. Therefore, the representation of Christ enthroned and the waters of life that flow from him suggest the eternal support of God, rather than just the Heavenly City. The combination of these two scenes, which are presented side by side, articulate the same ideas of everlasting support of the faithful and Christian dominance at the end of time that are expressed through the other double-page scenes.

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In summary, when compared to surrounding and similarly formatted images from these manuscripts, the Beatus Mappaemundi occupy an important place and express ideas of Christian wholeness and totality. Their overall structure and placement within the illustrative programme draws attention to the messages of spreading the Christian word, which are expressed through both the Commentary text and the specifics of the images, which will be discussed in the section below.

III. Details of the Beatus Maps

In addition to their format and placement, the details included on these four illustrations continue to project the maps as self-contained and complete entities. This dimension is perhaps most pronounced by the oceanic border that firmly encloses the earth, presenting nothing beyond the barriers of the ocean. While there are other early medieval maps that also present this oceanic border, these images either include elements beyond the earth itself or show features that disrupt the solidity of the outside border. For example, the aforementioned Cosmas map (Figure 2.19) perhaps bears the greatest similarities to the Beatus maps in terms of format, as it is rectangular, with a central landmass at its core that is surrounded by ocean. While the shape and organization of this central component of the Cosmas map is much like the Beatus images, there are four winds presented in the four strips of the ocean and, more importantly, an additional layer surrounds the rendered ocean and is labeled as 'Land beyond the ocean, where men dwelled before the flood.'44 Thus the Cosmas map includes features beyond the known world rather than presenting a complete image of 'known' parts.

Similarly, the eighth-century world map from Vatican, MS Lat. 6018 (Figure 2.16), which is often compared to the Beatus maps, presents a much busier image of the world, divided into Asia, Europe and Africa and surrounded by oceans.45 Despite containing these earthly features within a pronounced ocean border, the cosmic orientation proposed in the Vatican map is distinct from the Beatus scenes as the protrusion of extra-terrestrial elements indicates something beyond just the earth, a

44 ‘Terra ultra Oceanum, ubi ante diluvium habitant homines.’
45 This image was ordered from the Vatican Library and, despite its poor quality, is the best that was available. Williams, The Illustrated Beatus, Vol. 1, p. 50.
prominent difference from the strictly terra-centric Beatus images. Therefore, while similar in shape and format, the Beatus maps maintained a terra-centric approach to the image of the world while the Vatican map suggests that there is more beyond the boundaries of the Christian world.

The earliest surviving Islamic maps accompany the text Kitāb ṣūrat al-ard (Picture of the earth) by Abū al-Qāsim Muhammad ibn Haqwal, which is preserved in Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayi Müzesi Kütüphanesi, A.2246 and dated to 1086. The twenty-one maps commonly included in this manuscript, and subsequent versions of it, were developed by the Balkhī School. While the maps and cartographic descriptions developed by these scholars are spread throughout several complicated texts (Figure 2.34), scholars have been able to trace the ideas and images present in several eleventh and twelfth-century manuscripts back to these tenth-century writers and, as such, the Balkhī images warrant consideration alongside the tenth-century Beatus scenes.

Sometimes referred to as the ‘Islam-atlas,’ this set of maps includes a world map, maps of the three seas (the Mediterranean, the Persian Sea or Indian Ocean, and the Caspian Sea), and maps of seventeen provinces. Given the number of cartographic images dedicated to the provinces, emphasis within these texts and images was placed on the different Islamic regions, rather than on the significance of the world as a complete entity. Thus the world map (Figure 2.21) served as a way of situating the provinces in relation to one another and therefore had to ‘fit into a stereotyped idea of what the world should look like’ rather than asserting geographic totality and unity of belief. Additionally, while both the Balkhī and Beatus maps show the world with an oceanic surround, this water barrier is much thinner in the Islamic map and also extends at certain points, showing that there are features beyond the established circular boundary. This sense that there is something outside of the outlined border of the earth is asserted further through the inclusion of text to the side of the image.

Significantly, the appearance of elements outside the confines of the earth also occurs in the Mappaemundi from the later Beatus manuscripts. For example, the

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48 Ibid., p. 114.
49 Ibid., p. 120.
eleventh-century map from the Saint-Severe Beatus (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8878, folios 45v-45r, Figure 2.22) includes labels that extend from the earth and indicate North, South, East and West. Text that names the zodiac signs is also found just beyond the ocean border in this image. Similarly, the twelfth-century map from the Turin Beatus (Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, Sgn. I. II. 1, folios 45v-46r, Figure 2.23) shows the four winds in the four corners of the folios. Thus, as in the earlier maps discussed above, the later Beatus maps do not present an image that is an all-encompassing entity in and of itself; the barrier in the tenth-century maps creates a much more solid, defined and complete image of the Christian world within the thick ocean perimeter.

While the tenth-century *Mappaemundi* are distinct from these manuscript traditions in the way that they present a scene of totality, there are other cartographic images that embrace strong and defining borders and thereby offer parallels in terms of functioning as complete statements within those confines. The Nicopolis mosaic map (Figure 2.18), for instance, is defined by a rectangular, oceanic border, which is marked by curling waves in the perimeter around the earthly region. As in the Beatus images, this cartographic scene fills the space allotted to it and also offers several layers of insulation around the central earth. Thus despite the great differences in medium and size, both the Beatus scenes and the Nicopolis mosaic present a whole and complete Christian world, which dominates the space in which it is rendered. Furthermore, both of these cartographic scenes suggest that the containment and buffering of the earth from outside elements was a selective, stylistic choice and one that perhaps can be related to the ideas of wholeness promoted through these images.

That the Beatus images were developed to promote the sense of a complete and total Christian world is not necessarily surprising considering their context within the manuscripts. In a general sense, the concept of the complete Church is developed in the Book of Revelation through the Seven Churches, to which John delivers his message.

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50 There are several other cartographic mosaics from the sixth to eighth centuries. Prominent examples include the mosaic in the Church of St John in Gerasa, Jordan and the mosaic in the Church of St Stephen in Umm Er-Rasas. Similar to the Madaba mosaic, these images present several layered borders with oceanic, urban, natural and patterned themes. These layering borders surround a central rectangular panel, which boasts representations of fruit and animals. For further information or for other examples of mosaics with prominent borders, see G.W. Bowersock, *Mosaics as History: The Near East from Late Antiquity to Islam* (London: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 1-29.
From the beginning of his Commentary, Beatus references numbers and ideas associated with the wholeness of the Church. The beginning of the first prologue reveals that,

As soon as he is ordered to write the Apocalypse...to the seven Churches, he sees the Son of man seated upon the throne, that is Christ in the Church, and twenty-four elders, who are the twelve prophets and the twelve apostles. The seven Churches, and seven golden candlesticks, and the seven stars, are all the single Church, which is joined in matrimonial union to Christ by the seven-fold grace.\textsuperscript{51}

Similarly, the Commentary concludes by stating,

The codex of the Apocalypse ends with the number twelve of the Churches. In the same way, divided into sections following the twelve-fold order of the books, the codex is made up of many books, yet the book is a single volume...their parts are called pages from the fact that they are assembled together with one another (or compaginated). Here this work concludes, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{52}

Thus from beginning to end, with many references in between, themes of wholeness, totality and completion pervade the Beatus Commentary text.

Visually, there are also a number of illustrations that allude to a complete Christian history and story. For example, illustrations from the Morgan Beatus such as the opening full-page illustrations of the evangelists (Figure 2.35), followed by genealogical tables (Figure 2.36), which were a tenth-century addition to the illustrative


programme and show Christ's history beginning with Adam and Eve, suggest the complete Christian narrative. Other features such as the Cross of Oviedo with the Alpha and Omega suspended from its arms in the Valladolid Beatus (Figure 2.37) and the illustration of *Alpha* just before the beginning of the text (Figure 2.38) and *Omega* at the ends of the Girona Beatus suggest temporal totality (Figure 2.39). As was mentioned earlier, the Urgell Beatus is unique in its prefatory material as the genealogical tables convey the history of Christianity and then are followed by the map, further asserting that conveying ideas of Christian totality and wholeness was of interest to the tenth-century creators and also linking the *Mappaemundi* to that message.

In terms of the *Mappaemundi* more specifically, the Mission of the Apostles suggests the spread of the faith throughout the entire world and Christian dominance at the end of time, both aspects that indicate ideas of wholeness. Such ideas are manifestedbiblically as Christ commanded his disciples to, ‘teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matthew 28:19-20).’ More specifically, the Mozarabic liturgy used during Pentecost, the time that these manuscripts were most likely, if ever, to have been used outside of private study, promotes these ideas of dispersing the Word and bringing others into the faith. In beginning the celebration of Pentecost, the liturgy asks, ‘For who shall keep silent on the Advent of Thy Holy Spirit, since through Thy Apostles every tongue of the barbarians finds voice?’ The *Ad Pacem* in the Mass of the Liturgy before Pentecost also describes, ‘Christ, the Son of God, sent forth the Holy Spirit upon the disciples in the appearance of

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53 While Neuss assumed that the genealogical trees were a part of the original, eighth-century edition of the Beatus Commentary, Williams suggests that they were actually a tenth-century addition. Williams’ proposes this because of the biblical nature of the genealogical material and because the León Bible of 960 includes a similar set of tables. These factors indicate that genealogical trees were an import from the Iberian Bible tradition, which emerged around this time and endured into the thirteenth-century. If these are, in fact, a tenth-century addition, their inclusion in the manuscripts contributes to this sense that the later illuminations were designed to present a temporal totality.

fire, in order to speak the wonderful works of God in diverse tongues.’

Thus it is possible that this element of spatial and temporal totality developed in the Mappaemundi was meant to correspond with aspects of the liturgy.

The details included on these illustrations also convey such ideas. In comparison to other early medieval maps, the later Beatus maps and other Beatus illuminations, these tenth-century cartographic scenes are relatively bare. As such the comparatively few details that are rendered gain visual attention and significance. Earlier cartographic images such as the Vatican (Figure 2.16), Balkhī School (Figure 2.21) and later Beatus maps such as those from the Saint-Sever Beatus and the Beatus of Navarre (Figures 2.22 and 2.24) virtually cover the represented earth with painted renderings of water, landforms and details of cities, leaving relatively little blank parchment. The number of labels also increased in later Beatus maps as, for example the Mappamundi in the Osma Beatus of 1086 (Burgo de Osma, Archivo de la Catedral, Cod. 1, folios 34v-35r, Figure 2.26) included one hundred twenty labels in comparison to the Morgan Beatus’ ninety-five. Thus, increasingly, the Beatus Mappaemundi acquired greater detail and gained coverage of the parchment.

Along these lines, the tenth-century maps also are set apart from the majority of other Beatus imagery, which commonly features the extensive use of vibrant colour, with backdrops composed of bands of bright colours. While this is very common in images from these manuscripts, scenes such as of the Fifth Seal: Souls of the Martyrs on folio 106r of the Urgell Beatus (Figure 2.40) and the Angel of the Abyss and Locusts on folio 156v of the Girona Beatus (Figure 2.41), among numerous other possible examples, demonstrate the colour that is characteristic of these works. Considering these precedents, the blank parchment of the early Beatus Mappaemundi offers a

56 Williams, ‘Isidore, Orosius and the Beatus Map,’ p. 8.
57 There have been a few attempts to describe and explain the colour used in the Beatus manuscripts. For these discussions see, Elizabeth S. Bolman, ‘De Coloribus: The Meaning of Color in Beatus Manuscripts’, Gesta, 38/1 (1999), pp. 22-34; and Mireille Mentré, ‘L’Utilisation des couleurs dans la miniature mozarábe,’ Actas del XXIII Congreso internacional de Historia del Arte: España entre el Mediterraneo y el Atlántico: Granada 1973, 1 (1976), pp. 417-425.
startling contrast to surrounding images and also helps to accentuate visually the
details rendered on the Mappaemundi.

Of the elements that are included and accentuated on the maps, mountains and
rivers are the dominant features across the folios. While these geological features might
be expected in representations of the world, their bright colour and prominent
placement on the maps suggests that they were emphasised deliberately in the Beatus
scenes (Figure 2.42). The emphasised position of these details is evidenced further
when compared to other early medieval world maps. In the Vatican map (Figure 2.16),
for example, the few representations of mountains and rivers are relegated to small
spiked peaks and thin streams that are lost amidst the larger bodies of water, which are
rendered in a deep blue and an array of lined features and text that suggest cities,
regions and islands. Thus amid the busy interior of the world rendered on the Vatican
map, mountains and rivers assume a secondary position to sites and areas that are
specifically labeled.

Cosmas’ World Map (Figure 2.19) and the World Map produced by the Balkhī
School (Figure 2.21) also lack these features despite similarities in overall format to the
Beatus maps. In terms of Cosmas’ map, the emphasis is on the central landmass, the
ocean that surrounds it and the bodies of water that jut into the land, including the
Caspian Sea, Roman Gulf, Persian Gulf and Arabian Gulf. There are no rendered
mountains and the rivers are relatively thin. Similarly, the Balkhī School world map,
which also presents the world surrounded by an ocean as in the Beatus maps, includes
mountains and rivers, though they are small compared to the other features included
and do not stand out as in the Beatus maps. In the Balkhī School image, the deep blue of
the ocean dominates the scene and the space devoted to the rendered landmass is filled
with a range of details and script that take focus away from any one specific feature.
Even though the mountains were painted in a deep red, the scene is so busy and filled
with other elements that the viewer does not linger long on them. The network of
rivers that was developed in a beige colour is also easy to overlook as the waterways
are very thin and their colour less aggressive than the colour used in the creation of the
oceans and mountains.

With regards to the potential meaning and significance of the Beatus features,
mountains and rivers were extremely popular tropes in both scripture and patristic
writings. Frequently God and His protection are compared to mountains. This is
evidenced in Psalm 125:1-2, which explains that, 'They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion: he shall not be moved forever that dwelleth in Jerusalem. Mountains are round about his people from henceforth now and for ever.' Mountains were also specifically used to signal ideas of the power of Christianity and its totality the world over. For example, Isaiah 2 explains that 'In the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow unto it.' Additionally, they are referenced in biblical texts and assert the importance of belief in Christianity. Matthew 17:19 explains that 'Jesus said to them...For, amen I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, Remove from hence hither, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible for you.’ Thus while these verses present only a few examples of the ways in which mountains were used exegetically, they demonstrate their common and frequent use.

More specifically and more appropriate to the Beatus Mappaemundi that represent the Mission of the Apostles, however, is the common link between mountains and the apostles. Exegesis on Psalm 45 is particularly compelling and likely would have been considered within the Mozarabic Rite. Though the Mozarabic Rite was distinct from other Western rites in its liturgical orders and chants, the Psalms remained an important part of the liturgy. Unlike other rites where the recitation of the Psalms was regularly distributed throughout the week or, in some cases, as single day, the Mozarabic Rite lacks a fixed structure, introducing Psalms in varying orders and with varying degrees of frequency. In spite of this less rigid schedule, the Psalms remained a central component of the Mozarabic liturgy and have been studied most recently in terms of their unique musical qualities.  

In terms of Psalm 45:1-5 more specifically, the text of it reads:

Unto the end, for the sons of Core, for the hidden.

Our God is our refuge and strength: a helper in troubles which have found us exceedingly.

Therefore we will not fear, when the earth shall be troubled; and the mountains shall be removed into the heart of the sea.

58 For more on the psalms used in the Mozarabic liturgy, see Jorge Pinnell, Liber orationum psalmographus. Las colectas de salmos del antiguo rito hispánico (Barcelona: Instituto Enrique Floréz, 1972); and Michael Randel, An Index to the Chant of the Mozarabic Rite (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973).
Their waters roared and were troubled: the mountains were troubled with his strength.

The stream of the river maketh the city of God joyful: the most high hath sanctified his own tabernacle.

In discussing this passage, Augustine explained that when the ‘earth shall be confounded…It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord shall be manifest’ and furthermore:

...this mountain placed above other mountains; because the Apostles also are mountains, supporting this Mountain [my italics]. Therefore followest, “In the last days the Mountain of the Lord shall be manifest, established in the top of the mountains.” Therefore passeth It tops of all mountains, and on the top of all mountains is It placed; because the mountains are preaching The mountain.59

Cassiodorus also explained the relationship between the apostles and mountains when he commented on the section of Psalm 45 that reads, ‘And the mountains shall be removed into the heart of the sea.’ He wrote that ‘This happened at the moment when the mountains, in other words, the apostles, abandoned the unbelieving Jews and crossed over into the heart of the sea, that is, to preach to the Gentiles.’60 Cassiodorus then continued by writing, ‘We note that following the example of these spokesmen, the mountains jutting out with their holy peak and most secure in the firmness of their faith, were removed to the heart of the sea, that is, to instill belief in all nations.’61 Thus here


The association between the apostles and mountains is found in other texts beyond those related to Psalm 45. For example, Gregory the Great specifically describes the apostles as mountains in his homily on John 14: 23-27, celebrating their work and articulating their importance. Gregory wrote,

But while we cannot see God, there is something we can do to open a way for the eye of our understanding to come to him. It is certain that we can see now in his servants one whom we can in no way see in himself. When we see them doing astonishing things, we can be sure that God dwells in their hearts. In what is immaterial, let us take advantage of immaterial things. None of us can look directly at the rising sun by gazing at its orb. Our eyes are repelled as they strain to see its rays. But we look at mountains bathed in sunlight and see that it has risen. Because we cannot see the Sun of righteousness himself, let us see the mountains bathed in his brightness, I mean the holy apostles. They shine with virtues and gleam with miracles. The brightness of the risen Sun has poured over them. Since he is invisible in himself, he has made himself visible to us through them, as if through mountains bathed in light.

As Gregory explains, the apostles assume a revered role and become earthly manifestations of godly attributes. Such celebration of the apostles, their work and

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62 Both Augustine and Cassiodorus were read widely in early medieval Iberia. This is evidenced in the library inventories from Oviedo, Burgo de Osma, Oña, Ripoll and Burgos, as well as by extant illustrated manuscripts such as Cassiodorus’ Commentary on the Psalms, Madrid, R.A.H., 8 which was produced in the tenth century. See pp. 19-21 of the introduction to this thesis for more information on available sources and Appendices 1G and 1I for a list of illustrated manuscripts and library inventories.


their lofty position in the world is articulated in a number of other texts as well, demonstrating the importance of mountains in expressing Christian virtues. For example, Augustine wrote of John,

John, too, was one of those mountains...He had risen beyond all the mountain peaks of the world; he had risen beyond all the fields of the sky; he had risen beyond all the heights of the constellations; he had risen beyond all the choirs and legions of angels. For unless he had risen beyond all the things which have been created, he would not have reached him through whom all things were made.65

Thus, here the lofty mountain supersedes all earthly things, aspiring to greater and more divine things. After acknowledging the literally elevated position of John, Augustine encourages the faithful further by writing, 'Therefore, my brothers, if you want to understand, lift your eyes to this mountain; that is, raise yourselves up to the Evangelist, raise yourselves up to his meaning.'66 Here Augustine uses mountains to indicate the value of certain figures who wrote, taught and spread the Gospels, encouraging the faithful to look to those figures for meaning and guidance.

In relation to the boldly rendered mountains in the Beatus images, these texts contribute to their promoted messages related to the spread of Christianity by the apostles and the benefits of endurance, protection and triumph that come with the faith. The importance of the apostles to the Beatus maps perhaps is made increasingly apparent in later editions of the manuscripts where images of the apostles were included. In the Las Huelgas Beatus, a full-page illustration just before the maps is devoted to the images of the apostles (Figure 2.43). Additionally, in the Osma Beatus (Figure 2.26) busts of the apostles are placed on the map in relation to the areas that they evangelised. With nimbed heads and set on a pedestal of sorts, these busts resemble the shape of the mountains included on the earlier works (Figure 2.42).


66 ‘Ergo, fratres mei, si vultis intelligere, levate oculos vestros in montem istum; id est, erigite vos ad Evangelistam, erigite vos ad jus sensum.’ PL 35.1381/82 and Augustine, Tractates on the Gospel of John, Vol. 78, p. 45.
Additionally, there are far fewer mountains rendered on the Osma map and therefore, in a sense, the apostles occupy the space previously filled by the geological features. Thus in the tenth-century Mappaemundi, the mountains contribute to the sense that the image shows the Mission of the Apostles, presenting a world where the Christian faith reigned supreme.

For the monastic communities in the mountainous regions of the Iberian Peninsula, the prominence of mountains would have carried additional implications beyond the relationship to the Mission of the Apostles. The monks who emigrated to the North constructed their own communities in the mountains, apart from Muslim dominion in the South. In many ways this parallels the idea of the ‘city upon a hill,’ which stems from the Sermon on the Mount as described in Matthew 5:14 when Christ declared, ‘You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.’ In discussing this verse, Augustine explains that this city is ‘founded upon great and distinguished righteousness, which is also the meaning of the mountain itself on which our Lord is discoursing.’ Furthermore, in writing on this passage, Jerome suggested that ‘He is teaching about courage in preaching. He wants to keep the apostles from hiding out of fear...Rather, with complete freedom, they must let themselves be known, so that what they have heard...they should proclaim on the housetops.’ Thus this verse was associated with ideas of action, preaching and participation in the faith.

More specifically, the standard image of the city on the hill was Jerusalem, as Psalm 121:2-3 explains, ‘Jerusalem, which is built as a city, which is compact together. For thither did the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord: the testimony of Israel, to praise the name of the Lord.’ This idea of ascending up the hill to this lofty city was central to the concept of the city on the hill. The progression was to be undertaken through contemplation, which is developed through Psalms 120-134, also known as the ‘Songs

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of Ascent’ or the ‘Gradual Psalms.’ The early psalms introduce themes of strife and trouble in this life and progress towards ideas of contemplation in the latter part of the series. Toward the end of the series of psalms when contemplation and Jerusalem are reached, Psalm 132 acknowledges ‘Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.’ In his Commentary on the Psalm 132, Augustine wrote,

For these same words of the Psalter, this sweet sound, that honeyed melody, as well of the mind as of the hymn, did even beget the monasteries. By this sound were stirred up the brethren who longed to dwell together. This verse was their trumpet. It sounded throughout the whole earth, and they who had been divided were gathered together.

Augustine continued by explaining that because the Psalm acknowledged, “‘Behold, how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in one,’” why then should we not call Monks so?...They...live together as to make one man, so that they really possess what is written, one mind and one heart, many bodies.”

Augustine concluded his commentary on Psalm 45 by writing, ‘There they who dwell with one heart bless God...Depart, have your habitation in heaven...First go in heart, whither you would follow in the body. Do not hear, Lift up your hearts, with a

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69 The Gradual Psalms were recited as pilgrims progressed towards Rome. While the ascension to Rome becomes a popular theme in Renaissance art, these psalms are referenced specifically in chapter seventeen of the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani*, placing the tradition of their recitation whilst progressing to a defined destination firmly in the early medieval period. For this passage, see J.F. Webb, ed., *The Age of Bede* (London: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 255.

70 For more information of the recitation of these psalms and their relationship to movement in sacred spaces, see Thomas Barrie, *The Sacred In-Between: The Mediating Roles of Architecture* (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 105-107.


72 ‘Tamen quia certant, dicitis agonisticos: et invenistis unde appelletis, quia dixit Apostolus, Bonum agonem certavi. Quare ergo et nos non appellemus monachos, cum dicat Psalmus, Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum?...vivunt in unum, ut unum hominem faciant, ut sit illis vere quod scriptum est, una anima et unum cor; multa corpora, sed non multae animae; multa corpora, sed non multa corda.’ PL 37.1732 and Augustine, *Commentary on the Psalms*, <www.newadvent.org/fathers/1801133.htm> [Accessed 19 June 2013].
deaf ear. Keep your heart lifted up, and no one will straiten you in heaven. 73 Therefore, for the monastic communities constructed in the mountains of northern Iberia, this concept of building and existing in a city on a hill was a uniting and important one. As Jerusalem also was occupied by Muslims in the tenth-century, the Iberian monastic communities could draw a number of parallels with that city on the hill, gleaning the messages of reassurance in the monastic way of life and the promise of heaven that are present in discussions of the city on the hill.

Similar to the mountains, the rivers rendered on these maps were accentuated by both their placement and colour. Extending from the Mediterranean Ocean that is represented in the middle of the maps, the Nile and Don Rivers reach out towards the ocean borders and actually connect to the ocean in the case of the Don. In all four of these manuscripts, the rivers are found around the middle of the image and, along with the mountains, are the primary features on these maps. In the Morgan, Valladolid and Girona images, the rivers are bright blue on blank parchment and therefore attract the viewer’s attention.

Biblically, all rivers were considered to have come from the four rivers of paradise. As Bede explains in his Commentary on Genesis, ‘since the location of paradise itself is far removed from the knowledge of men, we must believe that the four parts of the waters are divided from there, but that these rivers, whose sources are said to be known, are somewhere under the earth, and that after being drawn to various places of distant regions they burst forth.’ 74 He clarifies this further, explaining that ‘these rivers go out through more hidden cavities and longer veins of the earth from paradise to us.’ 75 Thus the prominent inclusion of rivers on the Beatus Mappaemundi conjures up associations with the rivers of paradise, such as the four virtues and the

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75 ‘...quo ad nos de paradiso per occultiores terrae sinus venasque longiores exequant.’ PL 19.0045D-0046A and Bede, On Genesis, p. 115.
four evangelists who dispersed Christianity throughout the world. The relevance of these suggestions to the Beatus tradition is perhaps more clearly demonstrated in the elaborately painted Osma Beatus of 1086 (Figure 2.26), which actually includes the four rivers of paradise (Figure 2.45) at the top of the map, in lieu of the Adam and Eve scene.

This connection is expressed throughout the patristic literature as Augustine writes in City of God that ‘no one can stop us from interpreting paradise symbolically as the life of the blessed; its four rivers as the four virtues, prudence, courage, temperance, and justice.’ Augustine continued, clarifying further that ‘paradise stands for the Church itself, as described in the Song of Songs, the four rivers represent the four gospels; the fruit trees, the saints; and the fruit their achievements.’ The spreading of the word throughout the world and the importance of rivers in that process is expressed after the references to mountains in Psalm 45. Psalm 45:4 suggests that, ‘The streams of the river make glad the City of God.’ Augustine responded to this and continued to assert the aforementioned connections to the apostles and reliance on a protective Christian God by writing,

When the mountains shake when the sea rages, God deserteth not His City, by the streams of the river. What are these streams of the river? That overflowing of the Holy Spirit, of which the Lord said, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth in Me, out of his bosom shall flow rivers of living water.’ These rivers then flowed out of the bosom of Paul, Peter, John, the other Apostles, the other faithful Evangelists. Since these rivers flowed from one river, many ‘streams of the river make glad the City of God.’

76 While Augustine is referenced here, other patristic writers, including Ambrose in his De paradiso and Hrabanus Maurus in his In honorem sanctae Crucis, also explain this connection. For more on these see, PL14.0296 and Hrabanus Maurus, In honorem sanctae Crucis (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000).


78 ‘...paradisum scilicet ipsam Ecclesiam, sicut de illa legitur in Cantico canticorum: quatuor autem paradisi flumina, quatuor Evangelia; ligna fructifera, sanctos; fructus autem eorum, opera eorum.’ PL 41.0395 and Augustine, City of God, p. 535.

79 ‘Cum turbantur montes, cum saevit mare, non deserit Deus civitatem suam per impetus fluminis. Qui sunt isti impetus fluminis? Inundatio illa Spiritus sancti, de qua Dominus dicebat: Si quis sitit, veniat et bibat: qui credit in me, flumina aquae vivae fluent de ventre ejus. Ergo haec flumina fluebant de ventre Pauli, Petri, Ioannis, aliorum Apostolorum, aliorum Evangelistarum fidelium. Haec flumina cum fluuerent ab uno
Thus in addition to comparing the spread of the faith by way of the evangelists to the flow of rivers, the nourishing impact of the rivers also is emphasised. As Cassiodorus expressed in his Commentary on Psalm 45,

> The City of God is made joyful by the force of the river, and it finds rest; to make you realise that this river irrigates souls, he does not say that it has saturated the city, but has made it joyful. For this is the river of which Truth Itself says: \textit{Whoever believes in me shall not thirst for ever, but there shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting [my italics].} He did well to speak of the force of the river, since its course allows nothing marshy or sluggish since it has steeped itself in the power of the Godhead.\textsuperscript{80}

Similarly, Gregory wrote in his Homily on Luke 3:1-11 that ‘Water flows down from the mountains because the doctrine of Truth leaves proud minds; springs well up in the valleys because humble hearts accept the word of preaching...we see valleys overflowing with grain because the mouths of those who are gentle and guileless... have been filled with nourishing truth.’\textsuperscript{81} Gregory later explained in this homily that, God made ‘the dry land into streams of water. He gave the Gentiles, who because of their aridity had earlier borne no fruit in good works, the flowing waters of holy preaching. The way which was formerly closed to preachers because of its roughness and dryness later flowed with brooks of teaching.’\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{80}‘Civitate Dei impetu fluminis laectificata requievit. Et ut istum fluvium irrigatorem cognosceres animarum, non dicit satiasse, sed laetificasse civitatem. Iste namque est fluvius, de quo ipsa Veritas dicit: Qui credit in me non sitiet unquam, sed fiet in eo fons aquae salientis in vitam aeternam. Et bene dixit: Impetus fluminis, quia nihil palustre, nihil morosum cursus ejus sustinet, cum se potentia Divinitatis.’ PL 70.0330A and Cassiodorus, \textit{Explanation of the Psalms}, Vol. 1, p. 455.


\textsuperscript{82}‘Desertum quippe Dominus in stagna aquarum posuit, et terram inviam in rivos aquarum, quia gentilvati, quae prius per ariditatem mentis nulos bonorum operum fructus merebat, fluenta sanctae praedicationis dedit, et ipsa, ad quam prius pro asperitate suae siccitatibus non patebat, doctrinae postmodum rivos emanavit.’ PL 76.1166C and Gregory, \textit{Forty Gospel Homilies}, pp. 44-45.
By emphasising the rivers on the Beatus maps, these images would have delivered potent messages of the enriching and saving qualities of Christianity, highlighting the importance of spreading Christianity throughout the world in the manner of the apostles. The apostles were celebrated figures within the early Church, which is suggested by a number of patristic writers. As Augustine wrote in *City of God*, despite ‘the severest persecutions and the harshest punishments’ in their pursuit, the apostles ‘did not stop…preaching men’s salvation.’ He further explained that the ‘divine quality of their actions, their words and their lives, their triumphs, as one may say, over hard hearts, and their introduction of the peace of righteousness; all these brought them immense glory in the Church of Christ.’ Gregory also commemorates such devoted work by writing, for instance, in his twelfth homily on Luke 8:4-15, that Christians ought to ‘think of these things, my friends, and rouse yourselves to the pursuit of good works. With good people as models for you to imitate now, you may be able to be sharers in their goodness hereafter.’ Considering the revered status of the apostles and the repeated textual and visual references to them in the Beatus context, these images likely would have provided reminders of such admired figures and their actions to the Iberian monastic viewers considering them.

The rewards of preaching and dispersing the word of God were asserted further in these images by the reminder of paradise prominently presented on the maps. The only figural representation on these maps, the image of Adam and Eve (Figures 2.46, 2.47, 2.48, 2.49), was placed at the top of the map, in the eastern section in accordance with the Genesis description of Eden. In addition to the placement of this figural component of the maps, it was highlighted visually through colour and form. Therefore, for viewers, the images of Eden included so prominently on the maps so as to indicate the easterly location of paradise, would have served as a reminder of the heavenly rewards for the faithful at the end of time.

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83 ‘...inter gravissimas persecutions crudelesque poenas non sunt deterriti a praedicatione salutis humanae tanto fremitu offensionis humanae.’ PL 41.0159 and Augustine, *City of God*, p. 203.
84 ‘Et quod divina facientes atque dicentes divineque viventes, debellatis quodammodo cordibus duris, atque introducta paca justitiae, ingens in Ecclesia Christi Gloria consecuta est...’ PL 41.0159 and Augustine, *City of God*, p. 203.
85 ‘Haec vobiscum, fratres, agite, sic vos ad studium boni operis instigate, ut cum bonos vobis modo ad imitandum proponitis, eorum consortes tunc esse valeatis.’ PL 76.1134C and Gregory, *Forty Gospel Homilies*, p. 92.
While Adam and Eve imagery was common during the medieval period, the Beatus illustrations were rendered differently than similar scenes. Of the four manuscripts discussed here, the Adam and Eve scene from the Morgan Beatus is the only one to include a tree, which is red and to the right of the figures. The Valladolid, Urgell and Girona images lack any such addition, leaving the serpent either stretched vertically next to the figures or, in the case of the Girona Beatus, wrapped around the border of the box containing the figures. Such a lack of emphasis on the tree is surprising considering its importance to the narrative and its prominent placement in a number of other renderings of the same scene.

For instance, there are several Spanish traditions that exhibit a great emphasis on the arboreal component of the image and Genesis narrative whilst also presenting the figures of Adam and Eve in a manner similar to the Beatus images. In the León Bible of 960, an image of Eden (León, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, Cod. 2, folio 15v, Figure 2.50) was included in the upper left-hand portion of the folio, just before the text of Genesis 2:9, which explains that ‘And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.’ Thus in this instance, the illustration actually draws attention to the Genesis verse that described God’s creation of trees. Additionally, the trees are accentuated visually as they are taller than the figures of Adam and Eve and their leaves and buds blossom out in all direction, adding a sense of movement and excitement to the image and drawing the eye away from the static poses of the figures.

In other images, the position of the tree and snake is even more prominent as they were placed in the centre of the scene between the two figures. Atypically, the Escorial Beatus (Escorial, Biblioteca del Monasterio MS II.5, folio 18r; Figure 2.51) presents a large-scale scene of Adam and Eve in lieu of the Mappamundi. This image is similar to the scene of Eden found in the León Bible of 960, though here the tree was inserted into the middle of the scene, with the snake wrapped around it, directing his temptations towards Eve on the right. Both the serpent and the tree are detailed elaborately, with scales rendered on the snake and the flowering palms developed elaborately.

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86 Both of these manuscripts were likely made in the scriptorium at Valeranica, which was founded in the beginning of the tenth century just south of Burgos. See Appendices 2B and 2C for maps marking important cities and monasteries.
through bright colours and lines. Such specific elements offer a contrast to the figures that, despite having exaggerated features, are comparatively schematic and simple in design. As Williams notes, this replacement of the map with this type of scene is likely linked to the presence of Adam and Eve on the Branch II manuscripts but, perhaps more importantly, to the sharing of influences from manuscripts and illuminators that were present in the Valeranica scriptorium. This is significant not only because it illustrates the importance of the inclusion of Adam and Eve on the maps, but also reveals that Iberian depictions of the scene commonly placed the tree and snake in between the figures of Adam and Eve, a distinct difference from the elements included in the Beatus scenes.

In contrast, the figures are emphasised over the trees in the Beatus scenes. In the Valladolid, Girona and Urgell images, the figures fill up the majority of the space designated as Eden; in Morgan they remain the main focus but there is space that is taken up by trees that flank the figures. Stylistic choices that were made in developing these elements of the illumination also present the figures so that they are highlighted through the use of colour and the application of paint. In the Morgan, Valladolid and Girona images (Figures 2.46-2.48) the peachy colour of their flesh is set off against a blue or green background that, like the painted border, contrasts greatly with the blank vellum backdrop of the rest of the image. The contrast between the skin tones and the bolder base colours draws attention to the figures, which highlight the scene. In the same vein and despite the general lack of colour in the Urgell image, Adam and Eve are stressed by the significantly thicker application of black paint for the figures’ hair. This again stands apart from the rest of the image, which is composed of line.

Beyond these aesthetic connections, the bodily features of the figures are pronounced with unusual emphasis. For instance, even though the paint that defines the figures is fairly worn in Morgan, it is possible to make out the thick rendering of the bodies, Eve with wide hips and Adam a more masculine physique. The defining body parts are developed further in Girona and Urgell, where Eve’s breasts are highlighted and again the bodies are chunky and sturdy. This, however, is taken to an extreme in the Valladolid Beatus where Eve’s breasts are quite large compared to the rest of her body and both Adam and Eve’s genitals are exposed, illustrated below their hands and down around their knees. Compared to the majority of the other figures depicted in these manuscripts, which are swallowed in drapery and lacking in corporeal specificity
and also compared to figures such as those from the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS nouv. acq. lat. 2334; Figure 2.52) which probably was produced in Iberia during the sixth century and which presents the human form in a very generalised way, the emphasis on these human elements and qualities is striking.

Thus in examining these aspects, it becomes clear that the focus of the Beatus image of Eden is not the tree, in which Augustine explains ‘there was no evil substance because there is no evil substance’ in God’s creations, after all ‘we would not feel evil except for experience, since there would be no evil unless we had committed it.’ Nor is the emphasis on the serpent that tempts Eve but does not force her to consume the apple. Rather, of central interest are the human figures, who, despite having ‘it both in [their] nature to be able, and in [their] power to will, not to consent to the tempter,’ chose to eat of the fruit against God’s wishes, thereby serving as a reminder of the impact that choosing to disobey the Lord’s wishes can have. As in the messages

87 These ideas regarding the development of evil because of human action and choice are expressed in a number of other patristic sources as well. For instance, the third-century scholar Origen wrote in his commentary, The Being and Nature of God that ‘whatever excellence we possess, God was its maker; wickedness and sin we formed for ourselves.’ Similarly, the fourth-century Alexandrian scholar, Didymus wrote in his commentary on Genesis that, ‘to the serpent, it was said: Cursed are you (Genesis 3:14), but the same thing was not said to Adam, rather: Cursed be the earth in your works.’ Deriving ideas from these early Christian writers, slightly later thinkers expressed similar ideas. For instance, Ambrose explained in De Paradiso that ‘the earth is not cursed in itself, but it is ‘cursed in your works’, which was said with regard to the soul (anima). The earth is cursed when your works are earthly, i.e. works of this world...If we have sown carnal things, we will reap carnal things. But we have sown spiritual things, we will reap spiritual things.’ Similarly, in his thirty-first homily, Gregory explains that ‘human nature was planted well like the fig tree, and created well like the woman; but it fell into sin of its own accord, and preferred neither fruitful works nor its upright state.’

‘Quia vero ligna omnia in paradiso bona plantaverat (Gen. 12), qui fecit omnia bona valde, nec ulla ibi natura mali erat, quia nusquam est malu ulla natura...Cum vero illud tangitur, quod nec tengenti obesset si non prohiberetur, nec cuiquam alteri quandolibet tanderetur; quare prohibitum est, nisi ut ipsiu per se bonum obedientiae, it ipsius per se malum inobedientiae monstratetur?’ PL 34.0383-0384 and Augustine. On the Literal Meaning of Genesis, Vol. 2, trans. by John Hammond Taylor (New York: Newman Press, 1982), pp. 52 and 54.

associated with the Mission of the Apostles this focus in the Adam and Eve component of these images is on the figures and their opportunity to carry our God's wishes.

Through both stylistic choices and the selective illustrations, the maps promote a complete picture of Christian success, an image of what is described commonly in patristic writing and clearly defined by Augustine in *The City of God* as a 'universal commonwealth' (*communem republicam*) under God.\(^{89}\) This concept of the 'universal commonwealth' was a prominent one in early Christianity. As Isidore explains in his *Etymologies*, 'Catholic means universal... according to the whole.” Not confined to regional areas, as are the assemblies of heretics, it is spread widely throughout the whole world.'\(^{90}\) Similarly, in his homily on Mark 16: 14-20 Gregory writes of the 'harvest of believers...throughout the entire world' that was sprouted from the seeds that the disciples dispersed. Additionally, as was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, Beatus described the faith by writing, ‘Catholic, that is, universal...according to the whole. For unlike the small assemblies of the heretics, limited to some parts of regions, it is spread expansively through the whole earthly globe. The apostle affirms this, saying to the Romans: “I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken throughout the whole world.”\(^{91}\)

This sense of Christianity as an expansive and all-encompassing faith was integral to Beatus' message and this prominent image within the illustrative programme. These messages would have been a particularly poignant for those in the vulnerable monasteries of northern Iberia, which were consistently under threat of

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\(^{89}\) PL 41.0335 and Augustine, *City of God*, p. 453.


invasion and conversion by the Muslims occupying the Peninsula (Figure 2.53).  
Beginning with the concept of Reconquista that developed in the 880s with the 
Chronicle of Alfonso III, the ninth and tenth centuries in Iberia saw an increase in anti-
Muslim sentiments and expressions. Alongside such negative descriptions of Muslims, 
statements regarding the expansion of Christianity and the hope of Christians regaining 
control over the Peninsula encouraged believers to act against Muslim forces. The 
Cordoban martyrs’ movement of the mid-ninth century offers a sense of the mindset 
that had swept through Christian communities on the Peninsula by the start of the tenth 
century. Though the accounts that describe these events were composed in and about 
people from al-Andalus, they reflect ideas circulating throughout Christian Iberia and 
also indicate the sentiments of Christian groups such as those that abandoned the South 
to form the monasteries in the North where these manuscripts were produced and used. 
An example of such statements supporting the Church include the writings associated 
with the 851 martyrdom of Isaac de Tábanos, which explains that,

...when I heard that men and women were eagerly rushing 
from cities, hamlets, villages and towns, to join in this struggle, 
and that none of them feared to face an accusation in the high 
court, and when I saw that all unhesitatingly chose to die as

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92 The relationship between Muslims and Christians on the Iberian Peninsula at this 
time is much debated in current scholarship. See pp. 24-27 of the introduction for more 
on this debate. 
Richard Bulliet has conducted the most convincing study of conversion rates for 
medieval Iberia by studying naming records and patterns. While there are a number 
of problems that stem from this approach, this study provides the most data-based 
analysis and thus is referenced frequently. For more on conversion in medieval Iberia, 
see Richard Bulliet, Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative 
History (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1979); Thomas Glick, 
Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton 
University Press, 1979), pp. 33-35; and Jessica Coope, The Martyrs of Córdoba: 
Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion (Lincoln, Nebraska: 
University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

93 This is manifested in texts from the period. For example, the first king of Asturias, 
Pelayo, declared in a speech that he would ‘punish their [the Muslims’] iniquities, and 
with whips their sins’ and furthermore would ‘scorn this host and fear it hardly at all. 
(‘Uisitauo in uirga iniquitates eorum et in flagellis peccata eorum; misericordia autem 
meam non abertam ab eis’). Furthermore Muslims are described as ‘barbarous,’ ‘evil’ 
and in animalistic terms throughout texts such as the Continuatio Isidoria ad 
annum 754 of the late eighth century, the martyrs’ tales from the ninth century and the 
Chronicle of Alfonso III. Sponsler, ‘Defining the Boundaries of self and other,’ pp. 66 and 
witnesses for faith, I resolved to publish it in all our churches (founded on most solid rock), so that all might learn from and rejoice in their victory, since they had come from various places, and so that the variety of their sufferings should be an example for the whole Church.\textsuperscript{94}

These suggestions of working for the success of the Church and seeking spiritual rather than earthly profit are evidenced in Beatus’ text as well. For example, in the discussion of the Church from the Second book of the Commentary, Beatus wrote that God ‘promises a reward to those who after their labours have been victorious: that those who enter into Paradise may receive and freely eat the fruit of the tree of life.’\textsuperscript{95}

In summary, the \textit{Mappaemundi} were positioned as the first of five extra-Apocalyptic images to expound ideas from the Commentary text and that were the first double-page scenes in a series that promoted ideas of totality and wholeness. Their structure and integration into the illustrative programmes of these manuscripts drew attention to these scenes as complete and total Christian entities, demonstrating the global triumph of the faith. Furthermore the details included on these \textit{Mappaemundi} sought to highlight ideas of dispersing the messages of the faith throughout the world and of Christian triumph at Judgment. These promoted messages are consistent with the ideas expressed in the extant tenth-century literature and thus these images reveal some of the prominent considerations of northern Iberian Christians during this period, which will be demonstrated further in relation to the other extra-Apocalyptic imagery.


Chapter 3: Iconographic and Scriptural Parallels Represented in the *Four Beasts and the Statue*
Beatus Commentary Text on the *Four Beasts and the Statue*

The beast gets its name from ‘devastating,’ laying waste, or devouring. Now Daniel saw four beasts in a vision. The first was like a lion, and has the wings of an eagle. The second beast was like a bear. The third beast resembled a leopard. The fourth beast was terrible, and wonderful, and strong beyond measure: it had huge teeth of iron, eating and grinding, and trampling the leftovers beneath its feet. It was unlike the other beasts, and had seven heads and ten horns. These four beasts are this world, which is divided into four parts, East, West, North and South; albeit four kingdoms may also be understood, that is: in the lion, the kingdom of Babylon; in the bear, that of the Medes and Persians; in the leopard, the kingdom of Macedon; and in that dissimilar and powerful one the Kingdom of the Romans, having great iron teeth, devouring and trampling, since it is by that same kingdom that all martyrdoms were effected. Still, these four are the world. Just as Nebuchadnezzar also in his vision saw a statue as of one in the likeness of a man, while he beheld it as made up of four parts with members of different colours, that is, a head of gold, which is the first part of the world, chest and arms of silver, which is the second, the third of brass, which is the third part, to wit the belly and thighs, while the fourth part in fact, is the feet of iron and partly of clay.’

‘Bestia propie a deuastando nomen accepit, id est, deuorando. Danihel enim quattuor in uisione bestias uidit. Prima quasi leaena et habebat alas aquilae. Secunda bestia similis urso. Tertia bestia quasi pardus. Quarta bestia terribilis atque mirabilia et fortis nimis: dentes ferreos habebat magnos, comedens atque comminuens, et reliqua pedibus suis conculcans: dissimilis erat ceteris bestiis, et habebat cornua decem. Hae quattuor bestiae iste mundus est, qui in quattuor partibus diuiditur, oriente, occidente, septentrione et meridie: quamuis et quattuor regna intellegantur, is est, in leaena Babilonium regnum, in urso Madorum et Persarum, in pardo regnum Macedonum, et in illa dissimili et forti regnum / Romanorum, dentes ferreos habens magnos, comedens et conculcans, eo quod per ipsum regnum facta sunt omnia martiria. Tamen haec quattuor unus mundus est. Sicut et Nebuchodonosor in sua statua uisionis quasi unum uidit in figura hominis, sed in quattuor partibus discoloribus membris conspexit, id est, caput aureum, quod est prima pars mundi, pectus et brachia de argento, quod est secunda, tertia ex aere, quod est tertia pars, id est, uenter et femora, quarta uero pedes ferreos et ex parts fictiles.’

*(For the full Beatus Commentary text on the Four Beasts and the Statue, See Appendices 5B and 5C)*

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Description of the Placement, Style and Features of the *Four Beasts and the Statue*

Function of the Image:

- To illustrate the beasts, which are included in a list of evil groups which comprise the ‘Synagogue’ (any religious other)

Placement in Manuscript:

- Second half of the Prologue to Book 2 of the Commentary, which addresses and defines the Synagogue (any religious other) and its evil/heretical factions
- Occurs after the discussion and description of the Church in the first half of the Prologue to Book 2 of the Commentary, providing a juxtaposition to those protected within the Church

Direct Textual Link:

- Both the *Four Beasts* and the *Statue* illustrate narratives from the Book of Daniel (Daniel 7:1-11 and Daniel 2:31-49), which Beatus integrated into the Commentary to more fully explain and describe the evils beasts, which are members of the Synagogue

Physical Characteristics:

- The *Four Beasts*
  - The ‘Lion,’ which represents the Kingdom of Babylon, is located in the upper left corner in each of the images; the figure’s body, which resembles a lion with wings, faces toward the ‘Leopard’ on the right; its paws are raised and its mouth open in a roaring gesture
  - The ‘Leopard,’ which represents the Kingdom of Macedon, is positioned in the upper left corner of these illustrations; its body, which is spotted in accordance with the physical characteristics of a leopard and which also includes wings, is directed toward the ‘Lion’ on the left; its paws are raised in an aggressive stance
  - The ‘Bear’ is found in the lower left corner of each of the illustrations; in contrast to the other beasts, its four feet are firmly planted on the ground, though its body is directed toward the ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ Beast on the right
  - The ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ Beast has ten horns, in the centre of which, a small head can be found; in the Girona Beatus, this beast has two heads as described in Daniel, but the representation of the three other manuscripts only have one head; the beast faces to the left towards the ‘Bear’ and is posed in an active stance in each of these manuscripts, with either one or both paws raised
- These four beasts are placed in two rows of two.

- The *Four Beasts* were illustrated on their own pages in the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell manuscripts, while the scene is shown on the same page as the *Statue* in the Girona manuscript.

*The Statue*

- In each of these images, the *Statue* appears as a frontal human figure.
- Its head, upper body, core and feet are distinguished in each scene by colour and/or line.
- A mountain form is shown to the right of the *Statue* figure; in the Girona Beatus this feature is quite long and stretches alongside the *Statue* though in the other three manuscripts, the mountain is smaller than the figure and placed in the upper right section of the illustration.
- A smaller piece of the mountain is shown striking the foot of the statue.
Position of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* in the Morgan Beatus

**Mappamundi**
*First Section of the Prologue to the Second Book of the Commentary*

**Four Beasts and the Statue**
*Second Section of the Prologue to the Second Book of the Commentary*

**Woman on the Beast**
*Third Book of the Commentary Text*

12 Pages of Text, Transitioning from discussion of the Church to Discussion of the Synagogue

3 Pages of Text, Transitioning from the Prologue into the Text of the Second Book of the Commentary
Position of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* in the Valladolid Beatus

**Mappamundi**

*Beginning of Prologue to Book II*

**Four Beasts and the Statue**

*Second Half of Prologue to Book II*

**Woman on the Beast, Commentary**

*Text from Book II*

10 pages of uninterrupted text in the Prologue to Book II, transitioning from a discussion of the Church to a discussion of the Synagogue.

2 Pages of Text transitioning from the Prologue to Book II to the Text of Book II.
Position of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* in the Girona Beatus

1. **Mappamundi**
   - *Beginning of Prologue to Book II*

2. **Four Beasts and the Statue**
   - *Second Half of Prologue to Book II*

3. **Woman on the Beast, Commentary**
   - *Text of Book II*

12 pages of uninterrupted text in the Prologue to Book II, transitioning from a discussion of the Church to a discussion of the Synagogue.

Four Pages of Text, Transitioning from the Preface to Book II to Book II.
Position of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* in the Urgell Beatus
I. Context of The Four Beasts and the Statue

The second Commentary-based scene included in the Beatus illustrative programme is the image of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* (Figures 3.01-3.07). The image occurs in the prologue to the second book, which establishes the characteristics of the Church and the Synagogue, which is considered to be any heretical or non-Christian institution. This prologue serves to clarify the qualities of each institution prior to the explanation of the Seven Churches in the second book of the Commentary, which alludes to both. More specifically, the *Four Beasts and the Statue* scene occurs in the latter portion of the prologue, which deals with the Synagogue, sin and heresy, about ten folios after the *Mappamundi*, which relates to the first section on the Church.¹

The distinction between the Church and Synagogue is made abundantly clear through the juxtaposition of text and image concerning each. In the Commentary, Beatus suggests that ‘the difference between the Synagogue and the Church is as great as the distance that separates cattle from humans. In the Church the names of men are proclaimed, but in the Synagogue, those of animals.’² Furthermore, the Commentary text explains that ‘the Synagogue places all its hope in this world. It cares for the body, not the soul. Moreover, it takes in all these...the devil, the Antichrist, the heretic, the hypocrite, the schismatic, superstition, *the beast*, the serpent, the pits, the locusts, the horses, and the woman who rides the beast.’³ Within these categories of devious creatures, the illustrations of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* accompany the section ‘About the Beast,’ in which Beatus inserted the text of Daniel 7:1-11 in order to describe

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¹ There are eleven pages of text between the *Mappamundi* and the *Four Beasts and the Statue* in the Morgan manuscript. Likewise in the Valladolid and Girona manuscripts, nine and eleven pages separate the scenes, respectively. As the *Mappamundi* in the Urgell Beatus is located in the prefatory material, the *Four Beasts and the Statue* is the first image in the preface to the Second Book and appears after the fifty-four pages of text that follow the *Commission to Write.*


the evils of beasts. The text, which is included in this thesis on pp. 88-89, just before the start of this chapter, reveals that the Four Beasts represent the four major earthly kingdoms of the Babylonians, the Medes and Persians, the Macedonians, and the Romans, over which the Antichrist has dominion. In other words, the image presents a broken account of the world and its prominent empires that were controlled by sin and heresy. In contrast to the Mappaemundi, which present Christian totality across the earth at the end of time, this vision of the world is fragmented and represented as passing phases of separate empires.

Similar ideas are expressed through the Statue (Figure 3.09), which is also described in the text provided just before the chapter. As in the Four Beasts, the Statue suggests a four-part world through the four identified sections of the statue that are composed of different materials. While the Statue is a milder expression of the evils that exist on earth, it suggests the impending end of earthly evils combined with the triumph of God and the Christian faith. By including the image of the Four Beasts and the Statue in the preface to the second book of the Commentary, after the Mappamundi, those creating these manuscripts chose to add elements that visually emphasised the difference between Church and Synagogue, Christianity and heresy, good and evil. The Four Beasts and the Statue invert the ideas of the prominently placed Mappamundi, providing opposition to that illustration in order to articulate the difference between good and evil and eventually suggest the dominance of Christianity and the demise of non-believers.

More specifically, the illustration of the Four Beasts and the Statue represents two stories from the Book of Daniel: Daniel's dream of the four beasts that crawl out of the sea from Daniel 7:1-28, and Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue in Daniel 2:31-

4 Daniel 7:1-28 recounts a dream, which Daniel had during the first year of the Babylonian king, Balthassar’s reign. In this dream, the four winds churned up the waters from the sea, from which four beasts emerged. These beasts included a winged lion, a winged leopard, a bear and the terrible/wonderful beast which, according to Daniel 7:17, represent the four kingdoms of the earth. Furthermore, according to Daniel 7:23, the fourth, Terrible/Wonderful Beast represents the fourth kingdom that will overtake the other three kingdoms and devour the earth. This fourth beast is endowed with ten horns that represent kings, which are taken over by an eleventh king that is more powerful and known to 'speak words against the High One, and shall crush the saints of the most High' (Daniel 7:25). The power of this beast, however, is taken away at Judgment and the everlasting Kingdom of God is left to reign supreme at the end of this Apocalyptic vision in Daniel 7. See Appendix 6D for the complete text of Daniel 7.
Notably, an illustrated version of the Book of Daniel was also added to these manuscripts, following the Commentary text, during the tenth century. Daniel 7: 1-11 and Daniel 2: 31-49 are among the eleven illustrations incorporated into the Beatus editions of the Book of Daniel, making the *Four Beasts and the Statue* the only two narrative images to appear twice in the Beatus manuscripts. The additions of the extra-Apocalyptic image of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* and the illustrated Book of Daniel as well as the repetition of the scenes indicate a new and intense interest in the Book of Daniel during the tenth century.

This connection to the Book of Daniel is revealing, as the text deals considerably with the Babylonian captivity. The importance of Babylon to the Book of Daniel and to these manuscripts is demonstrated in the more ornately illustrated Morgan and Girona manuscripts, which include a frontispiece to the illustrated text of the Book of Daniel, which presents images of the towering city of Babylon, framed by serpents. The illustrations occur just after the text of the Beatus Commentary on folio 238v in the Morgan Beatus and on folios 236v-237r in the Girona Beatus (Figures 3.10 and 3.11). In addition to the serpents that encase the city, a text appears alongside the image that details aspects of its history, physical characteristics and associations with sin.

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5 Daniel 2: 31-35 recounts Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the statue. Nebuchadnezzar was a Neo-Babylonian king who reigned from around 634-562 BCE and conquered Judah and Jerusalem, taking the Jews into captivity during that time. In his dream, the statue was composed of four parts made up of four different materials; the statue is struck and destroyed by a stone that falls from a mountain. Daniel reveals God’s interpretation of the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, explaining that the statue in its four parts represented the four earthly empires that will fall, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar’s own Babylonian empire. After this, Nebuchadnezzar fell to his knees, worshipping Daniel, offering him sacrifices, acknowledging his God and eventually appointing him to a high position. For the full text of Daniel 2, see Appendix 6C.


7 The full text that accompanies this image reads, ‘Babylon was founded by the giant, Nimrod. Its walls are said to be fifty cubits in breadth and two hundred in height, and in circuit 469 stadia. Destroyed by the Medes and the Chaldeans, it was rebuilt by Queen Semiramis. Preserved there are the bodies of Saints Ananias, Azarius and Misael. And the vessels of the Lord were carried from Jerusalem [to Babylon] by King Nebuchadnezzar. Because of the wrath of God, there are dragons and ostriches around [the city], and owls and sirens sing seductively in the wicked city.’ (‘Babilonia a Nebroth gigante fundata est. Latitudo murorum cubita quinquaginta altitude cc habere traditur. Circuitus eius cccclxix stadiis conclusitur. Id est milia lxviii stadiis quattuor. Destructa est a Midis et Caldeis et reparata est a Semiramide regine. Condita vero sunt in ea corpora sanctorum Ananie, Azarie et Misaeli. In ambitu uero eius pre ira furoris domini
description helps to contextualise the images of the *Four Beast and the Statue* in terms of the Book of Daniel and draws attention to the sinful city of Babylon as a place of captivity for the faithful.

This connection to Babylon is perpetuated through Beatus’ discussion of the four beasts referenced in Daniel 7, which include the ‘Lion,’ the ‘Leopard,’ the ‘Bear’ and the ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ beast. The lion is the most mentioned animal in the Bible and carries a range of associations with it. Despite the possible mixed interpretations of the figure, Beatus clearly identifies it as a signifier of the Kingdom of Babylon, which is referred to in Revelation 18:2 as the ‘habitation of the devils.’ These references to Babylon invoke the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar’s siege of Jerusalem in the seventh century BCE and the subsequent captivity of the Jews under Babylonian rule.

In the scriptures and patristic commentaries, the promise of salvation is an essential component of the Babylonian captivity. The text of Daniel 9:24 explains that, ‘Seventy weeks [of captivity] are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the saint of saints may be anointed.’ The Psalms, which were central to the daily practices of the Mozarabic rite, also address the Babylonian Captivity. More specifically, Psalm 137 opens with the verses: ‘Upon thy rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept: when we remembered Sion: On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments. For there they that led us into captivity required of us the words of songs.’ As this Psalm offers such direct references, the text is central to most patristic discussions of the Babylonian captivity. For example, in his Commentary on Psalm 137, Augustine wrote,

...if ye wish not to be willows of Babylon fed by its streams, and bringing no fruit. But sigh for the everlasting Jerusalem...Be built

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8 Revelation 18:2 reads, ‘And he cried mightily, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, in fallen, and is become the habitation of the devils, and the hold of every unclean bird, and foul spirit.’

9 Nebuchadnezzar’s siege of Jerusalem is recounted in Daniel 1: 1-21 and the Babylonian Captivity is described in 1 Chronicles 9, 2 Chronicles 36, 2 Kings and the Book of Jeremiah.

10 See Appendix 6F for the full text of Psalm 137.
upon the Rock, if ye desire not to be swept away either by the
stream, or the winds, or the rain...Your captivity will pass away,
your happiness will come; the last enemy shall be destroyed, and
we shall triumph with our King, without death.

Thus the patristic literature suggests the rewards that will be granted to those who
endure captivity as well as the demise of the captors.

In addition to representing Babylon, the ‘Lion’ and the other beasts also relay
messages of the general dangers of heresy and evil. As the Beatus Commentary
explains, ‘the young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God (Psalm
104: 20).’ Beatus then asked, ‘Who else is given the name of the beast, except for the
old enemy, who cruelly forced deception on the first man, and by his evil counsel ripped
apart the uprightness of his life?’ Though this might seem an unusual interpretation of
this verse, Augustine offered a similar reading in his Commentary on the psalm,
explaining that, ‘The lion’s whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God.
Justly then our Lord...said to His disciples, as if darkness being about to come, the lion
would roam about to seek whom he might devour, that the lion could devour no man,
unless with leave.’ Similarly, Cassiodorus’ Commentary on the Psalm reveals that,

So on that night the beasts of the woods...the demons, and the
whelps of lions, whom devils brought to birth by corrupting their
wills, went forth seeking people to devour so that they could find
meat for their malice. But this happened with the forbearance of

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11 ‘...si non vultis esse salices Babyloniae, pasti de fluminibus ejus, et fructum nullum
aferentes. Sed suspirate in aeternam Jerusalem... In petra aedificamini, si non vultis
tollis aut a fluvio, aut a ventis, aut a pluvia...Transiet captivitas, veniet felicitas,
dannabitur hostis extremus, et cum rege sine morte triumphabimus.’ PL 37.1774 and
In the section before this, the rock is identified as Christ, an idea that will be developed
further along in this chapter.
12 ‘...catuli leonum rugientes ut rapiant et quaec ratione Deo escam sibi.’ Beatus, Sancti
Beati a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin, Vol. 1, p. 223 and Beatus, ‘English
Translation,’ p. 414.
13 ‘Quis alius nomine bestiae nisi antiquus hostis accipitur, qui deceptionem primi
hominis saeuis inpetit, et integritatem utiae illius male suadendo laniauit?” Beatus,
Sancti Beati a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin, Vol. 1, p. 224; and Beatus, ‘English
Translation,’ p. 414.
14 ‘Catuli leonum rugientes, ut rapiant, quaerentes a Deo escam sibi. Merito Dominus
venturus ad occasam suum, ipse sol justitiae agnoscess ocassam suum, ait disciplulis,
tanquam tenebris futuris circuituro leone, ut quareret quem devoraret, quod ille leo
neminem devoraret, nisi peteret.’ PL 37.1376 and Augustine, Commentary on the
Thus Psalm 104:20 was commonly associated with evil, malice and heresy, ideas that are developed further in the Beatus Commentary, which clarifies that ‘the young lions roar, because the spirits that serve the infamous, through prominent powers of iniquity, put all their strength into troublesome temptations.’\(^{16}\)

The Beatus renderings of the ‘Lion’ reflect such discussions of the evil lion as the open mouths and aggressive stances indicate that the creature is roaring. In instances where the lion is interpreted negatively, roaring was commonly affiliated with the devil and heresy.\(^{17}\) 1 Peter 5:8-9 advises, ‘Be sober and watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist ye, strong in faith: knowing that the same affliction befalls your brethren who are in the world.’ Similarly Psalm 21:15 describes the denouncing of Christ as ‘They have opened their mouths against me, as a lion ravening and roaring.’ Augustine reaffirms this position in his Commentary on Psalm 21, which explains that, ‘They opened their mouth upon Me, not out of Thy Scripture, but of their own lusts. “As a ravening and roaring lion.” As a lion, whose ravening is, that I was taken and led; and whose roaring, “Crucify, Crucify.”’\(^{18}\) Therefore, in the same way that these texts relate the opening of mouths to heresy, so too does the image of the ‘Lion.’

\(^{15}\) Nox ergo et illis fuit...id est daemonia, et catuli leonum, quos diaboli corrupta voluntate genuerunt, ad devorationem quaerentes aliquos exierunt, ut escam malitiae suae (permittente tamen Domino) reperirent. Nihil enim a quocum fieri potest, nisi quod ipse secreto judicio aut ad probationem, aut ad vindictam faciendum esse permiserit...Nec moveat quod superius diximus bestias silvarum multitudines accipi debere nationum; et hic videtur significare diabolum cum ministris. PL 70.0736A-B and Cassiodorus, Explanation of the Psalms, trans. by P.G. Walsh, Vol. 3 (New York: Paulist Press, 1990-1991), pp. 41-42.


\(^{17}\) Admittedly, roaring is not always associated with negative ideas in other contexts. For example, Mark 1:3 describes John the Baptist as roaring in the desert. Given the use of the lion as a symbol of heresy and malice in the Beatus Commentary, however, it is more likely that the roaring lion is endowed with negative associations.

\(^{18}\) ‘Aperuerunt super me os suum, sicut leo rapiens et ruginens: audiamus rugitum ipsorum in Evangelio, Crucifige, Crucifige.’ PL 36.0175 and Augustine, Commentary on...
The other creatures included in the *Four Beasts* were also associated with malice and evil. Representing the Kingdom of Macedon in the *Four Beasts*, the ‘Leopard’ was primarily affiliated with negative attributes during the medieval period. Before discussing possible interpretations, however, it should be acknowledged that there is a critical difference between Branch IIa and IIb representations of this beast, in that the ‘Leopard’ from the Branch IIb Girona Beatus has four heads while the others have only one. The four-headed image is grounded in the scripture as Daniel 7:6 reads: ‘After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast also had four heads; and dominion was given to it,’ and therefore, the single-headed representations of the beast deviates from the biblical tradition. In all other ways, however, the manner in which the ‘Leopard’ is represented is the same in each of the four manuscripts and the difference in the number of heads rendered likely is a result of the differing traditions on which the branches were modeled.

As a hybrid, the leopard was immediately considered to be evil, deviant and degenerate. As Isidore explained in his *Etymologies*, ‘A leopard, *leopardus*, is born from mixing a lioness and pard, and makes the third family stock.’ Isidore further recognised that Pliny wrote in his *Natural History*, that ‘the lion lies with the female pard, or the pard with the lioness, each union producing a degenerate offspring, like the mule and hinny.’ Thus the leopard was considered to be an inherently bad creature. The evil nature of hybrids has been discussed at length and there are a number of secondary sources that detail this feature of them. For more on the negative aspects of the leopard and other degenerate animals see: Florence McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), pp. 150-151; Richard Barber, trans., *Bestiary* (London: The Folio Society, 1992), p. 35; Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1992), pp. 66-68, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Hybridity, Identity and Monstrosity in Medieval Britain: On Difficult Middles* (New York: Palgrave Publishing, 2006), pp. 6-8, 41, 59-60 and 100, Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons & Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 2003, pp. 128-130, 137, 173 and 184; L.J.A. Loewenthal, 1978, ‘Amulets in Medieval Sculpture: I. General Outline,’ *Folklore*, 89/1 (1978), pp. 3-12 (pp. 8-9); and Asa Mittman, *Maps and Monsters in
Despite such negative associations, however, passages that include the leopard also described it as being triumphed over by other, tamed creatures. For example, Isaiah 11:6 suggests that ‘The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.’ Therefore, while the leopard was considered evil by nature, it could be controlled.

The final two beasts represented in this illustration, the ‘Bear’ and the ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ Beast, are not mentioned with great frequency in biblical or patristic literature, though they are both associated with evil elements in this context. With regards to the ‘Bear’ specifically, Beatus only acknowledges that ‘the second beast was like a bear’ and that it symbolised the kingdom of the Mede and Persians. Other discussions of bears are also relatively vague, though they do offer some interpretation of the bear’s features. Daniel 7:5 describes the bear-like beast as being ‘raised up itself on one’ with three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.’ This aspect of the bear’s ferocity is also acknowledged by Jerome in his Commentary on the Book of Daniel, where he relates the ‘Bear’ from Daniel 7 to the silver arms and chest of the statue described in Daniel 2:32, suggesting that the ‘hardness of the metal’ corresponds to the ferocity of the bear. Therefore, here, it is likely that the ‘Bear’ was associated with ferocity, carnage and destruction.

The ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ beast is explained in similarly destructive terms. The Beatus Commentary notes that this beast is ‘strong beyond measure...[with] huge teeth
of iron, eating and grinding, and trampling the leftovers beneath its feet.' In commenting on the fourth beast, Jerome notes that it corresponds to the Roman Empire. He explains further:

I find it strange that although he had set forth a lioness, a bear and a leopard in the case of the three previous kingdoms, he did not compare the Roman realm to any sort of beast. Perhaps it was in order to render the beast fearsome indeed that he gave it no name, intending thereby that we should understand the Romans to partake of all the more ferocious characteristics we might think of in connection with beasts... as for the next statement, ‘devouring and crushing, and pounding all the rest to pieces under his feet,’ this signifies that all nations have either been slain by the Romans or else have been subjected to tribute and servitude.

Therefore the fourth, 'Terrible/Wonderful' beast was associated with destruction and terror.

Additionally, the features of this fourth and final beast are used to explain the downfall of evil. According to the text, the beast’s ten horns represent ten evil kings, which will be overtaken by a more powerful eleventh king, represented by the small head that looks directly out at the viewer from the centre of this beast's head, in each of these manuscripts. Daniel 7: 25-27 explains that, upon taking up its reign, the eleventh king will,

speak words against the High One, and shall crush the saints of the most High: and he shall be mightier than the former, and he shall bring down three kings.

And a judgment shall sit, that his power may be taken away, and be broken in pieces, and perish even to the end.

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And the kingdom, and power, the greatness of the kingdom, under whole heaven, may be given to the people of the saints of the most High: whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all kings shall serve him, and shall obey him.

Thus the reign of the eleventh king will lead the world into demise, ensuring the triumph of good. In other words, this fourth beast was associated initially with violence and destruction, but ultimately suggested the fall of sinful earthly kingdoms to the triumphant God.

In terms of the context of the illustrations of the Four Beasts in these Iberian manuscripts, similar ideas and descriptions appear in the early medieval Iberian literature. For example, comparably savage terms were used to describe Muslims. In the Chronicle of 754, Muslims are described as being 'thirsty for blood' (sanguinem sitiens). Attacks by the Persians and then the Saracens were compared to being ‘ravaged mercilessly by rats from the desert,’ and Abd al-Rahman was described as having 'made himself drunk on the blood of Christians.' Furthermore, the writings of the Córdoban Paul Alvarus from the ninth century specifically reference the lion and draw attention to the Christian conception of the Muslims as animalistic. Alvarus described the Muslims as, ‘gnashing their teeth and raging with wide-open dog mouths, hissing with a viper's mouth, roaring with the fierceness of lions.’ In describing Muslims in such animalistic terms, Christian writers de-humanised Muhammed and his followers, asserting that they were something other than human and ‘separate from the world of the Apostolic mission.’

In addition to assigning animalistic qualities to Muslims, these texts also linked Islam to heresy. As Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher explain, Christians did not

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regard the recently converted Berber forces that carried out the conquest as followers of another faith but rather they were considered heretics, deviating from their original belief in the Christian faith.\textsuperscript{31} This is particularly important to Beatus, as his text may have been inspired by the Adoptionism controversy, which Beatus believed to be heretical and which was a point of contention for the Iberian Church, mentioned frequently in key Iberian literature such as Isidore of Seville's \textit{History of the Kings of the Goths}, the Chronicle of 754 and the Chronicle of Alfonso III. Additionally, tenth-century writings such as the account describing the martyrdom of Isaac de Tábanos, for example, present Islam as a heretical belief system. At one point, the text details Isaac de Tábanos' response to a Muslim judge whom he encounters in Cordoba, which reads: ‘Such as man is full of the devil, is promoting devilish delusions...and will suffer the pains of eternal damnation...Why do you not choose the everlasting assurance of the Christian faith, putting an end to the running sores of your detestable dogmas?’

More crucially, the Iberian literature addresses the Babylonian Captivity, drawing parallels to the invasion of the Moors in 711 and the migration of Christians from al-Andalus and into the mountainous regions of northern Iberia. As the \textit{Continuatio Isidoriana Hispana ad annum 754} recounts,

\ldots whatever Troy suffered when it was captured, whatever Jerusalem endured following the utterances of the prophets, whatever Babylon underwent as a result of the words of the Scriptures, and finally whatever Rome lived through when adorned by the noble martyrdom of the Apostles, I shall preserve a memory both in honour and in shame of just as many things which Spain—once delightful, now wretched, experienced.\textsuperscript{32}

Similarly, the \textit{Chronicle of Alfonso III} of 883 relates the Caliph to Nebuchadnezzar, explaining that,

\begin{quote}
The Arabs, having dominated the land together with the kingdom, killed many and brought the rest under their control...Even the city of Toledo, victorious over all peoples, fell in defeat to the triumphs of the Ishmaelites and was subjugated to them. They placed
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}

\end{flushright}
governors in all the provinces of Spain and for some years paid
tribute to the King of Babylon.\textsuperscript{33}

As these early sources demonstrate, Iberian Christians related their migration to the
rocky northern regions of the Peninsula and existence under Muslim rule to the Jews
forced into exile and captivity by the Babylonians.

As was discussed earlier in this chapter, the promises of salvation after the
endurance of captivity and the downfall of captors are key factors in texts that address
the Babylonian captivity. This triumph of good and demise of evil are confirmed in
these images through the ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ beast, as is explained by Jerome who
wrote in his Commentary on the Book of Daniel,

\begin{quote}
In the one empire of the Romans, all the kingdoms at once are to
be destroyed, because of the blasphemy of the Antichrist. And
the [succeeding] empire shall not be an earthly empire at all, but
it is simply the abode of the saints which is spoken of here, and
the advent of the conquering Son of God.\textsuperscript{34}
\end{quote}

Therefore, the image of the \textit{Four Beasts} presents the evils of unstable earthly kingdoms
that overtake one another, a marked contrast to the image of the \textit{Mappamundi}, which
depicts a complete and structured Christian world. In presenting these evils, the \textit{Four
Beasts} also suggest the value in enduring the perils of life on earth under such heretical
organisation. In the same way that Iberian texts relate living under Muslim rule to
enduring the Babylonian Captivity, so too do these illustrations that portray scenes
related to Nebuchadnezzar from the Book of Daniel, both of which are prominently
associated with the Babylonian Captivity and the idea of the eventual triumph of the
faithful.

\textsuperscript{33} ‘Araues tamen regionem simul et regno oppresso plures interfecerunt, relicos uero
pacis uerere blandiendo siui subiugaruerunt. Urbs quoque Toletana, cunctarum gentium
uictris, Ismaeliticas triumfis uicta subcubuit et eis subiugata deseruit. Per omnes
prouinicias Spanie prefectos posuerunt et pluribus annis Baulonico regi tributa
24-25.

\textsuperscript{34} ‘In uno Romano imperio propter Antichristum blasphemantem, omnia simul regna
delenda sunt, 670 et nequaquam terrenum imperium erit, sed sanctorum conversatio, et
adventus Filii Dei triumphantis, de quo dicitur.’ PL 25.0533A-0533B and Jerome, 1958,
\textit{Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel}, trans. by Gleason L. Archer (1958),
\url{<www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_daniel_02_text.htm}> [Accessed 5 June 2013].
II. The Formatting of the *Four Beasts*

The format adopted in these extra-Apocalyptic scenes lends further insight into their meaning. The illustrations included alongside the Commentary text illustrate aspects of Daniel’s dream of the *Four Beasts*, which is recounted in Daniel 7:1-28; these occur on folios 40r, 42r, 61r and 45v in the Morgan, Valladolid, Girona and Urgell manuscripts respectively. The representations of these four beasts, which are found in the prologue to the second book of the Beatus Commentary, place the figures in two rows of two, facing each other. The ‘Lion’ always assumes the upper left position while the ‘Leopard’ takes the upper-right spot, and the ‘Bear’ is found in the lower left corner while the ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ Beast occupies the lower right. This placement parallels the positioning of the four beasts in the images representing the same text, which are found in the illustrated Book of Daniel that was included in these manuscripts after the Beatus Commentary text. These scenes will be referred to as the *Beasts from the Sea and the Ancient of Days* and were illustrated on folios 261v, 258v-259r and 211r in the Morgan, Girona and Urgell manuscripts, respectively.

The Daniel 7 images of the *Beasts from the Sea and the Ancient of Days* from the Branch Ila Morgan and Urgell images (Figures 3.12 and 3.13) are both similar in format. In these scenes, the upper portion of the folio is occupied by an image of the Babylonian king, Balthassar, who is acknowledged as being in power when Daniel has this dream. He sits commandingly upon a throne, which is set beneath a horseshoe arch, around which are figures of the saints whose kingdoms will ultimately triumph. In the Morgan image, the four winds that churn the sea appear to the right and left of the arch and two orbs flank the base of the arch; the Urgell image lacks the figures of the winds. Water flows from the base of the structure, appearing as a river and the four beasts that emerge from that water are positioned to the right and left of it in two rows of two. Again, the position of these figures is very similar to the extra-Apocalyptic *Four Beasts* presented within the Commentary text itself.

The placement of the beasts on either side of a central water source is a common format in early medieval imagery, recalling Fountain of Life imagery. The Fountain of Life was an important Christian motif in the Late Antique and early medieval periods and was interpreted exegetically in several different ways. Cosmos Indicopleustes suggested the paradisiacal roots of the fountain in his *Christian Topography*. He wrote,
‘the fountain which springs up in Eden (Genesis 2:6) and waters the garden distributes the residue of its waters among the four rivers (Genesis 2:10) which cross over this earth and water the large part of its surface.’\textsuperscript{35} Other patristic writers, however, adopted more allegorical approaches. For example, Philo, Augustine and Ambrose interpreted paradise as a figure of the Church or Christ, with the four rivers representing the four Evangelists.\textsuperscript{36} Hrabanus Maurus, an Archbishop of Mainz and a prominent Carolingian writer between the eighth and ninth centuries, described Paradise as Ecclesia and the river as ‘the image of Christ flowing from His Father’s fountain.’\textsuperscript{37} Furthermore, during the Carolingian period allegorical poetry addressed the Fountain of Life in terms of salvation and resurrection.\textsuperscript{38} The \textit{Liber de fonte vitae} by Audradus Modicus, for example, details the fall of man and his exclusion from the Fountain of Life before discussing the divine plan of salvation through Christ and then concluding with a discussion of Easter.\textsuperscript{39}

Thus the Fountain of Life was interpreted in a range of ways, although ideas of paradise and salvation through Christ and the Church, which were symbolised by the fountain, were central to the early understanding of it. As Paul Underwood explains, these concepts of salvation and everlasting life through the Church and Christ, as represented by the waters of paradise, are extended to baptism. This connection is important to representations of the Fountain of Life from the early medieval period, because they are based on baptistry architecture. Perhaps the most prominent example of a baptistry from the Late Antique and early medieval period is the Lateran Baptistry in Rome. This structure, which was completed between 432 and 440 and is the last of


\textsuperscript{38} Underwood, ‘The Fountain of Life,’ p. 48.

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 48-49.
three baptistries on the site, features octagonal walls around a massive baptismal pool that forms the core of the building, which is supported by eight columns.  

These main features of the Lateran Baptistry were adopted in not only other representations of baptistries, but also in images of the Fountain of Life. They appear in a range of Carolingian sources, which include royal imagery, allegorical poems and in religious contexts, and were used in Georgian, Armenian and Ethiopian Gospel Books.  

The most prominent examples of this type of image in manuscript illumination are found in the *Fountain of Life* pages from the Gospel Book of Saint-Médard of Soissons (Figure 3.15) and the Godescalc Evangelistary (Figure 3.16). In these scenes, deer and birds, representative of the faithful, are set in two columns on either side of the central fountain. The majority of, and indeed the largest, figures are directed in towards the water source, which occupies the middle of the page, facing the animals across from them. These scenes of the animals’ movement towards the water of life are topped by an architectural structure, which is notable since the Beatus illustrations also include architecture above Balthassar. A dominating cross tops these structures, overlooking the Fountain of Life and the figures. In the Saint-Médard of Soissons scene, a figure of an eagle is actually rendered in the centre of the cross, functioning in a dominant role similar to that of Balthassar in the scenes illustrated in the Books of Daniel that are included in the Branch IIa manuscripts.

In the case of the images of the *Four Beasts* from the Commentary text, the evil beasts that suggest the domain of the devil are placed in rows facing in towards one another, similar to the *Fountain of Life* scenes and illustrations from the Book of Daniel. In these images, however, they lack the central saving water source and the higher authority represented by Balthassar, the Cross and Christ that overlook the animals in the other images. Therefore, while these malevolent creatures may overrun the earth they are not privileged to enjoy everlasting life, as in the *Fountain of Life* imagery, nor are they organised under a greater authority. Similar to the way in which the image of

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42 Other examples of *Fountain of Life* images are found in the mosaic pavement of the Salona Baptistry, in the Arch of Canons 6, 7 and 8 in the Gospels of Saint-Médard of Soissons (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 8850, fol. 11r) and in Ethiopic Gospels such as Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ethiop. 32, folio 7r and New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. 828, folio 6r. For more on these forms see Underwood, ‘The *Fountain of Life,*’ pp. 45-47 and figs. 28, 29, 53 and 54.
the *Four Beasts* inverts the ideas presented in the *Mappamundi*, the *Beasts from the Sea and the Ancient of Days* and the *Four Beasts* also provide opposing ideas to the common early medieval type of the Fountain of Life. They suggest the opposite of Fountain of Life imagery, expressing the risk of not obtaining eternal life at Judgment by not following Christian guidance while also demonstrating the value in leading a Christian life.

A similar inversion effect occurs with the Daniel 7:1-11 scene from the Girona Beatus (Figure 3.14). This image is formatted differently, occupying two folios, 258v-259r. It has a central circular form that spans the middle of these two folios and contains an image of Balthassar in a smaller, central circle. Figures of the saints line the inside of the central circle as well as the outer perimeter of the larger, circular frame that defines the world. Two smaller circles with floral designs flank this large central orb, and images of the four winds and these fours beasts occupy the four corners of the image. By presenting the *Four Beasts*, which are mystical creatures, in quadrants, with bodies directed towards the centre of the image, the Beatus artist again mimics a very common iconographic format that pairs the four mystical and winged evangelist symbols around a central cross or other central element, the *Maiestis Crucis*.

This placement of the four evangelist symbols in four quadrants and often around a central feature was very common during the early medieval period. Several images from the Beatus manuscripts recall this format, including the *Vision of the Lamb* scenes that presented Revelation 4:6-5:14 from the Morgan Beatus (Figure 3.17) and the San Millán Beatus (Figure 3.18; Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, Cod. 33, folio 92r), which was made in the last quarter of the tenth century. This beginning of the Revelation 4 narrative explains, ‘And I saw in the midst of the throne and round about the throne, four Living Ones...The first Living One was like a lion...the Second...like a calf...the third...had a face as a man, and the remaining Living One was like a flying eagle.’ Accordingly, the four evangelist symbols are found above, below and to the right and left of the lamb, which occupies the central circle in each of these images. Similarly, the image *Heavenly Throng praises God* from Revelation 14:1-10 in the San Millán Beatus (Figure 3.19; Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, Cod. 33, folio 209r) shows the four evangelist symbols flanking a central Christ in the upper portion of the image.

Other Iberian traditions also feature such formatting. For example, the frontispiece of the *Biblia primera* (Figure 3.20, León, Real Colegiata San Isidoro, 2, folio
presents the evangelist symbols within brightly coloured circles that are placed in
the corners of the patterned rectangle that makes up the frame. They are grouped
around the central Christ figure that is also rendered within a circular form. Similarly,
the carved ivory panel on the lid of a reliquary that was made in 1059 and said to hold
the remains of St John the Baptist and St Pelagius (Figure 3.21) also features the four
evangelist symbols around a central lamb.

This layout extended beyond the Iberian Peninsula and commonly was found in
Gospel Books and Evangelaries, especially those from the Carolingian period. For
instance, the evangelist symbols hover two-by-two above and below the mandorla,
which encircles the enthroned Christ on the Maiestas Domini page of the eighth-century
Codex Amiatinus (Figure 3.22). Similarly, the evangelist page on folio 27 of the Book of
Kells (Figure 3.23) features the evangelist symbols in the four quadrants of the divided
page. All formatted in a common way, these illustrations of the four evangelist symbols
express the harmony and balance of the evangelists and their narratives.

As was mentioned in the discussion of the Four Rivers of Paradise from Chapter
Two, four was an important number in medieval text and imagery. It was considered to
express totality and harmony through elements such as the four parts of the world, the
four corners of the earth, the four winds, the four seasons, the four cardinal virtues and,
critically, the four evangelists and their symbols. These connections are expressed in
sources such as Irenaeus’ Adversus haereses, 3.8.11, Ambrose’s third chapter of De

43 This is similar to the Four Evangelists page from the Book of Kells (Dublin, Library of
Trinity College, MS A. I (58), folio 27v).
44 John Williams, ’The Illustrations of the León Bible of 960: an Iconographic Analysis’
45 For more on the interpretations and analyses of this page, see Martin Werner, ’The
Durrow Four Evangelist Symbols Page Once Again,’ Gesta, 20/1 (1981), pp. 3-17;
Lawrence Nees, ’A Fifth-Century Book Cover and the Origin of the Four Evangelist
Symbols Page in the Book of Durrow,’ Gesta, 17/1 (1978), pp. 23-233 (pp. 3-8); and
Martin Werner, ’The Four Evangelist Symbols Page in the Book of Durrow,’ Gesta, VIII
(1969), pp. 3-17.
46 Martin Werner details the biblical features commonly expressed in tetrads. For more
on this, see Martin Werner, ’The Cross-Carpet Page in the Book of Durrow: The Cult of
the True Cross, Adomnan, and Iona,’ The Art Bulletin, 72/2 (1990), pp. 174-223 (p.215);
A.W. Buckland, ’Four as a Sacred Number,’ Journal of Anthropological Institute of Great
Britain and Ireland, xxv (1896), pp. 96-112; Underwood, ’The Fountain of Life,’ pp. 71-
72; and Jennifer O’Reilly, ’Patristic and insular traditions of the evangelists: exegesis and
iconography,’ Le Isole Britanniche E Roma in Età Romanobarbarica, ed. by A.M. Luiselli
Fadda and É. Ó Carragán (Rome: Herder Editrice e Libreria, 1998), pp. 49-94 (pp. 54
and 56-57).

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paradiso and Jerome’s Commentaries on Matthew and the Book of Ezekiel. In evangelist symbol imagery, however, the grouping of the four figures suggested not only the harmony of the four gospels but also the victorious nature of the divine Christ who is forever worshipped by the flanking evangelist representations. As Jennifer O’Reilly explains, ‘the cosmological significance of the number four was...key to the exegetical identification of the four living creatures as symbols of the four Evangelists’ which ‘in turn became an important part of the early Church’s manifold attempts to define and defend orthodox teaching against heretics and unbelievers of contradictions within scripture and particularly of discrepancies between the various gospels.’ In other words, representations of the group of four evangelist symbols functioned as a way of asserting Christianity’s ultimate triumph over all.

With regards to the Branch IIb image, by maintaining this common structure but changing the figures, the Four Beasts again challenge the ideas presented through the highly organised representations of the evangelist symbols. Whilst the four rendered beasts maintain the same sort of positioning found in scenes of the evangelist symbols, the Beatus artists did not maintain the rigid order attached to the examples discussed above. Rather, they deliberately skewed the evil figures, drawing a contrast between the harmony of the evangelist imagery and the evil, heretical beasts. In addition to contrasting with similar iconographic formats, this lack of a firm structure in the Four Beasts presents a marked difference from the majority of other Beatus images, which are commonly contained within a frame and are set against a banded background that helps to organise the placement of figures. Again this distinction between the Four Beasts and the other Beatus illustrations contributes to the sense that these images oppose the suggestions of order and clarity common in early medieval Christian imagery, associating evil figures with disorganization and disharmony. Thus by

48 O’Reilly, ‘Patristic and Insular Traditions of the Evangelists,’ p. 54.
49 Although the lack of a framing device is not consistent in these four manuscripts, there are a few images that were commonly rendered without a border surrounding them. The Woman on the Beast, which immediately follows the Four Beasts and the
inverting common types, the Commentary illustrations emphasise the disorder and dysfunction that comes with heresy and non-believers, highlighting the structure and stability of the Church that offers salvation to the faithful.

Similar juxtapositions between good and evil are developed in other manuscript traditions within early medieval art as well. One of the most prominent examples of this is found in the Leofric Missal, made around 900 for Exeter Cathedral, which presents images of Christ and Antichrist directly across from one another (Figure 3.29). In these images, the facial features, postures and placement of Christ and Antichrist are virtually identical; the primary differences between the two figures are the inclusion of a crown versus horns on Christ and Antichrist, respectively, and the robing of Christ versus the minimal clothing of Antichrist. Certainly the forms of these two figures mirror each other more closely than the four beasts and the scenes that they invert. However, discussion of their presentation of the contrast between good and evil contributes to an understanding of the Beatus scenes. More specifically, in discussing these images, Richard Emmerson suggested that the figures in the Leofric Missal not only ‘invoked the continuing conflict between good and evil,’ but also allowed that contention to be addressed in terms of ‘historical figures who in the past were in opposition to Christ, his people and his Church.’

This element of conflict between the Church and its opposition is a key component of the Beatus images and the literature from the period addresses heresy generally and conflict with Islam more specifically. For example, in addition to excerpts from the Beatus text which were mentioned earlier, Paul Alvarus expressed concerns over participating in other belief systems in relation to beasts. He wrote that ‘when we

Statue, lacks a frame in the Valladolid, Girona and Urgell manuscripts although it is encased in the Morgan Beatus. Additionally, neither the Palm Tree nor the figures of the Fox and the Cock have a decorative frame. In the case of the Palm Tree, which, as will be discussed in the fifth chapter, was designed to show the long path to heaven, it would not be fitting to confine such an image connoting the rise to paradisiacal realms in a box. With regards to the Fox and the Cock, the image is much smaller and somewhat incorporated into the written text and therefore, was not really suited for a large framework. Finally, architectural images such as the Seven Churches, Noah’s Ark and Babylon, for example, often are not framed, although the architecture itself creates a natural frame for the image. None of the images of Daniel are framed, but they are distinctly separated from illuminations of the Commentary and of Revelation.

delight in their verses and in their thousand fables and even pay a price to serve them and to go along with them in their most evil deeds...do we not openly bear the name of the beast in our right hand when our feelings are such?51

In summary, the formatting of the images of the Four Beasts and Beasts from the Sea and the Ancient of Days in the Beatus manuscripts reflects common early medieval representations of the Four Evangelist symbols and the Fountain of Life. Despite the similarities in structure, however, the figures of the beasts are associated with ideas of heresy and evil that contrast directly with the themes presented in evangelist and fons vitae imagery. Therefore, similar to the way in which the Four Beasts images provide opposing messages to the Mappaemundi, these disorderly and aggressive beasts also invert the concepts of balance, harmony and everlasting life through the Church, which are suggested in the types that they alter. This juxtaposition draws attention to the perils of heresy in comparison to the security of the Christian faith.

III. The Statue

As with the Four Beasts, the Statue was based on text from the Book of Daniel, which was included in the Beatus Commentary, rather than on the Book of Revelation. Additionally, the narrative of Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue from Daniel 2:31-35 was rendered in the illustrated Book of Daniel that follows the Beatus Commentary in these manuscripts. In Daniel 2, the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar dreams of the statue that is composed of four parts that are made up of four different materials. This statue is struck and destroyed by a stone that falls from a mountain. Daniel reveals God’s interpretation of the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, explaining that the statue in its four parts represented the four earthly empires that will fall, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar’s own Babylonian empire. After this, Nebuchadnezzar fell to his knees, worshipping Daniel, offering him sacrifices, acknowledging his God and eventually appointing him to a high position.

As there are several parallels to the narrative of the Four Beasts, the Statue serves an essentially supportive and comparative function within this section of this text and in other early medieval texts such as Jerome’s Commentary on the Book of

51 Coope, The Martyrs of Córdoba, pp. 7-8.
In his discussion of the beasts, Beatus transitioned into a brief comparison to the *Statue*. He wrote, that ‘these four [the beasts] are the world. Just as Nebuchadnezzar also saw in his vision a statue as of one in the likeness of a man, while he beheld it as made up of four parts with members of different colours.’ Thus within the Beatus text, the *Statue* was included to demonstrate further the ideas promoted through the *Four Beasts*.

While both the *Statue* and the *Four Beasts* appear on the same folio in the Girona Beatus manuscript (Figure 3.05), the Morgan (Figure 3.02), Valladolid (Figure 3.04) and Urgell (Figure 3.07) manuscripts have them spread over two pages. In the Urgell manuscript, these two images appear on folios that face each other, VIv-VIIr. In the Morgan and Valladolid manuscripts, however, the illustrations were rendered on the front recto and verso folios of the same page. They occur on 40r and 40v in the Morgan Beatus and 42r and 42v in the Valladolid Beatus. Despite these differences in placement, the images are either presented together or consecutively and coincide with the text that describes them, and therefore maintain their associations (Figure 3.09). Additionally, in each instance these scenes maintain visual dominance despite their differences in placement. In the Girona Beatus the scenes are highlighted because they are given an entire folio. Likewise, spreading the scenes over two folios, as in the other manuscripts, allows them more space. In essence, the scenes of the *Four Beasts* and the *Statue* are contextually, textually and visually associated in these works, and this combining of narratives accentuates the ideas promoted through them.

With regards to the promoted ideas, as in the *Four Beasts*, the *Statue* is noted in the text for having been divided into four distinct sections, which were marked by their different materials. Thus in the same way that the four distinct beasts represent the

54 As mentioned earlier, Beatus Commentary specifically describes, ‘a head of gold, which is the first part of the world, chest and arms of silver, which is the second, the third of brass, which is the third part, to wit the belly and thighs, while the fourth part in fact, is the feet or iron and partly of clay.’ (‘...caput aureum, quod est prima pars mundi, pectus et brachia de argento, quod est secunda, tertia ex aere, quod est tertia pars, id est, uenter et femora, quarta uero pedes ferreos et ex parte fictiles.’) Beatus, *Sancti Beati*
four empires and parallel the four sections of the *Mappamundi*, so too do the gold, silver, brass, iron and clay comprise the *Statue*.

The emphasis on distinguishing these materials in the *Statue* is particularly evident when comparing the illustration to *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue* from the illustrated Book of Daniel included in these manuscripts. In many respects the illustration of *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue* offers a more detailed image of the narrative from Daniel 2: 31-35 than the *Statue*; it shows aspects of the story beyond just the statue and the mountain featured in the extra-Apocalyptic scene. In the Daniel image on folio 243v of the Morgan Beatus (Figure 3.25), for example, the left side of the image shows Nebuchadnezzar sleeping on a bed, under which the whole and unbroken statue stands while a section of rock from the mountain on the right strikes its foot. Additionally, however, the broken pieces of the statue are also rendered, demonstrating the destruction caused by the rock. Although these parts of the image are ordered slightly differently on each of the folios, the illustrations of *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue* on folio 195v of the Valladolid Beatus (Figure 3.26), 244r of the Girona Beatus (Figure 3.27) and 198r of the Urgell Beatus (Figure 3.28) also display all of these elements.

Despite the attention devoted to the actions of the narrative, there is very little differentiation between the colours and materials that are specifically cited as comprising the head, chest and arms, belly and legs, and feet of the statue. Even though, of the four images from the Book of Daniel, the Morgan renderings shows the greatest differentiation in colour and area of the statues, the figure of the statue in the Morgan illustration of *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue* is largely composed in a mustard colour, though the hands, feet and head exhibit a peachy tone and the hair of the statue is dark green in colour. These slight differences in colour contrast with the Morgan *Statue* on folio 40v, where bright colours such as red, green, yellow and white as well blank parchment are used to distinguish each material and region of the body. The other scenes of the *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue* from the Valladolid, Girona and Urgell manuscripts provide far less distinction between sections of the statue. The Girona statue is mostly green, with pale hands and face and orange-red hair. The

*a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin*, Vol. 1, p. 222; and Beatus, *‘English Translation,’* p. 413.
Valladolid and Urgell figures are similarly homogenous with either a completely
darkened body or one that is void of any colour at all. Considering the comparatively
little differentiation in the tones used in the illustrations described above, it is clear that
the Beatus artists chose to emphasise the four sections of the *Statue* in the extra-
Apocalyptic scenes; this accentuation of the four parts complements the distinct
qualities of each of the creatures rendered in the *Four Beasts*, again conjuring up
associations with the number four and suggesting totality and wholeness.

In addition to marking the four sections of the *Statue* and numerically paralleling
the *Four Beasts*, there is also a strong Apocalyptic component to the *Statue*. The
Commentary explains that,

> You should clearly recognize that these feet signify the end of this
> world, since the feet are the extreme part of the body. So the stone
> falling from the mountain, that is, the Son of God born of the Virgin,
> that strikes this statue on the feet, is the same as to say that the
> end of the world is about to come, accompanied by the angels and
> worldwide peace, and He Himself is to be King of His Church in all
> the world; this is the meaning of the stone that fills up the world.\(^55\)

Thus, as the eleventh king represented on the ‘Terrible/Wonderful’ Beast brings the
sinful world to demise, so too does the rock that strikes the foot of the statue in Daniel
2:31-35.

This rock has great symbolic significance in terms of the Iberian Christian
context of this manuscript. In one sense, these manuscripts were being produced and
used in the monasteries that were established in the isolated, mountainous regions of
northern Spain. As was discussed in relation to the *Mappaemundi*, the use of the
mountain as a symbol would have been especially appropriate for and meaningful to
these communities that migrated to the north to avoid the restrictions of Muslim rule,
and developed their monastic communities amid the dramatic peaks of the Cantabrian
Mountains.

Additionally, the rock had strong Christological significance during the medieval
period. As is suggested in the Commentary, the rock commonly was used to represent

\(^{55}\) *In his pedibus aperte cognosce finem istius saeculi esse, quia pedes extrema pars
corporis est. Vnde et lapis de monte ueniens, id est, Filius Dei de uirgine, hanc statuam
in pedibus percutere dicitur, id est, in finem mundi uenire, et mundi pacem cum angelis
sociare, et ipse rex in uniuersum mundum suae ecclesiae esse. Hoc est lapidem
222; and Beatus, ‘English Translation,’ p. 413.

Christ. This stems from Matthew 16:18 where Christ proclaims that ‘thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ A number of other passages include this reference. For example, 1 Corinthians 10:4 explains that, ‘And all drank the same spiritual drink; and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.’ Similarly, Ephesians 2:19-20 reads, ‘Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.’

That the rock from the mountain strikes the feet of the Statue suggests that Christ will demolish and overtake all parts of this world. In essence, this image was designed to suggest that regardless of who was in control on earth at judgment, Christ and the Christian cause would reign supreme. Again, this is the same sort of message that is delivered through the image of the Four Beasts and, as both were combined, together they offer a condensed vision of the world that expresses its temporal nature in comparison to the everlasting and inevitable victory of Christianity. Therefore, in summary, these images serve as a reminder of the eventual totality of the Christian faith. The Statue complements the image of the Four Beasts, offering support and reassurance to those experiencing strife in this world. Furthermore they suggest that those who maintain Christian practice and faith in God will triumph in the end.

56 It should be acknowledged that there was much debate over who actually was understood to be the rock of the church. While Matthew 16 declares Peter to be the rock, Ephesians 2 suggests otherwise and therefore there is a range of patristic literature, produced by Eusebius, Augustine, Cyprian, Origen and Tertullian, among others, on the subject.
Chapter 4: Salvation after Trial in *Noah’s Ark*

Morgan Beatus

Valladolid Beatus

Girona Beatus

Urgell Beatus
Commentary Text on Noah’s Ark

This ark, that is built of incorruptible wood, means, as we have said, the structure of the venerable Church, which shall always endure with Christ. The seven souls who are given to holy and righteous Noah, are recognized to represent figuratively the Seven Churches, that shall be spared from annihilation by the fires of judgment, and are to reign together with Christ in the new land. But perchance it may bother someone that there are said to be seven Churches, when the Church is one, extended throughout the whole world ... When each one of us is considered separately, we each have a single gift of the spirit: when however we come together as one, all together we make up the one, integrated, and perfect septiform Church, which is the body of Christ. These are the seven souls who were given to Noah, who symbolically prefigured Christ, during the annihilation by water. It is by water that the righteous are saved, and by the same means are the sinners and irreligious punished. Just so, these seven Churches will be freed by Christ, as we have said already, from the cataclysm of fire at the end of the world, when all nations shall perish, and they shall receive the glory of the heavenly kingdom.

‘Nam arca haec, quae de lignis, inutribilibus constructa est, venerandae, ut dixi, ecclesiae fabricam indicabat, quae semper est cum Christo mansura. Septem animae, quae Noe sancto et iusto / donantur, septem ecclesiarum tipum habuisse noscuntur, quae per Christum excidium iudicialis incidii sunt easurae et in noua terra cum Christo sunt regnaturae. Sed fortassis aliquem moueat, cur septem dicantur ecclesiae, cum una sit in uniuerso orbe diffusa... Quicumque ergo ex numero fratrum in una et in eadem ecclesias consistente habuerint spiritum sapientiae, hi omnes habentes unum carisma unam ecclesiam faciunt: ecclesia enim congregation sanctorum interpretatur...

Et quos spiritus timoris Dei coniunxerit, hi ad septimam ecclesiam referuntur. Cum enim separata sumus singuli, singular carismata habemus: cum autem in unum convenimus, omnes unam et integram et perfectam septiformem ecclesiam, quae Christi corpus est, facimus. Hae sunt septae animae, quae Noe, qui Christi imaginem praetendebat, in excidio aquae donatae sunt. Per aquam enum ut iusti saluantur, ita peccatores et impii puniuntur: sicut septem istae ecclesiae in fine saeculi, pereuntibus cunctis nationibus, per Christum sun tab ignis, ut iam dixi, cataclismo liberandae et caelestis regni gloriam percepturae.’

(For the full Beatus Commentary text on Noah’s Ark, see Appendix 5D.)

Description of the Placement, Style and Features of Noah's Ark

Function of the Image:

- To explain the Seven Churches described in Revelation: 2:1-22

Placement in Manuscript:

- These images appear in the Second Book of the Commentary, which is entirely devoted to explaining the Seven Churches

Direct Textual Link:

- Beatus inserted and relied on Gregory of Elvira’s discussion of Noah’s Ark in this discussion

Physical Characteristics

- With the exception of the Girona image, which was illustrated on two pages, the representations of Noah’s Ark occur on one page
- The arks take a schematised ‘house’-like structure, with a base, two vertical lines walls and then a pitched roof
- The walls are defined by patterned borders which frame the structure, though the Urgell image has a patterned rectangular frame, with the ark defined by thinner red walls
- Inside the Valladolid and Urgell Arks, there are three brightly-coloured levels which the diverse animals occupy; the Morgan and Girona Arks have four brightly-coloured levels, also with animals on them
- With the exception of the Girona image, which features pairs of some animals, the animals are represented singularly
- The roofs of the structures are filled with Noah, his wife, their two sons and their sons’ wives
- In each of these images, there is a gap in the roof, through which Noah reaches to greet the dove
- The raven consuming the corpse is featured in each of these scenes
- While the Arks in the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell scenes stand on their own, the Girona Ark is set atop the flood water, in which bodies, sea grasses and hilly forms are rendered
- Both the Morgan and Girona scenes include a tree to the right of the ark
Placement of *Noah’s Ark* in the Morgan Beatus

*Image of Noah’s Ark*

*Book Two of the Beatus Commentary*

*Vision of God Enthroned*

*Book Three of the Commentary*

*Image of the Church of the Laodiceans*

*Book Two of the Beatus Commentary*

*Three Pages of text Describing the Church of the Laodiceans*

*Seven Pages of Text Before the next image*

*Transitions from Book Two to Book Three*
Placement of *Noah's Ark* in the Valladolid Beatus

*Image of Noah’s Ark*

*Book Two of the Beatus Commentary*

*Image of the Church of the Laodiceans*

*Book Two of the Beatus Commentary*

*Three Pages of text Describing the Church of the Laodiceans*

*Vision of God Enthroned*

*Book Three of the Commentary*

*Four Pages of Text Before the next image*

*Transitions from Book Two to Book Three*
Placement of *Noah’s Ark* in the Girona Beatus

*Image of Noah’s Ark*

*Book Two of the Beatus Commentary*

*Image of the Church of the Laodiceans*

*Book Two of the Beatus Commentary*

*Vision of God Enthroned*

*Book Three of the Commentary*

*Three Pages of text Describing the Church of the Laodiceans*

*Seven Pages of Text Before the next image*

*Transitions from Book Two to Book Three*
Position of the *Four Beasts and the Statue* in the Urgell Beatus

*Commission to Write, Text of Book I*

*Four Beasts and the Statue*

*End of Prologue to Book II*

*Woman on the Beast, Book I of the Commentary Text*

45 pages of text, transitioning into the Text of the Prologue to Book II

4 Pages of Text, Transitioning into Book II of the Commentary
I. Context and Placement of Noachic Imagery

The images of Noah’s Ark (Figures 4.01-4.04) appear in the Second Book of the Beatus Commentary, which addresses the Seven Churches described in Revelation 2:1-22. After his individual explanations of each of the Seven Churches, Beatus introduced a text concerning the Ark, which was written by Gregory of Elvira, in order to discuss them as a group;¹ Beatus clarified in the Commentary: ‘Here begins the exposition of the Seven Churches: Here is explained, by means of Noah’s Ark, the spiritual reason why seven are mentioned.’² In addition to this text, the ark was also addressed in the prologue to Book II, towards the end of Beatus’ discussion of the Church.³ The repeated acknowledgement of the ark and the inclusion of this extra-Apocalyptic illustration suggest its symbolic importance in early medieval Christianity and the necessity of evaluating the Beatus Noachic imagery in greater detail.

Despite the emphasis placed on these images within the Beatus manuscripts, few studies have sought to explain their significance in terms of these works or in terms of northern Iberian Christian culture. The scholarship that does exist on these scenes tends to be very generalised. A number of studies outline the different types of Noachic imagery used in the Late Antique and early medieval periods, explaining their symbolic and iconographic significance.⁴ Additionally, there has been some discussion of the Beatus illustrations of Noah’s Ark specifically, though the majority of it is found in survey texts or monographs of specific manuscripts, which described the stylistic features and placement of the Noachic scenes from those particular manuscripts.⁵

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¹ See Appendix 5D for the text addressing Noah’s Ark in the second book of Beatus’ Commentary.
³ See Appendix 5E for the discussion of Noah’s Ark in the preface to Book II.
Mireille Mentré has written the only article that addresses the Beatus arks exclusively; this text is entitled ‘La Présentation de l’Arche de Noé dans les Beatus.’ Here Mentré developed a formal analysis of the illustrations of Noah’s Ark in the Beatus manuscripts and outlined traditional interpretations and forms of Noachic imagery, suggesting possible sources for the Beatus scenes. While Mentré’s article is helpful in beginning to address these illustrations, its primary aim is to relate the images to other works rather than suggesting their greater significance within the context of these manuscripts or within early medieval Iberia. In contrast, this chapter will extend the discussion to address the relevance of the scenes to the Beatus manuscripts and the northern Iberian societies that produced and used them.

Visually, the illustrations of Noah’s Ark from the Morgan, Valladolid, Girona and Urgell Beatus manuscripts are striking. In the Morgan Beatus, Noah’s Ark occupies the lower two-thirds of the page, with the roof extending into the two columns of text, which fill the upper portion of the page and angle to accommodate the roof of the ark (Figure 4.01). The roof and the overall shape of the ark is distinguished further by the bright red colouring of the bold frame, which is accentuated with short, parallel blue lines which run along the sides of the structure. The bright and varied colours used in the background of the four main interior levels of the ark and the roof level also draw attention to the illustration, providing a striking contrast to the empty parchment which surrounds the scenes and the naturalistic colours of the foliage to the right of the ark. The figures of the animals, Noah and his family are also rendered in bright colours and often in active poses, further catching the interest of viewers.

The Noah’s Ark scenes from the other Branch Ila Valladolid (Figure 4.02) and Urgell Beatus (Figure 4.04) manuscripts were placed in the lower portion of their respective pages, below two columns of text. The borders around these structures are


thicker and are defined by stronger patterns than that found in the Morgan ark. Additionally, the colours selected for the levels of the ark and the animals are brighter and provide more contrast than in the Morgan image. In these scenes there are fewer animals, though they are more clearly rendered and are ornamented with patterns, attracting visual interest. Positioning the illustrations below the text, without a frame and with a considerable amount of blank parchment surrounding them would have created a contrast to the other images in the illustrative programme. Additionally, the relative simplicity of the structure of these arks, particularly in comparison to the surrounding images from the illustrative programme, would have visually accentuated the concepts which were expressed in the text, allowing viewers to consider the significance of those ideas whilst progressing down the page.

Along these lines, the placement of the Noah’s Ark illustrations and their relationship to the text is particularly important to their interpretation. The close affiliation between text and image in these manuscripts has been acknowledged before by John Williams. Williams explained that the illustrations of passages from the Book of Revelation adhere to those narrative components, rather than the exegetical interpretation of the passages developed by Beatus.7 The format of the manuscripts reflects this as the passages from Revelation are followed directly by images of those passages; the interpretation of the text is presented last. Williams expressed this more clearly by explaining that, in addition to being ‘wedded physically,’ ‘each Storia has a special signature arising out of the fact it is a gathering of a particular number of verses from the Apocalypse. Since the illustrations are more or less literal interpretations of precisely these narrative sections, the special signature is passed along to the illustrations.’8

With more specific regard to the placement of these scenes in relation to the text, in the Morgan image, the ark splits the beginning of the interpretatio text, with the dove directing its beak towards the opening lines which were taken from Genesis 6:13-14. The beak points towards the line which begins, ‘I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of timber planks: thou shalt make many nests in the ark, and shalt

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8 Ibid., p. 33.
Thus in this instance, the dove’s beak and the direction of its head draw attention to the words which announce God’s destruction of the evils on earth while suggesting how to remain protected from that wrath.

In the Valladolid Beatus, the olive branch extends from the beak of the dove, with its branches reaching up toward the lowest line of text in the left-hand column. The olive branch nearly touches the word, ‘*inuenimus,*’ which is at the end of the line of text, which reads,

> If we should wish to examine with diligent care and conscientious attention the construction of this ark, by means of which the righteous man Noah was worthy of salvation from the shipwreck of the world, we shall without any doubt find a great sacrament of spiritual grace to be disposed in its very measurements and joining.

The beak of the Urgell dove and the direction of its head also lead the viewer to the words, ‘*et coniunctionibus,*’ that are also featured toward the end of the above text. By directing viewers to this section of the text, these images point to verses which suggest the importance of the structure of the ark and Church in facilitating the salvation of those within.

The illustration of *Noah’s Ark* from the Branch IIb Girona Beatus (Figure 4.03) differs from the Branch IIa renderings in that it occupies two folios and also includes a representation of the floodwaters. In this image, the representation of the ark itself is set a few inches in from the edge of the depicted floodwaters. Even though one animal from each of the levels of the ark appears on folio 102v, the majority of the ark and its contents are on folio 103r. Divided into four levels, which are painted bright blue, pink, orange and light purple, the ark contains pairs of birds, rabbits, goats, monkeys, snakes, horses, camels, cows, lion and a single goat and bear. The upper roof section reveals Noah, who reaches up through the gap in the roof towards the hovering dove, his sons, their wives and two birds, one in each of the lower corners of the triangular roof.

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Represented in an organised manner, the brightly coloured creatures in the ark contrast with the flailing, pale bodies, which are thrown around in the waters below. These waters extend beyond the width of the ark and a tree grows out of them, to the right of the ark structure.

The most direct connection to the text in the Girona image is evidenced by the raven, which draws a corpse up out of the water on the left side of the ark. Here the raven and the hand of the corpse point to the left and are positioned across from the portion of the text which reads,

> What then is to sit on the throne of God, unless he be at rest and with God and to His glory in the presence of the blessed stand unshaken tribunals and to rejoice in the good fortune of that? He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.\(^\text{11}\)

This text is from the explanation of the Seventh Church, which precedes the discussion of the group of Churches in terms of Noah’s Ark. By directing the figures toward this preceding segment of text, the illustration encourages the viewer to consider the importance of hearing and respecting the word of God in order to be in good standing with Him, while pondering the image of Noah’s Ark, which symbolically stands in for the preceding seven Churches.

Therefore, while these images are incorporated into the Beatus manuscripts in different ways, all four of these images of Noah’s Ark are integrated into the text in a way that suggests their prominence and encourages viewers to consider the protective capacity of the Church and the Christian faith.

**II. The Shape and Structure of the Beatus Arks**

Despite the differences in the ways in which these images are integrated into the manuscripts, the Beatus arks share a similar shape, which reveals aspects of their importance and meaning. All four of the structures are composed of a defined base and two parallel walls, which extend up from the ends of that base, eventually culminating

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in slanted planks, which comprise the roof. The sides of the roof angle in towards one another though they never touch, leaving a gap through which Noah extends.

The placement of Noah, who Beatus identifies as representing Christ, in the position of the keystone is significant. During the early medieval period, patristic writers discussed the keystone in terms of Christ, who unites two sides, and His salvation. Although he lived and worked during the twelfth century, the writings of Abbot Suger of Saint Denis perhaps provide the clearest expressions of this, using St Paul’s Letters to the Ephesians 2:20 to describe Christ as that ‘which joins one wall to another.’ Despite the later date of Abbot Suger’s writings, this idea was recognised as early as the first century. Similar suggestions are seen in the writings of Ignatius of Antioch from the first century. He wrote, ‘You stopped your ears against the seeds they were sowing. Deaf as stones you were; yes, stones for the Father’s Temple, stones trimmed ready for God to build with, hoisted up by the derrick of Jesus Christ (the Cross) with the Holy Spirit for a Cable.’ Considering these references, which are made with increasing frequency into the Gothic period, Noah’s placement in the Beatus ark images perhaps offers a reminder of the unifying and protective powers of Christ and the Church.

Furthermore, in terms of the overall form of the structure, the adopted house-like shape strays from more standard early medieval modes of representing Noah’s Ark, which was linked to the term, arca, meaning a box or chest. Admittedly, this term was

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13 References to the keystone in this uniting capacity are very similar to biblical references to the cornerstone or foundation stone, which are found in I Corinthians 3:10-11, Isaiah 28:16, Psalms 117:22 and Matthew 21:42. For more on this see Günther Bandmann, Early Medieval Architecture as Bearer of Meaning, trans. Kendall Wallis (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 70.
14 For further information, see Bandmann, Early Medieval Architecture, p. 70; and Stanislaus J. Grabowski, ‘St. Augustine and the Mystical Doctrine of the Body of Christ,’ Theological Studies, 6 (1946), pp. 72-125 (pp. 89-90).
15 Bandmann, Early Medieval Architecture, p. 70.
16 This emphasis on the portable storage capacity of the arca links it to the structure and study and memory in the early medieval period, which is demonstrated through images which present chests with their doors open and contents revealed, such as in the Portrait Ezra and the diagram of the Tabernacle, both from the Codex Amiatinus as well as the mosaic from the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. Mary Carruthers, The Book of
used in different contexts to express other ideas that are important to understanding Noachic imagery. Most simply, arca suggested a wooden ‘chest’ or ‘box’ for storage, but arcae also were used for transporting valuables and for storing books in early monastic libraries. As a result of the linguistic associations and because the biblical description of the structure suggested a sarcophagus, early images of Noah’s Ark most commonly took the form of a box or chest. Examples of this occur in second-century coins from Apamea in Phrygia (Figure 4.08), the image of Noah’s ark on a gold-leaf glass bowl from Cologne that dates to 326 (Figure 4.09), the third-century frescoes from the Catacomb of Saints Peter and Marcellinus in Rome (Figure 4.10), carvings on funerary monuments or headstones such as the funerary stones from the Priscilla Catacombs (Figure 4.11) and the mosaics from structures such as the Gerasa Synagogue in Jerash, Jordan (Figure 4.12).

While the images listed above are very simple examples of the ark as a single box or chest, the same basic form was developed into more complex structures and scenes.

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17 Arcae are addressed in the monastic precepts of the Regula Magistri, which was composed in the sixth-century. This text explains, ‘Simul etiam arcam cum diversis codicibus membranis et chartis monasterii.’ Another clear use of the term arcae occurs in the writings of Aldhelm, the seventh to eighth century Bishop of Sherborne who wrote a riddle concerning his books, which was entitled, ‘De arca libraria.’ Similarly, the Metalogicon, which was written by John of Salisbury in the twelfth century suggests, ‘Memoria vero quasi mentis arca, firmaque et fidelis custodia perceptorum.’ Additionally, see Carruthers, The Book of Memory, p. 51 and Pierre Riché, Education and Culture in the Barbarian West: Sixth through Eighth Centuries, trans. by John J. Contreni (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1976), p. 461.

For example, the mosaic pavements from Misis-Mopsuestia (Figure 4.13) in Cilicia, Turkey and that from the Gerasa Synagogue (Figure 4.12) incorporate box-like arks into images that present an array of additional figures and details. Admittedly the representation of the ark only actually remains in the Misis-Mopsuestia scene, though the proximity of the date to the Misis-Mopsuestia mosaic and others that are similar to it strongly suggests that the Gerasa mosaic also would have included an ark that took the chest form. As such, what remains in the image shows the variety of animals and indicates the dynamic composition developed in such works that otherwise utilised a simple ark structure.

Even more complex uses of this basic ark form are evidenced in the Deluge and the Departure scenes in the Vienna Genesis (Figures 4.14 and 4.15). These scenes present an ark that is composed of three stacked boxes, which have the general shape of the chest-like ark but are combined and organised in a different manner. Similarly, the ark in the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Figures 4.16 and 4.17) takes a basket-like form that is similar to the open chests seen in the earlier examples. In this instance, the lid, colours and suggested texture of the ark add much detail and complexity to the structure. Despite this range of Noachic imagery that embraced the box-like ark, however, the Beatus artists chose to develop an ark structure that was distinct from earlier ark forms that were commonly used.

The Beatus renderings of Noah’s Ark also deviate from another known, albeit less common mode of representing the ark, the boat. The form of a boat appears frequently in Noachic imagery beginning around 400. The earliest examples of this type are found in the Exodus and Peace Chapels in the necropolis of El-Bagawat in Egypt, which are dated to the fourth and fifth centuries respectively (Figure 4.18). In addition to these early eastern examples, the tradition of showing the ark as a boat occurs in the west. The most frequent boat images appear in carvings on tenth-century Irish high crosses such as on the Cross of Killamery (Figure 4.19), the Armagh Cross (Figure 4.20) and the Cross of Camus-Macosquin (Figure 4.21), but manuscripts such as British

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19 Hachlili, Ancient Mosaic Pavement, p. 65.
21 Lezzi suggests that event though five centuries separate the Egyptian images from those found in Ireland, it is possible that there were other representations of this type and that they were lost, though perhaps the lack of intermediate boat-like
Library, MS Cotton Claudius B IV (Figure 4.22), which dates to the eleventh or twelfth centuries, also feature a boat-like structure. Again, the Beatus illustrators opted not to adopt the boat form despite its precedents in Late Antique and early medieval Christian art.

The distinctive shape of the Beatus arks and their divergence from more traditional modes of representation has been addressed before in relation to the Urgell Beatus. In his monograph on the Urgell manuscript, Antoni Cagigós Soro wrote, that ‘The church keeps being the key theme...Notice the shape of the ark. In this shape, the symbol of the Church stands out above the normal shape of the boat.’

Similarly developed, the Morgan, Valladolid and Girona arks also suggest a church structure much like that used in early medieval Iberian churches. While many of the earliest Iberian churches have undergone significant renovation work, the segments of them that remain frequently reflect the model used in the Beatus illuminations. For instance, churches and chapels such as Santa María del Naranco (Figure 4.23), San Miguel de Escalada (Figure 4.24) and Santa María de Arbazal (Figure 4.25), among others, share similar proportions and the same simple façade with long walls that terminate in a pointed roof. Similarly, it has been noted by archaeologists that the East and West apses in structures such as San Juan de Baños and the chapels in the Santullano in Oviedo (Figure 4.26) were rectangular in form and, contrary to the typical Iberian churches erected before 1000, were not covered by barrel vaults.

These examples suggest that Iberian architecture embraced the pointed roof, which in turn suggests that the Beatus images were designed to strongly reflect the Church.

Placing emphasis on the ark as an image of the Church is perhaps to be expected as Beatus and a range of patristic writers express the connection between the two. As Beatus explains in his discussion of the Church in Book II of the Commentary, ‘Noah’s Ark was a symbol of the Church, as the Apostle Peter says: “In Noah’s Ark a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also

representations also is indicative of the popularity and frequency of chest-like ark structures. Lezzi, ‘L’arche de Noé,’ p. 310.

Cagigós Soro, The Beatus of La Seu d’Urgell, 2001, p. 97. This edition of the book has been translated from the original Spanish text.


now save us” (1 Pet 3: 20-21). Other expressions of the ark as a representation of the Church were also expressed by Tertullian, Cyprian, Gregory the Great, Gregory of Elvira and Isidore, Augustine, John Chrysostom and Jerome, among others. The writings of the fourth to fifth-century writer and Archbishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, offer a succinct summary of the symbolism. He wrote, 'Surely the ark is the Church; Noah, Christ; the dove, the Holy Spirit; the olive branch, the divine goodness...As the ark in the midst of the sea protected those who were within it, so the Church saves those who have strayed.'

These ideas of salvation and protection that are evoked through the relationship between the ark and the Church are further accentuated through the visual characteristics of the Beatus arks. In each of these four images, the outline of the ark is a relatively simple house shape composed of a reddish or brown colour. The simplicity of the structure in these four manuscripts contrasts with the other architectural representations included in the Beatus programme, the vast majority of which present different dimensions and perspectives incorporated into larger scenes within a prescribed frame. For example, the images of the Seven Churches (Figure 4.27) and images of the Temple (Figure 4.28) present architectural structures, within an ornamented frame, through a range of different perspectives that could not be viewed together at one time. Even smaller and seemingly simpler architectural structures were often represented through many perspectives. This is evidenced, for example, in the arches from the image of the Message to the Church of Smyrna from the Valladolid Beatus (Figure 4.29) and the structure in the corner of the image of the Winepress of

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God’s Wrath from the Girona Beatus (Figure 4.30). Thus the single, frontal perspective used in the Noah’s Ark scenes and the amount of blank parchment that surrounds them is notable and distinguishes the images from the Church of Laodicea (Figure 4.31) and the Vision of God Enthroned (Figure 4.32) that come before and after Noah’s Ark in the illustrative programme. As in most of the Beatus illustrations, these scenes that flank Noah’s Ark present multi-dimensional architecture and are separated from the text and the rest of the page by a pronounced frame that encloses the image.

There are a few other examples of architecture that, like the arks, are not presented within one of the common decorative framing devices used throughout the Beatus manuscripts. Additionally, these images are shown through multiple perspectives and are much more complex than the arks; they are thus visually distinct from the Noachic representations. For example, Heavenly Jerusalem (Figure 4.33) was consistently rendered without a frame surrounding the structure. In these images, which leave little blank parchment around them, the centre is depicted from an aerial perspective while the gates and figures are shown frontally or in profile. Furthermore, these gates provide some semblance of a frame around the interior of the space, with the protruding towers of the gates leaving little room for additional framework.

Similarly, the images of Babylon from the beginning of the illustrated books of Daniel (Figure 4.34) present Babylon through a number of different perspectives, with flames extending from the top of the structure and the angel flying above. Again, there is no additional framework around the entirety of the scene. As in the images of Heavenly Jerusalem, however, the complicated system of perspective somewhat naturally frames the structure, which occupies much of the page it is on. Therefore, even though these scenes do not have the defining frames that are found around the majority of Beatus scenes, their use of mixed perspectives and colours lend a complexity to these scenes that is not found in Noah’s Ark images.

The clarity of the ark structure is furthered through the walls that form its house shape. In the Morgan scene, short black lines add ornament to the otherwise red frame, offering a clear and defined outline for the ark, separating the coloured tiers of the ark’s interior from the blank parchment of the rest of the page. Similarly, Noah’s Ark from the Valladolid ark also boasts a red frame, though it is filled with white circles that are

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29 For further comparison in each of the manuscripts, see the pages just before the start of this chapter, which indicate the placement of Noah’s Ark in these manuscripts.
marked by small dots placed in their centres. Furthermore, despite being a manuscript of lower quality, the border rendered in the Urgell image is the most intricate, with thicker and more vibrantly coloured walls that are defined by parallel reddish-brown lines, in the middle of which a zigzagging periwinkle lines form triangular sections that are accented with sets of four yellow and orange squares and rectangles.\textsuperscript{30} Thus the patterns articulated in the walls of the arks continue to draw attention to the house-like shape of the structure and its contents.

The Branch IIA image of \textit{Noah’s Ark} from the Girona Beatus (Figure 4.03) is slightly different in its presentation, though the emphasis remains on the structure itself. Primarily developed on folio 103r, part of the image extends onto folio 102v, where the lower portion that represents the flood begins in the centre of the page and to the right of the column of text that occupies the left half. While the floodwaters are rendered in this version, the size, elevation and colour used in the depiction of the ark assert the prominence of the structure. Unlike the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell illustrations (Figures 4.01, 4.02 and 4.04), the walls of this structure are not ornately decorated, but rather are thin and gray in hue. This thinner frame does not stress the outline of the ark in the same way, but it leaves more room for the articulation of the interior space of the structure, the bright colours of which contrast with the blank parchment around the illustration. Furthermore, the attention and space given to the animals and figures in the ark contrasts with the otherwise innocuous figures and blue of the waters below, perhaps suggesting the vivacity and triumph of those in the ark or Church over the sinful who drowned in the flood. In essence, even though the centrality of the ark structure is not expressed in the same way in this image as it is in the others, it remains the clear and vibrant emphasis in the illumination.

The visual promotion of the structure and its protective capacity is matched by descriptions from pertinent Late Antique and early medieval texts. Beatus begins and concludes his discussion of \textit{Noah’s Ark} with references to the structure. To start, he wrote, ‘If we should wish to examine with...conscientious attention the construction of

\textsuperscript{30} Even though images throughout the manuscript include more traditional forms of interlace, the woven effect used in the Urgell images could suggest the protective powers associated with complex interlacing patterns in the early period. For more on the aspect of interlace, see Ernst Kitzinger, ‘Interlace and Icons: Form and Function in Insular Art,’ \textit{The Age of Migrating Ideas} (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 1993), pp. 3-15 (p. 3); and James Trilling, ‘Medieval Interlace Ornament: The Making of a Cross-Cultural Idiom,’ \textit{Arte Medievale}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Series, 9/2 (1995), pp. 59-86.
this ark, by means of which the righteous man Noah was worthy of salvation from the
shipwreck of the world, we shall... find a great sacrament of spiritual grace to be
disposed in its very measurements and joining." This interest in the structure itself is
maintained throughout the rest of the second book of the Commentary, which Beatus
concludes by writing,

See therefore, beloved brethren, that all the structure of this ark
had to have been a pre-establishment of the mystery of the
worshipful Church, and that men cannot escape the annihilation
of the world, but those who were enclosed within the ark.

Therefore, these illustrations and the Commentary text associated with them highlight
the defined, protective barriers that comprise these arks, representing the Church and
intimating unity amongst faithful Christians enclosed within the structure who are
promised salvation through its protection.

Beyond these structural and ideological connections to churches, the shape of
the Beatus ark can also be compared to the shape of a unique and compelling
monument in northern Iberia. The Foncalada (Figure 4.39), which has been dated to
the ninth century based on its inscriptions, is a pre-Romanesque structure in the centre
of Oviedo. With a generally rectangular base and a pitched roof, the structure is similar
to the arks and also includes several key inscriptions, which offer suggestions of
salvation and triumph that can be useful in evaluating the Beatus illustrations.

With regard to the carvings, the Cross of Oviedo feature at the peak of the roof of
the Foncalada. During the early period, the Cross was widely linked to the Tree of Life
and ideas of Resurrection and salvation through Christ who died on the cross. Such

31 'Si arcae istius fabricam, per quam iustus homo Noe naufragium mundi meruit
euadere...magnum sacramentum spiritalis gratiae in ipsis mensuris et coniunctionibus
inuenimus esse dispositum.' Beatus, Sancti Beati a Liebana Commentarius in
32 Videtis ergo, dilectissimi fratres, omnem arcae istius fabricam in sacramento
uenerandae ecclesiae fuisse praemissam et non posse aliter hominem nisi per ecclesiam
de excidio totius orbis neuadere, sicut et in cataclismo mundi nemo remansit, nisi quos
434; and Beatus, 'English Translation,' p. 450.
33 For discussions on this topic, see: Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler, The Cotton
Genesis: British Library Codex Cotton Otho B. VI (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton
University Press, 1986), pp. 56-58; Martin Werner, 'On the Origin of the Form of the
Irish High Cross,' Gesta, 29/1 (1990), pp. 98-110; Martin Werner, 'The Cross-Carpet
Page in the Book of Durrow: The Cult of the True Cross, Adomnan, and Iona,' The Art
Bulletin, 72/2 (1990), pp. 174-223; and Helen M. Roe, 'The Irish High Cross: Morphology
ideas and the carving on this monument could be paralleled through the prominent placement of the dove and the olive branch at the pinnacle of the roof in the Beatus illustrations. As Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli has suggested in his discussion of Noachic dove imagery from Rome, the inclusion and hovering placement of the dove in such renderings was meant to invoke a crowning gesture that was used in numerous pagan images that also show doves in this manner. Examples of this are found in images of Noah that include, for example, the El Bagawat frescoes, the images from the cubiculum of Marcus Claudium in the San Sebastian Catacomb and the manuscript illuminations from the Ashburnham Pentateuch. As a symbol of peace and the sign delivered to Noah after the flood, the olive branch serves as a symbol of the salvation of those in the ark or, interpretively, the Church. Furthermore, as a suggestion of a tree, the olive branch metaphorically suggests the Cross, raising the same ideas that are brought forth through the placement of the triumphant Cross of Oviedo on the Foncalada.

The inscription carved below the Cross also conveys messages of protection and salvation. It reads: ‘With this sign the pious are protected, With this sign you shall defeat the enemy’ and ‘Lord, put the sign of the salvation on this fountain to now allow the angel knocking on the door to enter.’ Therefore, even though very little is known about this monument, it is clear that ideas of protection from and defeat over the enemy as well as the salvation of the faithful were ideas that were central it. Given the structural similarities between the Foncalada and the Beatus arks, it is possible that the monument could represent a common early medieval Iberian architectural type, elucidating further the ideas promoted through the form chosen for these Beatus images.

Additionally, archaeological surveys have shown that it was built atop a spring, the source of which remains unknown today though it clearly had some significance to

36 This is translated from César García de Castro Valdés’ Spanish translation of the text, which reads, ‘CON ESTA SEÑAL SE PROTÉGÉ AL PIADOSO, CON ESTA SEÑAL SE VENCE AL ENEMIGO. PON, SEÑOR, LA SEÑAL DE LA SALVACIÓN EN ESTA FUENTE, Y NO PERMITAS QUE SE ACERQUE EL ÁNGEL GOLPEADOR.’ García de Castro Valdés, Arte Prerrománico en Asturias, p. 32.
ninth-century Iberian Christians. The visible portion of the structure, which is set on a large slab, also takes a house-like outline that is very similar to the overall form of the Beatus arks. There is, however, an arch carved out of its centre, from which the stream of spring water flows. The deliberate inclusion of water from this rather mysterious source recalls associations with the fons vitae, baptism and the flood that also are invoked through Noachic imagery. The saving floodwaters that cleanse the earth of its evils in the Noah narrative are ideologically, textually and visually linked to the fons vitae, which flows from the Tree of Life. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, this water nourishes the faithful, offering them everlasting life through Christ and the waters of baptism that also purify believers.

There has been surprisingly little written about this structure despite its central position in Oviedo. Additionally, any information which was written prior to the 1994 excavations of the site are considered inaccurate and uninformed according to César García de Castro Valdés. What information there is can be found almost entirely in a series of short reports on the excavation. For more, see: Estrada García and Ríos González, "Excavaciones arqueológicas en la Plaza de Foncalada (Oviedo) 1995," Excavaciones arqueológicas en Asturias, Oviedo 1991-1994 (Oviedo: Principado de Asturias, 1991-1994), pp. 137-146; Ríos González, Estrada García and Chao Arana, 'La Fuente de Foncalada, Boletín del Real Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 144 (1994), pp. 399-422; Chao Arana, Estrada García and Ríos González, 'Tres enseñas de peregrino halladas en Oviedo,' Asturiensia Medievalia, 7 (1993), pp. 101-104; César García de Castro Valdés, Arqueología cristiana de la Alta Edad Media en Asturias (Oviedo: Real Institutos de Estudios Asturianos, 1995), pp. 493-501; and García de Castro Valdés, Arte Prerrománico en Asturias, pp. 30-33.

Patristic writers widely discussed baptism and salvation in terms of the deluge. Cyprian, Augustine, Tertullian and Ambrose all addressed the links between the flood, the waters of baptism and the fons vitae, which flowed from the Tree of Life which was commonly associated with both the wooden ark and the cross. St Cyril of Jerusalem perhaps most succinctly explains these connections by writing, ‘Some say that, just as salvation came in the time of Noah by the wood and the water, and there was the beginning of a new creation, and as the dove came back to Noah in the evening with an olive branch, so they say, the Holy Spirit came down to the true Noah, the Author of the new creation...the spiritual dove came down upon Him at His baptism to show that He it is who, toward the evening, by His death, gave the world the grace of salvation.’ For additional explanations of these connections, see Tertullian, 'De Baptismo,' Ante-Nicene Fathers, trans. by S. Thelwall, Vol. 3, <www.newadvent.org/fathers/0321.htm> [24 June 2013]; Ambrose, On the Mysteries, and the Sacraments by an Unknown Author, trans. by T. Thompson and ed. by S.H. Srawley (London: The Macmillan Company, 1919), pp. 46-63 and PL 16.0391B-0403B; Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments: the Procatechesis and the Five Mystagogical Catecheses (London: SPCK, 1966), pp. 17-25 and 52-67; Augustine, City of God (London: Penguin Books, 2003), pp. 643-644; and Augustine, Contra Faustus Manichaeum <http://gnosis.org/library/contf1.htm.> [26 November 2013]; and PL 42262.
These connections are encouraged further by the similarities found in the shapes of the Beatus arks and images of the *fons vitae*, such as those from the Godescalc Evangelistary (Figure 4.40) and the Gospel Book of Saint-Medard of Soissons (Figure 4.41). Both of these images present a fountain defined by pillars and capped with a peaked roof, which, according to Paul Underwood, provided the architectural foundations for baptistries.\(^{39}\) Even though there are clear differences between *fons vitae* imagery, the Foncalada and the Beatus arks, their shared structural form and the inclusion of water reinforces the associated themes of baptism, the flood and salvation. Thus the shape given to these Noachic scenes lends an implicit sense that faithful will be saved and guided towards everlasting life under the protection of the Christian God.

### III. Representing the Saved and the Damned

Further to the aesthetic and symbolic significance of the structural outlines of the Beatus arks, their role in holding in and confining the rendered figures is significant. While Noah is able to extend up through the roof, the rest of the human and animal figures are tightly enclosed within the structure (Figure 4.05). By representing the figures inside the ark, the Beatus scenes depict the point in the narrative when the figures are *in the midst of the flood*, with emphasis on the faithful who are protected within the structure and *awaiting salvation*. This is vastly different from the moments of the Genesis narrative that are shown in the majority of other Noachic images produced in the Late Antique and early medieval periods. For instance, the mosaic of Noah’s Ark from Misis Mopsuestia in Cicilia (Figure 4.13) presents an empty chest-like ark in the centre surrounded first by a row of birds and then by a row of other beasts. The emphasis in this image is clearly on the animals that have already been saved from the deluge and that now roam free outside of the ark.\(^{40}\) Similarly, the separate *Deluge* and *Departure* scenes from the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Figures 4.16 and 4.17), made in the late fifth or early sixth century, and the Vienna Genesis (Figures 4.14 and 4.15),

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\(^{40}\) Suggestions of a similarly structured scene are present in the mosaic of Noah’s Ark from the Gerasa Synagogue (Figure 4.12). Even though the image is incomplete, rows of animals remain and it is possible to assume that there also would have been an ark, around which the animals dominating the scene would have circled.
which was created in the sixth century, also emphasise the figures outside of the ark, rather than those within the ark, which represent the Church under siege. The Deluge scenes from both of these manuscripts present the writhing figures of the damned, jumbled amidst the floodwaters just outside of the ark. More specifically, the Deluge scene from the Ashburnham Pentateuch is relatively simple in its execution, clearly showing the inaccessibility of the ark to those caught in the flood below it. There are no figures visible within the ark and instead the focus is on the sealed structure and the four drowning giants and cattle that tumble around in the rising floodwaters.

In contrast to the attention devoted to those lost to the flood in the Ashburnham Deluge image, the Departure illustration on folio 10v of the manuscript highlights those saved after the flood. In this scene, the ark maintains the same basket-like structure though the lid is opened and Noah, his family and the saved animals are shown in the process of exiting the structure. In contrast to the contorted, naked figures of the giants on the preceding folio, the saved are orderly, leaving the ark in a calm and organised procession, further suggesting the confident triumph of the faithful who were kept within the ark or, metaphorically, the Church. Despite the differences in messages concerning the damned versus the saved, the emphasis in both of these images is on the figures outside or leaving the ark, a marked difference from the Beatus figures that are tightly contained within the ark.

In the Deluge image from the Vienna Genesis, the rectangular area in which the scene is rendered is blue. This background is developed by horizontal brushstrokes that reveal a slight horizon line separating the floodwaters from the sky. This is also painted in blue, though it is composed primarily of vertical brush strokes and is of a darker shade. The floodwaters occupy about three-quarters of the space designated for the illustration and the ark, which is developed as three distinct box-like layers of black and gray tones that decrease in size towards the top, and is partly submerged amidst flailing human and animal forms in the water. While the ark is given a position of great importance through its central placement and the position of the figures that encircle it, the figures actually occupy the majority of the space allotted to the scene, standing out further with their peachy flesh and pink clothes, which are set against the darker blues and greys of the ark and the water. Thus, as in the Ashburnham Pentateuch Deluge, the scale and colour used in this scene emphasise the agony of those outside of the ark who
disobeyed God. This is in contrast to the Beatus scenes, where the emphasis is on those preserved within the ark.

As in the Ashburnham Pentateuch, the Departure image from the Vienna Genesis also draws attention to the action of leaving the ark. It presents a full, stepped ark, with Noah, his family and the animals leaving the structure on the left side of the page and progressing out to the right in a definite way, unlike the figures of the damned from the Vienna Genesis Deluge image that flail about in all directions. The ark becomes relegated to the left side of the folio rather than occupying a central position, thereby permitting the figures to adopt the central space and march to the right, the direction allocated to the saved. Again, the procession of figures out of the preserved ark and onto purified land becomes the focus of the illustration, upstaging the ark and the sense of trial experienced by those saved within it.

The contrast between the figures outside of the arks represented in the Ashburnham Pentateuch and Vienna Genesis scenes, and those decidedly held within the Beatus arks is alluded to in the Beatus Commentary text. Beatus wrote that, 'See therefore, beloved brethren, that all the structure of this ark had to have been a pre-establishment of the mystery of the worshipful Church, and that men cannot escape the annihilation of the world, but those who were enclosed within the ark [my italics].'

Beatus then continued by explaining that,

...faithful in the Lord, we may be worthy to remain inside God's Catholic Church [my italics]. For thus our rewards will follow, if with every covenant of peace and harmony we shall have observed the laws of evangelical institution, so that we may truly be able to be happy in the presence of God the Father Almighty.

Thus through both text and image, Noah's Ark emphasises that salvation can only be obtained by the faithful, who are presented in the midst of the flood and are awaiting their salvation through the Church.


This is made even more apparent by the juxtaposition of the figures preserved within the ark that are approached by the dove and the image of the raven consuming the corpse that is illustrated just outside of the ark in all four of these scenes. In each of the Beatus illustrations, the dove approaches Noah, who reaches his arm up and out of the gap in the roof to greet the bird. Beatus mentioned this in his Commentary, explaining that,

...the dove who was sent forth, when she could not find any resting place in the world, returned again to the ark. She figuratively represented the Holy Spirit, who, spreading throughout the whole world, being unable to find any resting place among all mankind because of the wickedness of the world, returned back to the ark of the Church...That she brought an olive branch clearly meant a testimony of peace and resurrection, and offering in her mouth and foretelling the wood of the passion that He should have to distribute the rich grace of spiritual gifts.43

This emphasis on triumphant resurrection that is expressed through the upward direction of the figure of Noah greeting the dove, with its olive branch is made more explicit through its contrast with the raven and the corpse (Figure 4.06), which is an exceptional inclusion for the early medieval period. The raven consuming the corpse does not appear in the earliest images of Noah’s Ark, such as those from the Apamea coin or the sarcophagi scenes nor does it appear in the slightly later carvings of the Irish High Crosses, nor in the Ashburnham Pentateuch and the Vienna Genesis illuminations.44 Given the lack of precedent for such an inclusion, its presence stands out in the Beatus scenes.

Biblically, the raven is identified in Genesis 8: 6-7, where it is explained that ‘At the end of forty days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent out

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43 'Columba uero, quae emissa est, cum requiem non inuenisset in saeculo, rursus in arcam reurssa est, Sancti Spiritus imaginem indicabat: qui, cum fuisset in toto orbe diffusus et prae iniquitate saeculi requiem aput omnes homines non potuisse repperire, rursus esset in arcam ecclesiae reuocandus...Quod ergo ramum oleae adtulit, testimonium pacis et resurrectionis perspiciue indicabat et quod lignum passionis ore suo praedicans ac praeferebans pinguem gratiam carismatis tribuere haberet.’ Beatus, *Sancti Beati a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin*, Vol. 1, pp. 431-432; and Beatus, ‘English Translation,’ p. 450.

44 There is some precedent for the image of the consuming raven, as a bird of prey is depicted eating a cow or some other large creature on the fourth-century glass bowl, RGM Glas. 991 in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum in Cologne. In spite of this inclusion, the motif remains unusual.
the raven; it went to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth.’ This was addressed by Beatus who wrote that,

...as for the raven that it says was sent forth from the ark, to return no more, that meant that the impure desires of men should be cast out from the Church, so that they may not return again. For a raven means the desires of deceitful and unclean souls, and the infamy of its black color signifies the illicit vices of sinners.\(^{45}\)

The Septagint, Philo and patristic writers such as Sulpicius Severus, Prudentius, Saint John Chrysostom and Augustine also discuss the raven’s movements, all suggesting that the bird did not return because it was preoccupied with feasting on cadavers that were floating in the floodwaters.\(^{46}\) Augustine expressed this by writing,

That the raven which was released after forty days did not return, either because he was carried away by the waters or was distracted by some floating corpses, signifies man, overwhelmed by the uncleanliness of avarice and [thus] overtly intent on those things which are external in this world, who have to be rebaptized or else they are seduced and held by those people whom baptism kills outside the ark, that is outside the church.\(^{47}\)

Thus with these associations of sin and its placement outside of the ark, the raven opposes the dove and the faithful within the Beatus arks.

More specifically, the location of the raven and the corpse in these images emphasises the inferior status of the figures and their exclusion from the protective ark. In the case of the Urgell scene, the raven consuming the corpse is positioned below the ark, which is protected from such evils by its thick and ornamented border.\(^{48}\) Placing

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\(^{46}\) Gutmann, ‘Noah’s Raven,’ pp. 63-64.

\(^{47}\) ‘Quod post dies quadraginta emissus corvus non est reversus, aut aquis utique interceptus, aut aliquo supematante cadavere illectus; significat homines immunditia cupiditatis teterrimos, et ob hoc ad ea quae foris sunt in hoc mundo nimis intentos, aut rebaptizari, aut ab his quos praeter arcam. id est, praeter Ecclesiam Baptismus occidit, seduci et teneri.’ PL 42.0624 and Gutmann, ‘Noah’s Raven,’ p. 65.

\(^{48}\) While the raven and the corpse appear strangely unaffiliated with the rest of the image, there is no evidence to suggest that the detail was added later. The details of the figure are stylistically similar to other figures throughout the manuscript and it does not appear to have been rendered by a different hand. Notably, the Urgell manuscript has a
the sinful raven beneath the ark suggests that the ark, or Church, triumphed over that evil. Similarly, the raven and corpse that are rendered on the page opposite the Ark in the Valladolid Beatus are embedded within the text at a point that emphasises the unity and strength of the Church. Cutting through the left-hand column of text, the bird and the corpse, with its arm extended, intrude into the section of the Commentary that explains: ‘The seven souls who are given to holy and righteous Noah, are recognized to represent figuratively the Seven Churches, when the Church is one, extended throughout the whole world. Although she is one, she is denoted severally as Seven Churches, because of her seven-fold spirit.’ Additionally, the left hand and feet of the corpse reach out towards and into the right-hand column of text, directing the reader to the section of text that reads:

And those who have been joined together by the spirit of the fear of God are carried over to the seventh Church. When each one of us is considered separately, we each have a single gift of the spirit: when however we come together as one, all together we make up the one, integrated and perfect septiform Church, which is the body of Christ.

Thus in the Valladolid Beatus, the raven and the corpse draw attention to selected portions of text that assert the power of the Church.

The Morgan image places the raven and corpse to the left of the ark. Again, these figures are distinctly separated from the saved figures within the structure by the distinct red wall of the ark itself. In this scene, however, a tree was also included outside and to the right of the ark. Placed on the opposite side of the ark, this inclusion provides additional contrast to the raven and helps to confirm the salvation narrative.

long and tumultuous history, once a victim of them and damaged in places during that ordeal that could, perhaps, contribute to some of the concerned areas around this portion of the illumination.


Despite its exterior placement, the tree’s branches are flush against the structure, maintaining contact with the ark; the contact between the tree and the ark contrasts with the distinct separation of corpse and raven from the structure. Additionally, the tree that is in bloom, features a bird that is the same colour and shape as the dove that greets Noah, which perches in the branches. The fruits and branches of the tree are rendered similarly to those of the olive branch that is found in the dove’s mouth, making it likely that the tree is also of the olive variety.

This reference to the dove and the olive branch suggests salvation after the flood. More specifically, the dove made Noah aware that the flood was over and that he, his family and the animals had survived. Similarly, the olive branch could serve as a reference to the oil used in baptism and the sacraments, thereby furthering suggesting salvation through the Church. The significance of oil in the baptismal rite and in salvation is suggested by Cyril of Jerusalem, who wrote that ‘as Christ was in truth crucified, and buried, and raised together with Him, so is it with the unction also. As He was anointed with the spiritual oil of gladness, the Holy Ghost...so ye were anointed with ointment, having been made partakers and fellows in Christ.’

As John Chrysostom wrote, ‘The narrative of the Deluge is a sacrament (mysterion) and its details are a figure (typos) of things to come. Surely the ark is the Church; Noah, Christ; the dove, the Holy Spirit; the olive branch, the divine goodness [my italics].’

Therefore, by including both of these elements, the Morgan scene not only shows the contrast between good and evil, but also provides a chronological summary of the narrative. When reading the image from left to right, the raven and the corpse on the left suggest the evils that inhabited the earth before the flood, the Ark indicates those being saved during the flood and the tree reveals the promising future for the faithful saved in the flood. Such use of a chronological development is even more pronounced in the Branch IIb Girona Beatus, which differs from the other scenes in its extension over two pages and inclusion of the floodwaters. In spite of the difference, the

52 Gutmann, ‘Noah’s Raven,’ p. 63.
53 The difference could stem from its roots as a Branch IIb manuscript. It is, however, difficult to assert that the sources of these manuscripts are entirely responsible for this dramatic difference as the only example of Noah’s Ark in this format is found in the Turin Beatus, which was probably modeled on the Girona Beatus. Therefore, it is likely that there are additional factors also at play, and one of the most distinguishing features of the Girona Beatus is its richness. Similar to the Morgan Beatus, this manuscript was
distinction between those inside the ark and those outside remains compelling. The rich blue of the floodwaters contrast with the upper levels of the ark and, unlike the brightly coloured animals and people shown within the ark, the bodies thrown about in the Deluge are extremely pale and stand out against the bright blue paint used to indicate their liquid surround. Additionally, while there is disorder and chaos in the lower portion, the ark is ordered and secure through the walls and levels of the structure. The differences in colour and order assert the controlled and predictable sanctuary of the ark and Church in contrast to the unknown and chaotic evils in the domain of the raven.

The placement of the raven in this image is also revealing. It appears, drawing a corpse out of the floodwaters, on folio 36v at the far left of the illumination. The majority of the ark itself was rendered on folio 37r and therefore, when viewing the manuscript, the raven and the corpse are as far left as the illumination allows, kept away from the majority of the preserved ark. Similar to the Morgan image, a tree extends out of the floodwaters to the right of the ark. Again, this tree is likely of the olive variety, as the fruits growing from it are very similar to the olives presented on the branch found in the dove’s mouth. Therefore this olive tree, branches of which Beatus described as ‘a testimony of peace and resurrection, and offering in her mouth and foretelling the wood of the passion,’ is juxtaposed against the raven, which Beatus related to the ‘desires of deceitful and unclean souls.’ Again, similar to the Morgan image, reading the components of this scene from left to right leads the viewer through the chronology of the flood narrative and promises triumph after the suffering on earth.

While each of these Noah’s Ark scenes varies slightly in the placement of the raven and the corpse, there is a clear contrast between the evil figures who are expelled from the ark and the saved, headed by Noah, who reaches up toward salvation as represented by the dove and olive branch. This effort to emphasise the salvation of the faithful and the damnation of non-Christians is particularly significant, because it also is

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a dominant theme in northern Iberian texts from the period. With regards to the deluge specifically, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, which was written in the ninth century, references the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites, which was recorded in Exodus 13:17-14:29 and served as a common trope for the deluge during the early medieval period.\(^{56}\) As Ambrose explained in *On the Mysteries*,

\[
\text{Thou observest that even then was holy baptism prefigured in that passing through of the Hebrews, in which the Egyptian perished and the Hebrew escaped. For what else are we taught in this sacrament daily, but that guilt is drowned and error destroyed, while goodness and innocence remained safe to the end?}^{57}
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Similarly, the text from the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* warns, ‘remember that He who opened the waters of the Red Sea to allow the passage of the children of Israel, buried these Arabs who were persecuting the Church of God.’\(^{58}\)

While this juxtaposition of good and evil, faithful and unfaithful is central to Noachic imagery from this period in general, the focus of the Beatus illustrations is on those enduring God’s wrath and earthly hardship within the ark, rather than the damned. More specifically, the people and animals depicted in the Beatus scenes offer a great variety in terms of the shapes, textures and colours of the figures (Figure 4.07). While this is true for each of these illustrations, the animals depicted in the Urgell scene are perhaps the most distinctively rendered. They are developed with blue, yellow, black, white, purple and orange base colours and then detailed with varying patterns rendered in different colours.

The emphasis on the varied and individualised creatures shown in the midst of trial is unusual, though allusion to this feature of diversity within the ark is made in the Commentary when Beatus related the variety of animals in the ark to the ‘men from all kinds of peoples and customs’ that make up the Church, and continued his allegory by suggesting that the creatures on the Ark ‘had their nests, just as the Church has its many


dwellings.'\textsuperscript{59} Provided this textual reference to the many creatures and dwellings within the ark, it is possible that the Beatus illustrators intentionally used colour and pattern to stress the breadth of creatures and people within the ark, thereby drawing attention to the expanse of the Church’s membership. As was discussed in relation to the colours and textures used in the \textit{Four Beasts and the Statue} and as Elizabeth Bolman expressed in her article, ‘De Coloribus: The Meaning of Color in Beatus Manuscripts,’\textsuperscript{60} even though variety in colour is very much a part of the aesthetic of the Beatus illustrations, there may be larger, still undiscovered significance to the employment of such diverse tones,\textsuperscript{61} including suggesting the qualities of the Church and its members as represented in these illustrations.\textsuperscript{62}

Other features of the Beatus ark imagery further this suggestion of an extensive Christian population. For instance, in the Morgan image, the body of the ark is divided into four strips containing groups of animals (Figure 4.01) and one top roof level, which holds the figures of Noah and his family, flanked by two birds. Notably, this differs from the description of the three stories of the ark from Genesis. The lowest level, which is set against a mustard-coloured background, contains six animals that vary in colour and range from elephants to horses to giraffes and camels, though not all of them are identifiable creatures. The next row is set against an orange backdrop and has four animals, two of which face towards the right side of the image, where the other two interact with one another, either wrestling or playing. The third strip from the bottom again has five animals that also appear relatively active, either engaging one another in conflict or posed with knees bent and front legs prepared for attack. Finally, the fourth and final level of depicted animals presents four birds, two snakes and a rabbit against a deep green background.


\textsuperscript{60} Elizabeth S. Bolman, ‘De Coloribus: The Meaning of Color in Beatus Manuscripts’, \textit{Gesta}, 38/1 (1999), pp. 22-34.

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 29 and 31.

\textsuperscript{62} While colour is not the focus of this thesis, this is an area in the scholarship of the Beatus manuscripts specifically and early medieval Iberian art more generally which has not been adequately explained. Bright colours are a defining feature of these works and future research will hopefully shed further light on its meaning in the Beatus context.
In terms of the three sections, there are a few elements that stand out. Visually, the different rows and the animals placed within them are distinguished by distinct colours and textures, which are developed through the chosen hues and the addition of lines and dots on the bodies of the beasts. Such differentiation between the rows of animals, which are ordered according to the biblical categories of beasts, birds and things that crawl, uses the layers of colour in a way unlike other Beatus imagery, in order to highlight the range of creatures contained within the structure. While the application of rows of bright, thick paint to form the background of illuminations is common and indeed a stylistic feature of these manuscripts that is evidenced in many of the scenes, the bands of colour in these images are distinctly contained within the ark structures. Here they help to articulate the levels of the ark, rather than serving as a more generally layered backdrop, across which portions of the illustration stretch. While there are a number of architectural illuminations that can be used to demonstrate the point, the illustrations of the Seven Churches from the Morgan Beatus (Figure 4.27) show how the layers of colour defined the scene while the architecture is set on top of them, as opposed to these ark images where the structure dominates and incorporates the painted layers into the requirements of the scene.

The emphasis placed on the visual differences between the saved animals within the distinctly coloured bands that fill the Beatus arks is perhaps similar to other examples of early Noachic imagery that also distinguish rows of saved animals from those deemed unfit for salvation. For example, the mosaic from the Gerasa Synagogue (Figure 4.12) presents three lines of animals that are organised according to the biblical categories of beasts, birds and things that crawl, all contained within one thick strip of the mosaic. As in the Beatus images, each animal was rendered with distinct features, again suggesting that those creating the mosaic placed emphasis on the specific and varied articulation of the animals. Furthermore, a pair of lines separates this section of illustrated creatures from a thinner frieze that presents plants interspersed between animals hunting their prey; this scene extends around the perimeter of the image. This separation between the rows has been understood as an articulation of the contrast between pure and tainted animals, tame and wild beasts or even the contrast between animals on earth and those that achieved immortality and an afterlife.\(^{63}\) Thus, in

addition to representing a diverse array of animals, the saved group is distinguished further through the comparison to the preying beasts.

Similar attention to detail is found in the Misis-Mopsuestia mosaic (Figure 4.13), which offers a row of avian figures around the central ark and then a row of other beasts surrounding the layer of birds. While the animals in this scene are ordered slightly differently and less rigidly than in the Gerasa image, each creature is individually rendered. The birds and beasts are assigned relatively naturalistic colour and scale, aspects that help to identify the different species. They also are posed in different ways across the mosaic, with heads turned in different directions and are in the process of carrying out different actions. Therefore, as in the Beatus scenes, great care was taken to give each figure a unique position and set of characteristics, continuing to suggesting an interest in the specific qualities of the saved animals that were represented.

While the Beatus examples and the ark images from the Gerasa Synagogue and Misis Mopsuestia fall into a tradition that demonstrates the individualised figures illustrated in the arks, there are a number of Noachic images that do not place such emphasis on the particulars of the animals, showing that stressing diversity was a stylistic choice. In images such as the Vienna Genesis and Ashburnham Pentateuch Departure scenes, there are certainly clear differences between the flying animals and those on the ground. In both of these renderings, however, all of the animals are generally amassed, lacking a clear sense of order. Additionally, all of the animals, which are rendered in similar tones of white, cream, tan and gray, and march out of the ark in clusters, a marked difference from the vividly coloured and markedly defined creatures of the Beatus renderings. Thus, it is evident that a conscious choice was made during the development of the Beatus images to accent each of the creatures on the ark, creating visual contrast between them and highlighting each specific animal within the row that contains it.

The individual conception of each animal in the Beatus images is pronounced further in the Branch IIa Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell images, which present single figures of each type of animal rather than pairs. This deviates from the text of Genesis 7:15, which explains, ‘Went in to Noe into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein was the breath of life.’ This decided difference between the sets of animals described in the text and the presentation of single animals is also apparent in the mosaic from Misis
Mopsuestia. Notably, this scene presents single animals encircling the central ark. In this image, the ark is central and one from each pair of the various types of animals forms lines around the structure. As in the Beatus scenes, each animal is specifically rendered and distinct from the others, a striking feature of these scenes when considering images such as the Gerasa mosaic, and the Departure scenes from the Vienna Genesis and the Ashburnham Pentateuch, which present the animals in pairs as they exited the craft. In contrast to these Noachic images which more closely reflect the Genesis narrative, the Branch IIa Beatus and Misis Mopsuestia renderings show the variety of species saved from the flood, perhaps promoting the inclusive nature of the Church, which accepted a diverse population, thereby suggesting the strength and expanse of the Christian community.

The Branch IIa Girona image of Noah’s Ark presents most of the animals in pairs, but also includes three single animals, one on each level. The colour used to depict the figures still suggests variety, though the pairing of many of the species conforms to more traditional Noachic representations. While the animals in the Girona ark perhaps lack some of the individuality and diversity of those from the other manuscripts, the details of Noah and his family that were included in the Girona scene assert the vastness of the Church in a more pronounced way than in the other manuscripts.

Before discussing the particulars of the Girona scene, it is worth considering the representations of Noah from the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell manuscripts for comparison. In each of these four Beatus images, the figures of Noah and his family appear in the roof area of the ark (Figure 4.05). Noah, his wife, their three sons Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives, who are mentioned in Genesis are all represented. As mentioned earlier, Noah extends up towards the dove, which symbolises the Holy Spirit, breaking through the decorative frame. In spite of these similarities, there are differences between the illustrations that warrant discussion. Of these four versions of Noah’s Ark, the representation of Noah and his family from the Valladolid Beatus is closest to the Genesis description in that just Noah and his family are presented in the upper section of the ark, against a green background.

The placement of figures in the Morgan, Girona and Urgell scenes is similar to that in the Valladolid image, however the Morgan, Girona and Urgell representations of Noah’s Ark also include birds in the upper level of the ark. In the Morgan image, thin yellow divisions separate this central portion, which contains Noah and his family, from
the corners of the roof, which contain a single bird on each side, set against a white backdrop. Two birds are similarly featured in the Girona Beatus, where Noah and his family again are placed in a central section which is defined by two green divisions that mark off the two corners of the roof that are occupied by the birds. In both the Morgan and Girona images, it is clear that the birds shown in the right corners of the arks are different from those in the left corners. In the Morgan scene, the right-hand bird is primarily mustard in colour, with a white belly and a red face whereas the bird on the left is primarily black or dark brown, with a white belly. Likewise, the bird in the right corner of the Girona roof is gray or a very light periwinkle colour, with a white belly and the bird on the left is black. These colours could suggest a number of different bird species ranging from ravens to partridges, though the images lack any features that might assist in identifying the figures more specifically. Rather, what is clearly apparent is that the birds illustrated on either side of the roof are distinct and different from one another, again highlighting variety within the ark and again suggesting the inclusive nature of the Church.

Noah’s Ark from the Urgell manuscript (Figure 4.04) offers another variation on the presentation of Noah and his family in the roof of the ark. Here, brick-red planks slope inward, defining the roof and leaving triangular spaces between the roof and the corner of the ornamented border. Noah is represented inside this roof section, flanked by five figures, three representing his sons on the right and then two figures of wives on the left, all in brightly decorated robes. Unlike the Branch IIa images, the other two wives are outside of the roof area in which Noah and the other five are situated. They occupy the upper left corner of this top level, positioned to Noah’s right. On the other side, a black bird appears also outside the roof, occupying the upper right corner, which is to Noah’s left. The wives and this black bird occupy the similar spaces on either side of the ark, although the interior of the ark/Church is made more accessible to the wives in this image as the roof does not fully connect to the border on their side of the image. In contrast, the area occupied by the crow is entirely blocked from the interior of the ark. The juxtaposition between the figures of the wives on Noah’s right that are able to access the interior of the ark and this black raven-like bird on the left that is blocked from the protected ark perhaps suggests the saved, who are able to achieve salvation and the damned, who cannot enter the sacred space of the Church.
In addition to the structure of the upper level of these arks, the ways in which the figures are depicted also suggests the extent of the Church. In each of these manuscripts, the figures wear bright robes, continuing to use colour as a suggestion of *varietas*. The representation of Noah in the Girona Beatus (Figure 4.42), however, is unusual. In Girona, Noah is presented with loins exposed, his blue robe split to reveal the entirety of his limbs, up to his hips, which contrasts with the other six members of his family that surround him, three on either side and each figure wearing different colour-variations of robes that offer full coverage of their bodies and legs. This feature of the Girona figure is revealing beyond just its exposure of the lower portion of the figure, as it could suggest ideas of fertility.  

In a general sense, Genesis 9 cites Noah as being the father of humanity after the flood because God instructs Noah to ‘increase and multiply and fill the earth’ in Genesis 9:1. This idea is furthered throughout the ninth chapter of the book as Genesis 9: 7-9 and 11-12 explain,

But increase you and multiply, and go upon the earth, and fill it.

Thus also said God to Noe, and to his sons with him,

Behold I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you...

...I will establish my covenant with you, and all flesh shall be no more destroyed with the waters of a flood, neither shall there be from henceforth a flood to waste the earth.

And God said: This is the sign of the covenant, which I give between me and you, and to every living soul that is with you, for perpetual generations.

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64 The Oxford English Dictionary defines loins as: In the living body. Chiefly *pl.* The part or parts of a human being or quadruped, situated on both sides of the vertebral column, between the false ribs and the hip-bone. Significantly, the Girona Noah exposes exactly that portion of the body, thereby further encouraging this interpretation. Isidore is less specific in his description of the term, explaining that ‘Loins are called *lumbi* because of lascivious lust, *libido*. In men, loins cause physical lust...Whence in the beginning of a speech to Job (38.3) is said: *Accinge sicut vir lumbos tuos* (hird your loins like a man), so in them would be the preparation for resisting, the usual means of controlling lust.’ (Lumbi, ob libidinis lasciviam dicti, quia in viris causa corporeae voluptatis in ipsis est, sicut in umbilico feminis, unde, et ad Job 17 in exordio sermonis dictum est: Accinge sicut vir lumbos tuos, ut in ipsis resistendi praeparatio, in quibus libidinis est usitata dominanté occasio.) PL 82.0409B-0409C.; and Isidore, *Isidore of Seville’s Etymologies: the complete English Translation of Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum*, trans. by Priscilla Throop, Vol. 2 (Charlotte, Vermont: Medieval MS, 2005), p. XI.1.95.
This connection between an exposed Noah, his sons and the notion of procreation is possibly evidenced in the image of the *Drunkenness of Noah* in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11, f. 78 (Figure 4.43), which was made around the year 1000.\(^{65}\) Noah occupies the upper portion of the image and reclines with his genitals exposed. His sons and vegetal imagery are featured below, occupying the lower section. Despite Noah’s naked state as described in the Genesis narrative, this image is unusual, as he is not usually exposed early medieval imagery.\(^{66}\) This unusual way of representing Noah, in combination with the lush foliage beneath him in the image has been understood as a way of conveying ideas of fertility and procreation.\(^{67}\)

Along similar lines, a naked figure was included on folio 200r (Figure 4.44) as a part of the genealogical trees in the book of Kells. Seated, the figure reveals his genitals despite being otherwise fully clothed, a detail of the illumination that has been interpreted as a reference Noah’s procreation, as detailed through the genealogical trees.\(^{68}\) Thus while these images are not directly linked to the Beatus scenes, there are precedents that suggest a connection between the representation of genitalia and Noah’s lineage that comprises the population of the faithful.

Textual parallels can also be drawn between the suggestion of Noah’s loins and the re-population of the earth. For example the instructions given by God to Jacob in

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\(^{67}\) Karkov explains this idea in greater detail, though it should be acknowledged that early medieval commentaries on Genesis do not discuss the episode of the Drunkenness of Noah in terms of procreation and thus this connection remains somewhat skeptical. See Karkov, ‘Exiles from the Kingdom,’ p. 191.

Genesis 35: 11 read, ‘And [God] said to him: I am God Almighty, increase thou and be multiplied. Nations and people of nations shall be from thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins.’ Thus while this is not an explicit reference to Noah’s loins, the concept of humanity extending from that region of the body was expressed in the biblical sources. Similarly Genesis 6: 8–9 acknowledges that ‘Noe found grace before the Lord. These are the generations of Noe: Noe was a just and perfect man in his generations; he walked with God’ just before revealing that God was to establish His covenant with Noah and those in his line. Thus Noah was consistently cited for his lineage, which formed the corpus of believers.

Given the uncommon exposure of Noah’s full naked body and the definite split in the robe of the Girona Noah, it is possible that the image developed in this vein. In essence, the Girona Noah highlights the preservation of the pure and faithful through the ark/Church, whilst again demonstrating the variety of those saved through the range of colour and texture in the animals and in the figures that don robes of different colours. Thus even more than the Noah’s Ark images from the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell manuscripts, the Girona scene emphasises not only the authority of believers but also the benefits of following the Christian God in the manner of Noah.

These themes of diversity and the extent of the Church are prominent also in the Iberian literature, which reveals the desire of the Iberian Church to take in believers of all kinds and to extend their geographic control. For example, the Cronica Prophetica, which was initially written in Oviedo in 883, expresses the Christian desire to re-gain control of the Peninsula and expand the Church. The text suggests, ‘May Almighty God grant this, so that, the courage of our enemies being constantly reduced, the Church may grow everlastingly for the better’ and continues by declaring that ‘with divine clemency protecting us, our enemies’ territory is shrinking day by day and the Church of the Lord grows larger and better. And as much as the honour of the name of Christ achieves, by so much does the shameful misfortune [brought upon us by our enemies]

69 Islamic sources provide references to Noah’s loins and the proliferation of generations; an example of this includes ‘Itad ibn Musa al-Yahsubi, al-Shifa bi-ta ‘rif huquh al-Mustafa’ which was written by Ibn ‘Abbas, a cousin of the prophet.
70 ‘Quod prestet omnipotens Deus, ut inimicorum crebro deficiente audacia in melius semper crescat eclesia.’ Smith, Christians and Moors in Spain, pp. 48-49.
Furthermore, the Chronicle cites Pelayo, the founder of the Kingdom of Asturias, as asking, 'Have you not read in Holy Scripture that the Church of God can become as small as a grain of mustard and can then, by God’s grace, be made to grow again much larger?’ Composed during turbulent times of conversion and threat, these texts indicate the interest in Christian growth, both in terms of membership and re-claiming territory, ideas also developed through the visual characteristics of the Beatus images of Noah’s Ark.

Therefore, the placement, stylistic choices and featured components of the Noah’s Ark scenes assert the protective and triumphant powers of an extensive Church. As with the Mappaemundi and the illustrations of the Four Beasts and the Statue, these renderings encourage viewers to take refuge in a Church that reaches myriad believers and that ultimately will be triumphant. Furthermore, these illustrations deliver a clear message that only the faithful will earn God’s favour, presenting the decided contrast between the figures inside the ark and those that remained outside. Expressed in both patristic and Iberian literature that circulated prior to and during the tenth century, these ideas were prominent within early medieval Iberian culture, suggesting that the Noah’s Ark scenes would have been poignant reminders for the faithful viewing these works of the triumph of the Church over non-believers.

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71 ‘Sicque protegente diuina clementia inimicorum terminus quoddidie defecit et ecclesia Domini in maius et melius crescit. Et quantum perficit Xpi nominis dignitas, tantum inimicorum tabescit ludibria calaminas.’ Ibid., pp. 48-49.

72 ‘Non legisti in scripturis diuinis quia eclesias Domini ad granum sinapis deuenitur et inde rursus per Domini misericordia in magis erigitur?’ Ibid., pp. 26-27.
Chapter 5: The *Palm Tree* as a Marker of the Passage to Paradise

Morgan Beatus

Valladolid Beatus

Girona Beatus

Urgell Beatus
Beatus Commentary Text Discussing the Palm Tree

He is not describing anything else, other than the Church. And he says: ‘palms in their hands.’ He not undeservedly compares the life of the Just to a palm tree: since the palm tree is rough to the touch in its lower part, and as though bound up in dry bark, while in its upper part it is beautiful to the sight and in its fruits; its lower part is narrowed by the binding of its bark, but it widens above by the breadth of its handsome verdure. So also is the life of the chosen, its lower part scorned, its higher part beautiful. The lower part is close to the earth, that it, wrapped in inferior things as it by much bark, while it is oppressed by countless tribulations; on the contrary, in the highest eternity it broadens out by the amplitude of its reward, as if with leaves of beautiful greenness.

‘Nihil est enim quod praeter ecclesiam describatur / Quod autem ait, Palmae in manibus eorum, non in merito iustorum uita palmae conpatatur, quia scilicet palma inferius tactu aspera est, et quasi aridis corticibus obuoluta: superius uero et uisa et fructibus pulchra: inferius corticum suarum inuolutionibus angustatur, sed superius amplitudine pulchrae uiriditatis expanditur. Sic quipped est electorum uita, despecta inferius, superius pulchra: iuxta terram ista, id est, in ima quasi multis corticibus obuolutur, dum innumeris tribulationibus angustatur, in summa uero illa aeternitate quasi pulchrae uiriditatis folis amplitudine retributionis expanditur.’

(For the full Beatus Commentary Text on the Palm Tree, see Appendix 5F.)

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Description of the Placement, Style and Features of the Palm Tree

Function of the Image:

- To further explain the heavenly rewards of the 144,000 Elect who are sealed in Revelation 7:4-12

Placement in Manuscript:

- These images appear in the Fourth Book of the Beatus Commentary, which discusses and explains Revelation 7:4-12
- It follows the image of the Sealing of the Elect, in which those sealed into God’s covenant process, carrying palms

Direct Textual Link:

- Beatus inserted Gregory the Great’s description of the palm tree from *Moralia in Job*, which draws comparisons between the form of palm trees and the lives of the Just

Physical Characteristics

- The ground from which the palm trees in these images grow is clearly rendered in each of these images
- The trunks of the trees are tall and thin, extending well beyond the rendered figures and branching out into palms
- The Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell trunks are segmented, with segments alternating in colour, while the Girona trunk is defined by two vertical lines and has a floral developed against the yellow backdrop of the trunk’s interior
- The trunk of the Girona image evolves into an interlacing pattern just before approaching the palms
- The palms are rendered in bright colours and arch out over the figures; smaller sprigs and clusters of dates can be seen where the trunk meets the palms
- There are six brightly-robed figures in the Morgan and Valladolid scenes, all of whom carry palms
- The robes of the six figure in the Urgell scene were not pained and while the hands of the figures are positioned to hold palms, palms were not rendered in the scene
- The Girona *Palm Tree* shows only two figures, one of which is positioned to the right of the groundline, wearing and loincloth and holding onto a rope, which loops over a small hook-like branch which extends from the tree
- The second Girona figure loops his foot through the end of the rope; he carried a sickle and attempts to climb up the tree
Position of the Morgan Beatus *Palm Tree*

*Palm Tree*

*Fourth Book of the Beatus Commentary*

*Sealing of the Elect*

*Fourth Book of the Beatus Commentary*

Twenty Pages of Text Explaining the Sealing of the Elect

Four Pages of Text Describing the Elect, Transition from Book Four to Book Five

*7th Seal*

*Fifth Book of the Beatus Commentary*
Position of the Valladolid Beatus *Palm Tree*

**Palm Tree**

**Sealing of the Elect**

*Fourth Book of the Beatus Commentary*

**Seventeen Pages of Text Explaining the Sealing of the Elect**

**7th Seal**

*Fifth Book of the Beatus Commentary*

**Three Pages of Text Describing the Elect, Transition from Book Four to Book Five**
Position of the Girona Beatus *Palm Tree*

*Palm Tree*

*Sealing of the Elect*

*Fourth Book of the Beatus Commentary*

*7th Seal*

*Fifth Book of the Beatus*

Twenty Pages of Text Explaining the Sealing of the Elect

No text Separating these Images
Position of the Urgell Beatus *Palm Tree*

_Sealing of the Elect_

*Fourth Book of the Beatus Commentary*

_Fifth Book of the Beatus Commentary_

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I. Contextualising Palm Trees

The Beatus Palm Trees (Figures 5.01-5.04) appear in the fourth book of the Beatus Commentary, which concerns the seven seals as described in Revelation 6:1-17 and Revelation 8:1-5. Towards the end of this fourth book, a section is devoted to ’The Story of the Hundred Forty Four Thousand’ and describes the Sealing of the Elect from Revelation 7:4-12. In addressing this section of the Book of Revelation, Beatus introduced an excerpt from Gregory the Great’s *Moralia in Job*. This text relates the lives of the Just to the structure of a palm tree and thus the image of the Palm Tree appears after about twenty pages of text that follow the double-page image of the Sealing of the Elect (Figures 5.10-5.13), in order to help explain the qualities of the elect that are accepted into the Heavenly Church in the preceding image.

The Palm Tree features in thirteen of the extant twenty-six Beatus manuscripts or fragments, including all four of the manuscripts central to this thesis. As the subject of the text, the Beatus Palm Trees are the primary features of the scenes and deliver the main ideas presented in the text. This is unusual for palm trees represented in early medieval art, as they more typically appear as addenda to larger scenes or narratives that are commonly related to ideas of paradise, resurrection, triumph and Adventus. While, the Beatus Palm Trees certainly illustrate these associations, it will be argued that their form, placement and stylistic details convey other key messages regarding access and entrance into heaven. Furthermore, this chapter will examine the presence of palm trees in early medieval art more closely. By considering their position and placement in works from across the early medieval world, it will be suggested that palm trees are not just symbols of triumph and paradise, but rather that they actually demarcate transitional space between heaven and earth, serving as gateways that mark heavenly space.

1 See Appendix 6G for the text of Revelation 6-Revelation 8:1-5.
2 The Palm Tree appears after twenty-five pages of text that follow the Sealing of the Elect in the Morgan Beatus and after seventeen pages of text in the Valladolid Beatus. In the Girona and Urgell Beatus manuscripts, twenty pages of text separate the Sealing of the Elect from the Palm Tree. See the placement pages prior to the start of this chapter, for further explanation of how these images are situated in the manuscripts with regard to surrounding text and images.
3 It should be noted that many of the manuscripts and fragments are partial, so it is likely that the image also featured in other additions even though those sections are now lost.
Despite the consistent and commanding presence of the *Palm Tree* within the Beatus imagery, very little has been written in terms of their greater significance within these manuscripts. As is the case with the other extra-Apocalyptic images, references to the images occur only in survey publications and in explanatory descriptions from the facsimiles and monographs dedicated to specific manuscripts. This lack of research on the Beatus images, however, is representative of a larger and more general scholastic gap in the study of medieval plant motifs, which is only gradually being explored. As such, this chapter will address the Beatus *Palm Trees* in depth for the first time and will offer preliminary discussion of the placement and function of prominent palm tree imagery from the Late Antique and early medieval periods.

In his introduction of the *Palm Tree*, Beatus wrote that, 'He [Gregory] is not describing anything else, other than the Church....He not undeservedly compares the life of the Just to a palm tree.' Similar ideas are expressed also in Psalm 92, which explains, The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will

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flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, “The Lord is upright; he is my Rock and there is no wickedness in him.”

In analysing this psalm, Augustine explains, ‘paradise stands for the Church itself, as described in the Song of Songs, the four rivers represent the four Gospels; the fruit trees, the saints; and the fruit, their achievements.’ Similarly, Cassiodorus declared in his Commentary on Psalm 92 that ‘the Church embraces her wise people in Catholic unity’ and suggests further that there is beauty and strength in expressions of unity within the Church.

In addition to the association with the Just and the Church that Beatus established in the Commentary text, several other key Late Antique and early medieval associations with palm trees are relevant. Very generally, in Christian belief, history begins in the garden, as it is explained in Genesis 2:9 that ‘the Lord God brought forth of the ground all manner of trees, fair to behold, and pleasant to eat of: the tree of life was also in the midst of paradise: and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.’ In accordance with this verse, trees of all sorts become central factors in the Christian narrative because the consumption of the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was the original sin that necessitated redemption through Christ. Additionally, the Tree of Life signifies eternal life, as according to Revelation 22:14, ‘Blessed are they that keep my commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter through the gates into the holy city.’ The palm commonly was used in illustrations of Eden and took on associations of paradise. Instances of this occur in a wide range of examples, including the León Bible of 960 (Figure 5.14), the image of Adam and Eve from the

Escorial Beatus (Figure 5.15) and the Genesis pages from the Moutier-Grandval Bible (Figure 5.16) and the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Figure 5.17). The use of the palm tree as a symbol of paradise occurred in other traditions as well, as is evidenced by the mosaics from the Dome of the Rock (Figure 5.21).

Beyond associations with the Tree of Life, patristic literature and the medieval liturgy further relate arboreal forms to the True Cross. As images of the True Cross, the represented trees carry connotations of eternal life and the continual nourishment of the faithful through the fruits of the tree and salvation. These connections were so widely accepted that during the early Christian period it was a ‘well-established conceit that the instrument of Christ’s death was made from the tree in Eden,’ and thus there was an interchangeable relationship between the tree and the cross. Pilgrims’ ampules from Bobbio and Monza develop this link using the palm tree specifically, as the trunk of the palm tree serves as both the cross and Christ’s body (Figures 5.18 and 5.19).

Along these lines of salvation and triumph over death, palm trees are also tied to Adventus and Christ’s procession into Jerusalem. The arrival into Jerusalem is documented in each of the Gospels, though palms are only mentioned specifically in John 12:12-13, which explains that ‘when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried: Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel.’ This scene is represented in works such as the Ivory Casket with Scenes from the Book of Kings (Figure 5.20), which was made in eighth-century Iberia. This work features an image of Christ riding into Jerusalem, with figures holding palms as he approaches.

As a result of this affiliation, the use of palms was associated with triumph throughout Christian tradition because, as Augustine notes in his Commentary on John

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13 Ibid., pp. 57-58.

12:13, ‘Palm branches are praises, signifying victory, in token that the Lord was by
dying to overcome death, and with the trophy of the Cross to triumph over the devil, the
prince of death.’ This triumphal tone is mirrored by Isidore, who explained in his
*Etymologies* that ‘the palm is named *palma* because it adorned the hand of the victor, or
because it has outspread branches, like the human palm. This tree is a sign of victory,
with long, beautiful branches, covered with long-lasting leaves, whose foliage remains
without any replacement.’

In summary, it is well established that palm trees were symbolically significant
in the early medieval period. The trees have been affiliated with ideas of resurrection,
triumph, martyrdom and paradise, all of which are important in the arguments
presented throughout this chapter. The following sections, however, will suggest their
further significance. By examining the forms and placement of palm trees in early
medieval art generally and in the Beatus manuscripts, this chapter will argue that palm
trees served a very important function in demarcating liminal space, acknowledging
transitional zones and heralding heavenly space.

**II. The Beatus *Palm Trees***

Beatus embraced the ideas of paradise and victory in his discussion of the *Palm
Tree*. He wrote that ‘The Lord bestows this Paradise and its tree, to those who
overcome. Paradise is the Church. The tree of life is the crucified Christ...these are
given to those who are victorious.’ This interest in the paradiisical component is
particularly evidenced in the Urgell image by the lush and colourful palms that branch
out over the scene suggesting the rewards of heaven (Figure 5.05). The vivid greens,

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15 ‘*Rami palmarum laudes sunt, significantes victoriam; quia erat Dominus mortem
moriendo superaturus, et tropaeo cruces de diabolo mortis principe triumphaturus.*’ PL
35.1764 and Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel According to St. John, and his First Epistle*,

16 ‘*Palma dicta, quia manus victoris ornatus est, vel quod oppannis est ramis, in modum
palmae hominis. Est enim arbor insignis victoriae, procerisque ac decoro virgulto,
diuturnisque frondibus vestita, et folia sua sine uilla successione conservans.*’ PL
82.0609A and Isidore, *Isidore of Seville’s Etymologies: the complete English Translation of
Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, trans. by Priscilla

17 ‘...*istis lignum vitae quod est in paradise Dei, id est, crucem Christi in ecclesia...
repromotionis ingrediuntur caelestia regna.*’ Beatus, *Sancti Beati a Liébana,
reds, yellows, oranges, yellows and blues used to render the palms contrast with the blank outlines of the figures, attracting the eye of the viewer and promoting the heavenly zone. In the Morgan and Valladolid scenes, the inclusion of twelve palms in total, six on each side, furthers this sense that the upper region was meant to suggest heavenly perfection. In his discussion of the 144,000 members of the heavenly church, Beatus emphasised the numbers twelve and six. He explained that,

> Six is a perfect number... from the perfection of this number, God created every creature in six days. These three parts of the number six show us that the Trinity of God made all creation in the trinity of number, measure and weight. Know then that the perfection of this number six, that we so frequently encounter in the Holy Scriptures, is of manifold value...

Beatus also addressed the relevance of the number twelve in terms of its parts, noting that ‘if the number twelve is examined in its parts, when they are added together they exceed it in abundance.’ He went on to explain that as there is ‘perfection in the number six, now six doubled makes twelve. This means the Church is constructed on the number twelve, that is, the Apostles: and twelve multiplied by itself gives 144. For as is said above, the Church amounts to 144,000, and 144,000 is generated by the number twelve.’

In addition to celebrating the heavenly properties of the palm tree and the number twelve, Beatus emphasised the distinction between the lower and upper parts of the tree. He wrote,

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the palm tree is rough to the touch in its lower part, and as though bound up in dry bark, while in its upper part it is beautiful to the sight and in its fruits; its lower part is narrowed by the binding of its bark, but it widens above by the breadth of its handsome verdure. So also is the life of the chosen, its lower part scorned, its higher part beautiful.21

This contrast is made visual in the Beatus Palm Trees as well, where emphasis was also placed on the base of the trees. In these scenes, the long row of curling root tendrils grips the earth, highlighting their grounding in this world (Figure 5.07) and contrasting with the bright and exaggerated rendering of the branches above.22 Beatus identified this feature of the tree in the text as he acknowledged that ‘they who were formerly strong in the flesh study how to be strong in spiritual works...and those who came forth from the root feeble in their beginnings grow strong at the peak of their perfection.’23 Along these lines, the Commentary advocates pursuing a path of divine rather than earthly significance, suggesting, ‘Let the holy liberty of charity not have you weaker than the pursuit of earthly pleasure had you strong in your flesh. There are it is true not a few who, since they wish for celestial things, leave behind the harmful deeds of this world.’24 In essence, through both text and image, the Beatus Palm Trees images draw attention to the separation between heaven and earth and the need to overcome earthly trials in order to reach the divine realm.

Despite the distinction between these two zones that is demonstrated through the roots and palms, the Beatus Palm Trees provide a link between the two—the trunks of the trees (Figure 5.06). These trunks, particularly in the Morgan, Girona and

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22 Miguel C. Vivancos Gómez and Angela Franco, Codice de Santo Domingo de Silos (Barcelona: M. Moleira, 2001), p.120.

23 ‘Mutant quippe fortitudinem, quia fortes student esse in spirituali opera, qui ante fuerant fortes in carne...Et qui tenues a radice inchoationis exeunt, fortes in culminis perfectione conualescunt.’ Beatus, Sancti Beati a Liébana, Commentarius in Apocalypsin, Vol 1, pp. 664-665; and Beatus, ‘English Translation,’ p. 492.

24 ‘...quales fuistis antea in actione uitiorum, ne debiliores uos habeat sancta libertas aeris, quos in carne ualidos habuit usus termae voluptatis. Sunt uero nonnulli qui cum caelestia adpetunt, atque huius mundi noxias facta derelinquent, ab iniqua cogitatione sua cotidie inconstantiae pusillanimitate deficient.’ Beatus, Sancti Beati a Liébana, Commentarius in Apocalypsin, Vol 1, p. 663; and Beatus, ‘English Translation,’ p. 492.
Valladolid images, give the scenes a strong verticality. This is especially apparent in the Girona image (Figure 5.03), where the erect trunk is formed of rigid parallel lines that create a tree that is considerably taller than the rendered figures. Compared to the preceding image of the Sealing of the Elect (Figures 5.10-5.13), which spans two pages and is decidedly horizontal in orientation, the Palm Tree scenes are much narrower, with considerably more empty space between the figures and the top of the tree. The straight, thin features of the trees and the blank parchment around the trunks contrasts with the majority of other illustrations in the Beatus programme, which generally are framed and set against backgrounds of horizontal bands of colour that emphasise the width of the images. For example, the image of First Trumpet: Hail, Fire and Blood, which follows the Palm Tree, is oriented vertically, although the intricate border demarcates both the width and height of the scene. Furthermore, the horizontal bands of colour in the background of the image offset the vertical orientation of the compactly presented narrative. Thus even in the Beatus imagery, which is oriented vertically, the width remains a prominent aspect of those scenes. Furthermore, when compared to other trees depicted in these manuscripts, it is apparent that the Beatus Palm Trees are proportioned to be unusually long, straight and narrow. Trees such as the olive tree feature to the right of Noah’s Ark in the Morgan Beatus (Figure 5.48), the tree featured in the Dream of Nebuchadnezzar from the Urgell Beatus (Figure 5.49) and the decorative tree-like foliage from the Girona Beatus (Figure 5.50) all present trees with comparatively shorter trunk proportions than the palm tree depicted in these works.

In addition to the verticality of these trees, there are several other aspects that set them apart. Further to being comparatively thin in relation to the broad base of the roots and the extending leaves of the palms, the vertical, parallel lines of the Branch IIb Girona trunk eventually develop into a complex interlacing pattern before blooming outward into the flowering palms of the tree. While the outer border of the Girona trunk is blue and outlined in red, the interior section has a yellow base and is ornamented with an undulating, vine-like motif. The trunks in the Branch IIa Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell images are different from the Girona trunk, but share similarities with one another. These thin trunks again extend vertically, supporting the vibrant palms that burst from the top of the plant. Unlike the Girona trunk, however, the bodies of these trunks are comprised of stacked shapes that seem to take a heart form.

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25 To compare these images, see the placement diagrams on pp. 165-168.
Although this suggestion that the Beatus trunks are composed of heart-shaped features is speculative, the forms and colours used in the trunks accentuate the shape. The trunks of palm trees are commonly segmented in early medieval art, as is evidenced in the trees in the Arian Baptistry (Figure 5.28), on the evangelist pages of the Francis II Gospels (Figures 5.32 and 5.33), on the Genesis pages of the Moutier-Grandval Bible (Figure 5.16) and the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Figure 5.17) and on the ampules from Monza and Bobbio (Figures 5.18 and 5.19), among numerous other examples. Furthermore, some of the sections of the rendered palm tree trunks, such as those on the Genesis Page from the Moutier-Grandval Bible and on Ampule 10 from the Monza Cathedral Treasury, somewhat resemble hearts. In the Beatus scenes, however, the double lobe at the top and the point at the bottom of each segment are particularly evident. These features seem to be enhanced further through the use of colour in the Beatus scenes, where the hearts alternate red and blue, orange and red and a red and periwinkle colour in the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell images respectively. Thus in these instances, the sections of the trunk and their shape appear to be noticeably highlighted through colour and the specifics of their form.

Problematically, there is little literature on the use and development of the heart shape. Pierre Vinken has written the most developed study on the topic in his book *The Shape of the Heart*, and Michael Camille discusses the shape briefly in *The Medieval Art of Love*.\(^\text{26}\) Even though Vinken’s discussion of the use of the shape during the medieval period is highly generalised, the evidence and examples he provides suggest that it was most commonly used in the early Middle Ages to indicate leaves.\(^\text{27}\) This practice extends from ancient Greek and Coptic traditions where vines are shown with heart-shaped leaves and images of Dionysus, the God of wine, appear with borders composed

\(^{26}\text{Although Michael Camille addressed the heart 'shape' with which we are familiar with today, his earliest example is from Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodl. 264, fol. 59r, which dates so 1344, and the majority of his examples are fifteenth-century. Pierre Vinken's examination of the shape is a bit more specific but is not without its share of missing material. For more, see Michael Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 1998), pp. 111-119; and Pierre Vinken, *The Shape of the Heart* (New York: Elsevier, 2000).}

\(^{27}\text{Vinken suggests that the use of this particular shape to indicate the corporal heart began around this time or just after. There are, for instance, heart-shaped boxes from eleventh-century Iberia that he identifies as possibly references to the heart as an organ. Despite this evidence, there is not enough to suggest that the hearts in the Beatus trunks were meant to suggest the human heart.}
of a similar repeated heart pattern (Figure 5.39). Similarly hearts appear as decorative, floral forms in the Beatus manuscripts, either in the borders of images or as decorative elements on text pages (Figure 5.40). Given the most common uses of the heart shape, it is possible that the shape was used deliberately in the trunk of the tree to suggest vines and leaves.

Even though this is somewhat speculative, the suggestion that the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell trunks were designed to suggest vines matches up with the vine-like structure contained within the parameters of the Girona trunk. That vines were potentially included in both the Branch IIA and Branch IIB images can perhaps be attributed to the prominent themes associated with vines in biblical and patristic literature. For instance, in John 15:5 Christ proclaims, ‘I am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing.’ In line with this model, the Beatus trees, that are symbolic of the Church, are presented with Christ at their core. The stability of Christ at the centre of the trees supports the faithful who reach out as the branches, eventually bearing the fruits of paradise. Commentaries on John extend these ideas further. For example, Origen wrote on ‘Christ. The True Vine and as Bread’ in his Commentary on the Book of John that, ‘He is the true vine, because the grapes He bears are the truth, the disciples are His branches, and they, also, bring forth the truth as their fruit.’ The identification of the faithful as leaves or fruit and the recognition of Christ as the tree was also referenced by the fourth-century Syrian Church father, Ephrem the Syrian. He wrote that, ‘In persecution the faithless have fallen like leaves which do not abide on their trees; but Christians, hanging on Christ, are like olive leaves in winter, all of them planted wholly on him.’

In relation to the Beatus images more specifically, the connection between the roots in the earth and the palms of heaven is the vine—Christ, which offers a path that progresses towards heaven. This sense of progressing in faith and towards heaven is developed in the section of the Commentary text, which addresses the Just and palm trees. Toward the end of this passage that describes the 144,000, the Commentary describes the most faithful who achieve heavenly status by explaining that,

...the palm tree, as it was said, is broader as its summit, than the size that it began to be at its root. For often the conversion of the chosen is more thoroughgoing at the finish than it promised to be when it began. And if it began more tepidly at first, in the end it finishes more fervently: that is to say, it always judges itself to be beginning, and accordingly it endures untiring in its freshness. Seeing this constancy of the Just, the Prophet says: “they that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

The progression of those who persevere in faith contrasts with the performance of those who falter in their faith. As Beatus asks,

> What am I to call them, but like those other trees, who never rise up in their upper parts like they sprang up in their lower? When they came to be converted, they did not persist in the same way that they began, and in the manner of trees they are broad at their creation, but grow thinner: for after a little while, by temporal trials, they suffer a loss of virtue. Desires for heavenly things languish weakly in them, and those who proposed to be robust and strong, finish weak and sickly. While they progress with an increase of repose, they grow, as it were, to be easily bent.

Thus the ability to progress to heaven was recognised as a feature of the Just, in comparison to those less faithful who could not endure the trek.

This sense of progression and passage that is evidenced in the Beatus *Palm Trees* plays a key role in palm tree imagery from the early medieval period generally. The

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next section will address several different ways in which palm trees marked transitory or liminal regions, suggesting their larger significance within early medieval art.

III. Palm Trees as Markers of Transitional Space

As was mentioned earlier, the palm tree is closely connected to Adventus and Palm Sunday processions. Group participation in Palm Sunday events dates back to the fourth century when members of the faith around Jerusalem would go out to the Mount of Olives and then solemnly process back to the city carrying palms. More formally, Palm Sunday processions and the blessing of the palms were accepted into the Iberian, Syrian and Gallican liturgical traditions first. With regards to Iberia more specifically, such traditions were observed in the liturgy as early as the seventh-century, making it likely that Iberian Christians were the first in Western Europe to adopt these ceremonies that emphasised Christ's entrance into Jerusalem. Rome also accepted these customs, albeit slightly later as Palm Sunday processions were incorporated into the Roman rite between the seventh and fourteenth centuries. Thus beginning in the seventh century, palms were used in liturgical practices throughout the Christian world in order to actively promote ideas of entrance and passage through space. Furthermore, these processions and ideas were a part of Iberian Christianity at a particularly early stage.

In addition to using palms to commemorate triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, their placement of palm representations in early medieval imagery suggests that they also served a more significant function as beacons of transitory points that separate a sacred, paradisiacal area from the worldly. In order to demonstrate this role of the palm tree, the following section will provide the foundations of a discussion on the placement and function of palm trees in early medieval art generally in order to support the analysis of the Beatus Palm Trees that will ensue.

One of the more apparent uses of palm trees to signal entrance and exit occurs in building ornamentation from Armenia and Georgia. Carved onto the lintels of doorways, the palm and other decorative elements mark a space of spiritual significance and suggest something divine as one enters the church. Examples of this are found on the south lintel of the sixth-century basilica at Ereruk (Figure 5.29), the lintel preserved at Kølb and the lintel over the west door of the fourth century K’asal Basilica (Figure 5.30). In the K’asal image, palm trees flank the central Maltese cross and are then themselves flanked by six-petalled rosettes on the outside of the lintel. These features are all enclosed within a patterned border that is composed of repeated circles, which have an intertwining motif between each of them. This interlacing pattern is worth considering in relation to themes of protection as it commonly served an apotropaic function. Ernst Kitzinger explains that doors were considered particularly vulnerable


spaces in the early Christian and early medieval world, most in need of protection from evil forces that might make their way through them. Therefore numerous points of entrance were endowed with apotropaic devices such as zoomorphic interlace, which is evidenced in the carvings on the steps and doorway of the Hypogée des Dunes in Poitiers (Figure 5.41). With regards to the K’asal imagery, it is possible that the inclusion of the palm trees within a fretwork border on the lintel was meant to mark the transition from the outside world into a protected, divine space.

The lintel over the south portal of the K’asal basilica features similar images and themes. In this example, a carved central cross is flanked by two deer that are coarsely carved on top of the palm trees. Vines and clusters of fruit fill the space between the central cross and the animals and palm trees, all of which are surrounded by a twin-stranded fretwork border that is common in Armenian carvings from this period. The fruit, deer and palm trees all suggest paradise and, again, the border could serve a protective function. As in the K’asal Basilica, these indicators of paradise are positioned over the liminal space between the outside world and the sacred space of the church. Placed on the outside of the structure and seen as the faithful entered the church, the carvings anticipate and signal the sacred realm inside the structure and the heavenly destination of the faithful.

Such demarcation of liminal space is marked at other openings on Armenian churches as well. For instance, the lower band of carvings on the south façade of the Church of the Holy Cross in Aght’Amar (Figure 5.31) includes a palm tree just below a window. To the left of the window stands a carved figure of Moses, who is identified by his bare feet. In the story of Moses and the Burning Bush from Exodus 3:5, Moses was instructed to ‘Put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing...’

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40 Kitzinger, ‘Interlace and Icons,’ p. 4.
41 Kølb image is similar to the one in the mausoleum staircase at Maras. Thierry, Armenian Art, p. 61.
42 Ibid., p. 59.
is holy ground.'43 Thus the barefoot figure of Moses in this carving suggests the sacred nature of the structure. To the right of the window, an angel is carved with its back to the window, glorifying the figure of the enthroned Christ, which is further to the right and signifies the divine.44 The palm tree is carved directly below the window, between these two figures that suggest the sacred nature of the structure. As in the lintels from K’asal and Aght’Amar, the palm tree included on the Church of the Holy Cross marks a penetrable point in the structure, acknowledging the transition that occurs from the earthly space outside to the sacred space within.

The use of the palm tree to mark the transition between the earthly and the divine occurs in architectural settings outside of the Caucasus region as well. For instance, palm trees frame those ascending to or destined for heaven in the apse mosaics in the churches of Saints Cosmas and Damian (Figure 5.23), Santa Prassede (Figure 5.24) and Santa Cecilia (Figure 5.25) in Rome.45 In each of these images, Christ is depicted in the centre of the apse, floating above the ground in an area of the sky marked by the pinks, oranges and yellows that suggest sunrise and Christ’s Second Coming. The hand of God extends down, just above Christ’s nimbed head and a phoenix perches on the tree to the right of Christ. As a symbol of resurrection, the phoenix nestled in the branches of the palm tree accentuates ideas of resurrection and entrance

into paradise. Peter and Paul flank Christ and introduce the titular saints, Cosmas and Damian. St. Theodore, identified through the inscriptions, stands to the far right of the figures, just next to the right-hand palm tree while the image of Pope Felix IV is positioned similarly on the far-left. In these images of the Second Coming the palm trees extend up higher than any of the figures, marking the space between the esteemed central figures and those attempting to gain access into heaven who are a part of the earthly congregation.

The use of the palm tree to demarcate the heavenly region within the apse is particularly appropriate as apses themselves were considered portals. They symbolised the 'link between the Church triumphant and the Church militant constructed by the ecclesiastical hierarchy’ and functioned as a 'point of authority' within the structure of the church. As Günter Bandmann suggests, 'The visual organization of the apse exemplifies the representation of God and the ruler. The heavenly liturgy is comprehended and made real during transubstantiation through the image represented in the apse.' Therefore, the apse was considered a distinguished place separate from the norms of the rest of the earthly Church. This sense of the ethereal and divine nature of the apse was developed in early medieval writings, for example, through the expression of the connection between the apse and the sun, which in turn was associated with Christ and the Emperor. Such ideas were developed, for example, by Hrabanus Maurus who wrote of the apse in terms of the light shining through it ('abside...eo quod lumine accepto per arcuus resplendeat') and by the Frankish monk,

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47 The apse mosaics in SS. Cosmas and Damian date to the pontificate of Felix IV (526-530) though there was church re-modeling and restoration work carried out in the seventeenth century that slightly altered them. In spite of these changes, the format of this scene is as it was when it was created initially in the sixth century and also was the basis for a number of later apse mosaics in Rome. More details on the mosaics in SS. Cosmas and Damian and the alterations that were made, see John Osborne and Amanda Claridge, *Mosaics and Wallpaintings in Roman Churches*, Vol. 1 (Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1996), pp. 94-97.


Walhfrid Strabo wrote in the ninth century of the light that is received by the ark (‘Absida Grece, Latina lucida dicitur, quia lumen acceptum per arbum intromittit’).52 Thus the apse was recognised as a distinguished and heavenly area of the Church—a transitional place between members of the Church and figures of authority, which was marked by palm trees in the aforementioned images.

This function of the palm tree as a marker of transition is even more pronounced in the mosaic found in the southeastern apse in Santa Costanza (Figure 5.26).53 While Christ’s authority and the iconography of the Traditio Legis presented in this image have been discussed at length, there is little mention of the palm trees which frame the scene and demarcate the heavenly space. Here the palm trees flanking the scene grow out of what Poeschke describes as huts, from which the lambs process.54 These ‘huts,’ however, bear resemblance to city gates that were common in early medieval civic architecture and which are evidenced on early medieval coins, such as the imperial bulla of Charlemagne, which dates between 800 and 814 (Figure 5.47).55 Thus there is a clear sense that the combination of the palm trees and these architectural structures acknowledges the liminal space between the rest of the church and the heavenly space within the apse, which must be transcended.

This distinguished area within the apse is occupied by the lambs and the scene of Peter, Paul and Christ, who extends a scroll to Peter that reads, ‘DOMINUS LEGAM DAT.’56 In essence there is a distinct acknowledgement of the need to transcend the barriers of earthly life in order to access the divine realm. This is made more apparent through the doors included on the structures that support the palm trees. The space dedicated to the door of the structure on Christ’s right is darkened, suggesting that it is open while the door on the structure to Christ’s left has a door that is clearly closed. The open door to Christ’s right that the sacred space in between the two gates is open and accessible to the faithful, who sit to Christ’s right. In contrast to the door that is closed to sinners on Christ’s left, this opening to Christ’s right offers the faithful the

52 Ibid., p. 94, PL 111.0403A and PL 114.0925D.
53 For further information at Santa Costanza, see Poeschke, Mosaiken in Italien, pp. 52-69; David J. Stanley, ‘Santa Costanza: history archaeology, function, patronage and dating,’ Arte Medievale, N.S. 3.2004 (2005), pp. 119-140;
54 Poeschke, Mosaiken in Italien,’ p. 55.
55 Fore more on city gate structures, see Bandmann, Early Medieval Architecture as a Bearer of Meaning, pp. 89-91.
56 Poeschke, Mosaiken in Italien, pp. 54-55.
chance to pass into the sacred central space, whereas those to the left are unable to make that transition.

Palm trees also mark liminal space in the northwestern apse of Santa Costanza (Figure 5.27), which partners the mosaic discussed above. Where the southeastern scene depicts Christ giving the Law to Saint Peter, this mosaic shows Christ, seated atop the globe, giving the keys to Paul. Christ is positioned more or less in the centre of the image, with seven palm trees to his left. Paul stands on Christ’s right, with two palm trees behind him. The inclusion of groups of seven and two trees further indicate that the apse in a divine area. Seven was considered a sacred number, suggesting divine perfection through the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are outlined initially in Isaiah 11:1-3. These verses explain,

And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness.

And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.

Beyond the Seven Gifts, seven also suggested the Seven Churches and the seven angels described in Revelation, as well as the seven days of creation from Genesis, among other septiform groups.

Similarly, according to Beatus, two represented the two Testaments (‘Duo, Duo testamenta intelleguntur’). In combination, the Old and New Testaments were associated with the Covenant. They offered the prophecy of triumph and its fulfillment when Christ ascends to heaven, thereby making it possible for the faithful to do the same. Additionally, however, a smaller palm tree is found just above the hands of the figures exchanging the keys. This inclusion contributes to the sense that the apse presents a heavenly area as it brings the total sum up to the perfect number, ten. Furthermore, it is positioned over the exchange of the keys that mark the possibility of entrance into the kingdom, continuing to highlight the exclusive nature of entrance into

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such a sacred space and again marks an area of transition between earthly and heavenly regions.

Beyond these architectural examples, palm trees also marked movement into intellectual spaces in early manuscripts. The Genesis page from the Moutier-Grandval Bible, for example, includes a single palm tree amongst a number of other trees. While scholars have not attempted to identify the trees in the image and while it has not been possible to identify all of the trees in this image, there are a few that stand out and that suggest the importance of the specific species that is rendered.\textsuperscript{58} In the case of the palm tree, which was rendered on the far right side of the third row down, the easily identifiable tree was depicted next to Adam, Eve and the serpent. As Adam and Eve cover themselves, it is apparent that they have sinned and therefore cannot enter into paradise, which is demarcated by the palm tree. Thus unable to pass through into the sacred realm, Adam and Eve are forced to answer to Christ’s shaming gesture, living out a life of toil on earth, which is represented in the comparatively barren bottom row of the illumination.

\textsuperscript{58} The facsimile edition of this manuscript offers a detailed discussion of the Genesis page, written by Alfred Schmid. Despite being relatively thorough, Schmid essentially ignores the trees, suggesting that they are important because they are incorporated into the scene in various ways; his discussion does not extend beyond indicating that additional work needs to be conducted in order to understand what they contribute to the image.

In attempting to gain a sense of the types of trees that are placed throughout this image, several botanists were consulted; they could not, however identify all of the trees, nor were they in agreement that it was possible to identify the represented species. As Dr Henry Noltie suggested in an email, ‘In the series on the Garden of Eden, I think it is impossible to identify species (and probably a mistake to try).’ Nonetheless, other experts were able to offer more specific suggestions. For instance Peter Brownless of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh suggested that the tree on the right side of the second row was to be an olive tree. He also suggested that the tree on the far left of the third row down was a grapevine, though it looks more like a fig tree, in my opinion. Finally, Dr Catherine Kidner of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and the University of Edinburgh suggested that the first tree in the second row was meant to be some sort of pine tree. Given that there were features that these experts could identify, it seems that the rendered trees were meant to be display certain qualities associated with specific species in response to the illuminated scenes. This has not been previously discussed, but for general identification of the moments of Genesis represented in the frontispiece, see Herbert Kessler, \textit{The Illustrated Bibles from Tours} (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 14-35; and Alfred A. Schmid, ‘Die Kanontafeln und die Miniaturen,’ \textit{Die Bibel von Moutier-Grandval British: Museum Add. MS. 10546} (Bern: Verein Schweizerischer Lithographiebesitzer, 1971), pp. 149-185 (pp. 165-166).
Similarly, the Genesis page from the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Figure 5.17) also includes a range of foliage, with the palm tree as the most clearly identifiable form. On this folio, there are eleven large trees and four smaller plants all of which, save the date palm, are stylized and unidentifiable vegetal forms. As such, the non-palm tree forms in the manuscript become what Dorothy Verkerk describes as ‘filler’ elements that generally are more decorative or are a part of the background that helps to develop the scenery rather than serving a symbolic function. The palm tree in the image, however, stands apart from the other examples of trees because it is not depicted in the stylised way that is common in sixth-century art. It is positioned next to Cain who throws his hands back as God confronts him for killing Abel. Based on the biblical narrative and the positioning of the figure and the tree, Verkerk suggests the palm tree was designed to substitute for the deceased brother, signifying both martyrdom and a triumphant reward in paradise, as Abel often is considered the first martyr and was compensated appropriately by God. Verkerk proposes further that the Ashburnham scene also could represent paradise lost as the sinner Cain throws his hands back towards the tree of paradise that remains out of his reach. Thus in this instance the palm tree becomes a signifier not only of paradise but also of denied entrance into that space, indicative of the heavenly region and the limited access into it.

Manuscripts also included palm trees as markers of entrance into the spiritual realm of the text and cogitation. Prominent examples are found on the evangelist pages from Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 257 (the Gospel Book of Francis II), which is dated to the third quarter of the ninth century. In the case of the Mark, Luke and John pages, two palm trees are presented on the recto of the following folio facing the portraits of the evangelist on the verso folios (Figure 5.32). In each of these instances, the palm trees flank a shorter tree, possibly an acacia, all of which are shown beneath

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59 Verkerk identifies Weitzmann as first noting the ‘filler’ elements that are used throughout the manuscript. Verkerk, *Early Medieval Bible Illumination*, p. 115. See also Kurt Weitzmann, *Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1977), pp. 118-125.

60 Verkerk cites Weitzmann’s discussion of the apse mosaic in S. Apollinare in Classe from Weitzmann’s *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century* and the discussion of the creation of plants in the Cotton Genesis from Weitzmann and Kessler’s *The Cotton Genesis* in deciphering the stylized properties of some of these images. Verkerk, *Early Medieval Bible Illumination*, p. 115.

61 Ibid., p. 114.

the appropriate evangelist symbol that occupies the centre of a circular form at the top of the illustration. While it is very difficult to discern the species of the central tree, it would be significant if it were of the acacia variety as Exodus 25:10 details how to build the Tabernacle, instructing, ‘Frame an ark of setim [acacia] wood, the length whereof shall be of two cubits and a half: the breadth, a cubit and a half: the height, likewise, a cubit and a half.’\(^63\) Therefore, if the tree in between the two palm trees is an acacia, then they distinguish the space around the material associated with the Tabernacle, which Augustine described in his Commentary on Psalm 42 as the house of God, expressing further that ‘God’s Tabernacle on earth is the faithful.’\(^64\)

The folios that show the actual portraits of the evangelists also suggest salvation and heaven. On these pages, the figures are seated beneath arches that are ornamented with interlacing patterns, poring over their respective gospel books. Two trees, similar to the non-palm type on the opposite pages, flank the figures. While the majority of the page also is set against a blue backdrop, the upper portion of the background is distinguished from the rest by a thin row of clouds, above which the sky takes on pink, yellow and orange hues with faint traces of twisting, light blue clouds, suggesting the Second Coming. Similar to the representation of the Second Coming scenes rendered in the Roman mosaics discussed earlier, these images of the evangelists suggest the spiritual triumph of the evangelists and the faithful who read their texts at the end of time, noting their eventual passage into heaven.

While Matthew’s page (Figure 5.33) is not spread over two pages, it is structured similarly to the other evangelist pages in this manuscript. Depicted on the recto page, \(^63\) After consulting a number of botanists and those specialising in horticulture, only Dr Catherine Kidner of the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh was able to provide a label for the species. Others asked did not attempt identification and Dr Henry Noltie, also of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and the University of Edinburgh suggested that this central tree was ‘unknowable.’ As such, while the identification of the tree as an acacia supports this argument, it should be considered carefully.

the scene shows Matthew flanked by palm trees, hunched over and writing his gospel; this page faces an image of Christ on the Cross being lanced by Longinus. Rather than finding Matthew’s symbol of the man in the roundel near the top of the image, it now appears in a hemispheric form that extends from the upper border of the rectangular scene. Again, while most of background is periwinkle or light blue, the upper section of the semi-circular shape that contains the symbol of the man develops into a daybreak mixture of light pinks, yellows and oranges of the Second Coming. Again, interlace with the golden borders and looping animal forms occupies the four corners, suggesting protection within the borders of the image.

Even though the foliage assumes a prominent position on these evangelist pages, there is little discussion of it. In the instances when the trees have been discussed, scholars analysed the stylistic properties in order to demonstrate a link between this manuscript and others produced at Tours. With regards to the palm trees, perhaps it has been assumed that they indicate paradise and the triumph of the faith, ideas that are expressed explicitly in the gospels and that are suggested by the colours that suggest the Second Coming at the top of the portrait pages. Certainly these are related connections, however, their placement and context add layers of probably meaning to them.

More specifically, these pages preface the evangelists and their books, demarcating the entrance into the gospel text. Similar to the fretwork carved into the Armenian church lintels, these palm tree scenes are encased within protective interlacing borders that suggest a secure and sacred space into which the reader can enter intellectually. This sense of entrance is particularly compelling in the Mark, Luke and John pages which feature arches and columns that represent an architectural frame for entrance and exit. Thus, in line with Michelle Brown’s suggestions in ‘The Book as Sacred Space,’ these evangelist pages facilitate access to the Christian narrative and offer a protected doorway through which one can enter into Christian practice.

65 For information on the manuscript and these images in particular, see Joachim E. Gaehde and Florentine Mütherich, Carolingian Painting (London: Chatto & Windus, 1977), p. 93; and Laffitte and Denoël 2007, pp. 211-212.
67 In her article, Michelle Brown suggests that manuscript illuminations offered a way of transcending the physical world and entering into a spiritual and contemplative place.
Ideologically affiliated with trees, crosses served an important role in demarcating liminal spaces throughout Christian traditions generally and in Iberia specifically. For instance, Augustine noted that the Hebrews marked the cross on doorposts to protect their children from the last plague that was meant to wipe out the Egyptians.68 Similarly, making the sign of the Cross was first encountered by Christians when they entered into the Christian community.69 With regards to Iberia more specifically, the Cross of Oviedo marks a number of transitional points into sacred realms. For example, the inclusion of the Cross of Oviedo (Figures 5.43 and 5.44) at the beginning of Iberian Bibles and editions of the Beatus Commentary herald the entrance into the text.70

Furthermore, the Victory Cross, as it also was known, is associated with entrances made by prominent Iberian rulers of the early medieval period. For instance, it was carried before Alfonso the Great (c. 848-910), the most famous leader of the early Christian Reconquest, during one of his most celebrated victories against the Muslims.71 As a result of Alfonso’s actions, the so-called Victory Cross became a symbol of Christian resistance and conquest, a fact which is made evident in some of the manuscripts by the inclusion of an inscription instructing the pious to hold up the sign of the victory cross to conquer the enemy.72 The function of the Victory Cross in this capacity is perhaps most clearly evidenced in the continued use of the most famous of these crosses, the

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69 Ibid., p. 84.
70 Parallels could also be drawn between the function of crosses in the Iberian traditions and cross-carpet pages included in Coptic and Insular manuscripts, namely the Lindisfarne Gospels. These cross-carpet pages are the ‘embodiment of the crux gemmata,’ according the Michelle Brown and likely ‘served something of a prayer labyrinths,’ thereby facilitating entrance into spiritual consideration of the text. For more on this see Michelle Brown, The Lindisfarne Gospels (London: The British Library, 2003), pp. 316 and 325.
bejewelled Cruz de los Ángeles that remains in the Cámara Santa of the Cathedral of San Salvador in Oviedo (Figure 5.45). This rich and ornate gold cross was not designed to sit on or hang above the altar functionally and therefore probably was used in processions, much in the same way that the relic of the True Cross was used in the Good Friday procession to the basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem as early as 700. While there are a number of reasons to use a cross in this manner, be they apotropaic or otherwise, it is important to recognise that this most famous example of the Cross of Oviedo was and remains intimately associated with triumphant procession into a sacred structure during a religious occasion. In essence this revered cross, which, through its form is endowed with associations to trees, was tied to ideas of entrance in early medieval Iberian culture, contributing to this emerging idea that palm trees marked the progression into a sacred space.

Spiritual movement and change is also suggested by palm trees, as is evidenced in the mosaic in the Dome of the Arian Baptistry in Ravenna (Figure 5.28). Here, Christ’s baptism occupies the centre of the dome, with John the Baptist, God the father and the dove of the Holy Spirit surrounding the figure of Christ. Figures of the twelve

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73 While the Cruz de los Ángeles is perhaps the most important Iberian example of this use of the bejeweled cross, the Crux gemmata served similar functions in other instances of early medieval art. For example, the Ottonian Cross of Lothar has imperial implications and was used to lead processions. For more information on the Crux gemmata, see Martin Werner, ‘On the Origins of the Irish High Cross,’ Gesta (Chicago: International Center of Medieval Art, 1990): pp. 98-110; and C. Milner, “Lignum Vitae” or ‘Crux gemmata’? The cross fo Golgotha in the early Byzantine period, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 20 (Birmingham: Center for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies, 1996): pp. 77-99.


75 For more on the veneration of the Cross in such ceremonies see Werner, ‘The Cross-Carpet Page in the Book of Durrow,’ pp. 189-190

76 For a discussion of the function of crosses in the early medieval period, see Neuman de Vegvar, ‘In Hoc Signo,’ pp. 79-117.

apostles encircle this central scene, with palm trees separating the figures from one another. Here the image marks the transition from earthly life into a divine one. The rite of baptism was closely linked to ideas of resurrection and rebirth, as Ambrose explained in *On the Mysteries* that, ‘After this the *Holy of holies* [the baptistry] was unbarred to thee, thou didst enter the shrine of regeneration. Thou didst renounce the devil and his works, the world and its luxury and pleasures... Thou didst enter, therefore, to discern thine adversary.’ The octagonal shape of the Arian Baptistry further suggests these links as, according to Ambrose, eight was symbolic of regeneration and resurrection, as Christ rose from the dead of the eighth day of the Passion. Thus the palm trees in the mosaic of the Arian Baptistry acknowledge the liminal space between earthly life and the transformation that is undergone during baptism.

Furthermore, the placement of this image in the dome suggests movement into a divine area, as domes were associated with heaven. In Byzantine tradition, ‘the dome represented the universe’ and through ‘geometry, the terrestrial square plan and the heavenly circle of the dome were reconciled.’ Furthermore, as Thomas Barrie explains, these sacred structures were places ‘where God would “dwell,” a fulcrum connecting the devout with the divine.’ Thus while the Byzantine Arian Baptistry is not a church, the dome is significant as a marker of the transition into heavenly space. More specifically, the twelve apostles and the twelve palm trees herald the transition into divine space, serving as beacons of heavenly realm beyond. This is supported by patristic writers such as Bede, who wrote in his *Commentary on the Apocalypse* that ‘the gates [of the

80 Barrie, *The Sacred In-Between*, p. 176.
81 Ibid., p. 176.
Heavenly Jerusalem are the Apostles, who primarily, either by writing or by work, laid open to all nations an entrance into the Church.” Similarly, in his discussion of Heavenly Jerusalem, Beatus expressed a transient understanding of indicators of a limited and divine space. He wrote,

To those happy ones who are faithful followers, He promises ‘power over the tree of life, and that they may enter in through the gates, into the city’; the ones who enter in through those portals are the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and the Apostles, and all the saints who by following their example come to the single gate, which is our Lord Jesus Christ, and these saints themselves are the gates, and the Church, and the holy city Jerusalem. Through these gates falsehood may not enter, but only truth: for they are closed to liars.”

Thus, again, it seems that in the Arian Baptistry, palm trees make a point of transition and herald heavenly space.

Beyond these architectural examples, palm trees also occur on objects, heralding spaces of spiritual liminality. For example, such images are found on Iberian sarcophagi such as the seventh-century Sarcophagus from Poza de la Sal (Figure 5.34) and the similarly-dated Sarcophagus from Briviesca (Figure 5.35) which are now in the Museo Provincial in Burgos. Despite being ‘crudely rendered’ with ‘enigmatical’ meaning, the clear presence of these palm trees on objects where the deceased would be placed to transcend their earthly burial again suggests that palm trees both marked the transient space and acknowledged the heavenly future to come. A similar sense of the spiritual transition is suggested in the image of the Resurrection of Lazarus on the Capsella de Brivio (Figure 5.36), which was made in the first half of the fifth century in Northern

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Italy, and which now is a part of the Louvre’s collection. Here, Lazarus is shown on the
left of the casket, beneath a tomb structure. Christ, overlooking the beggar in front of
him, gestures towards Lazarus, an act marked by a rod stretching from Christ’s hand to
the tomb. To the far right of the image stands the palm tree, which serves as a border
for the end of the scene and also touches the nimbus around Christ’s head. This contact
renders the palm tree as the heavenly source for Christ’s miracle; the palm touches
Christ, who extends his arm which holds the rod, which then touches the tomb of
Lazarus, raising the man to life after four days of being dead. Thus again the palm tree
indicates triumph over death, but also marks the liminal heavenly zone as the source of
such victory.

The discussions of palm tree imagery above suggest the function of palm trees as
indicators of entrances and places of transition into sacred spaces. Although there is
variety in the modes of entrance suggested—physical, spiritual, intellectual—the palm
trees provide barriers for that divine area, marking the exclusive access to it. In the case
of the Beatus Palm Trees, the mode of access to the lush palms of heaven is limited
visually by the unusually thin rendering of the trunk. As was alluded to earlier, the
trunks of the Beatus trees are disproportionately narrow when considering the width of
the roots and palms. Aspects of this are articulated in the Commentary, which
described the trunk as ‘broader at its summit, than the size it began at its root’ because
‘the conversion of the chosen is more thoroughgoing at the finish than it promised to be
when it began. And if it began more tepidly at first, in the end it finished more
fervently.’

As a route of access from earth to heaven that is described as beginning
narrowly, the trunk draws parallels to the narrow gate that is described in Matthew
7:13-14. This passage recommends, ‘Entre ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate,
and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat.
How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that
find it!’ In this sense, the trunk functions as a narrow path to that upper region,
allowing those who believe in Christ to continue towards the wealth of branches above.

85 ‘Palma uero, sicut dictum est, uastior in summitate est quam esse coeperit qualitatis
ex radice. Quia saepe electorum conversio plus finiendo peragit quam proponit
inchoando.’ Beatus, Sancti Beati a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin, Vol. 1, p. 664;
and Beatus, ‘English Translation,’ p. 492.
Those able to progress through the narrow gate and up towards the lush palms of paradise are represented in these scenes as well. In the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell images, the figures are shown carrying palms, echoing the representation of the saved in the *Sealing of the Elect* scene. According to Revelation 7: 9-17 in which the scene is described, these figures ‘serve[d] him day and night on his throne’ and therefore, in this instance, there is a clear connection made between serving God and eventually dwelling with God as is suggested in Revelation 7:15.86 Despite the similarities between these sets of figures, however, there are critical differences between the Just on earth who surround the palm tree and the ‘chosen’ who are lined up across the double-page depictions of the *Sealing of the Elect*. In the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell Beatus manuscripts, the greatest difference is in the shorter, secular garments worn by the figures (Figure 5.08). These shorter robes indicate that the *Palm Tree* figures are devoted Christians on earth who, through faith, worked their way to heavenly status that is suggested by their nimbused heads and the slight elevation of the figures in the Morgan and Valladolid scenes. These figures suggest the path of the faithful on earth towards heaven.

In the Girona Beatus, there are only two figures, one of which is completely naked while the other wears only a loincloth (Figure 5.09). The naked figure is presented above the ground, with his foot in a looped rope that is suspended from the tree. This rope is anchored by the semi-clothed, longhaired man, who stands to the right of the tree, his feet set at the level of the roots. According the Miguel Moleiro, these figures can be identified as the body and soul, a proposition that is supported by the inscriptions included near the figures; the text next to the suspended figure reads, ‘*ubi hic omo cupiens crapulare/palme,*’ meaning ‘To this man who seeks to take his fill of the fruit of the palm tree’ while the words, ‘*et his alter iubamine porrigit p[er] fune*’ meaning, ‘And this other one helps him clamber up using the rope’ appear next to the clothed man.87 This type of figural representation is unique among the Beatus palm tree images and, as an image of the body who strives to eat of the fruits of the tree of life and

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86 See Appendix 6H for full text.
soul who supports that endeavour, again demonstrates how the faithful will gain access to heaven through spiritual acts.  

This scene of ascending up the tree towards divine status perhaps is an early example of an enduring type. The *Lignum Vitae* from St Bonaventure’s thirteenth-century treatise adapts traditional Tree of Life imagery and its associations with Eden, Golgotha and the New Jerusalem to suit Franciscan practices. In this treatise, ‘the fruits of this tree are “tasted” in the form of a series of affective meditations, particularly on the humanity and passion of Christ, designed to stir the individual reader’s love and compassion.’ This is developed further in a fourteenth-century version of this image made by Pacino de Bonaguida in the Academia in Florence, which shows a dead Christ on a cross that is composed of a large, twelve-branched tree of life, with each branch bearing fruit (Figure 5.46). Therefore, within this image, ‘the fruit provides the soul with spiritual food, and the rung-like branches form a means of ascent, the way of the Cross, for the individual’s journey to paradise.’ Similar to the Beatus trees, these images offer believers the opportunity to climb to the ranks of paradise, through good works.

A similar sense of religious triumph is projected through the inclusion of palm trees in non-Western examples as well. For example, three palm trees were included in the mosaics above the arches in the Dome of the Rock (Figure 5.21). In discussing this image, Carolanne Mekeel-Matteson argues that the taller central palm tree was designed to dwarf the two trees that flank it, indicating the triumph of Islam over Christianity and Judaism. She explains that from the perspective of early Muslims, the tall and fruitful

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88 John Williams also has suggested that this image extends from Andalusian practices of harvesting the date palm tree, though this explanation is more important in terms of the features included in the image and does not explain the inscriptions above the figures. For more on this, see Moleiro, <http://www.moleiro.com/en/beatus-of-liebana/girona-beatus/minimutra/127> [Accessed 26 November 2013]; and Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus*, Vol. 2, p. 59.


92 There are a number of other images of palm trees on Islamic ivories and tapestries that suggest the power, authority and triumph of rulers. For example, the casket made for the Prince al-Mughira, son of the Caliph Abd al-Rahman III, which is dated to 968.
tree in the centre would have been viewed as Islam dwarfing the smaller and less abundant trees to either side of it. Though the trees are all ‘rising from the same root (the faith in the One True God), the other two religions departed from that faith and so bore no fruit, thus Islam is depicted as being the true faith of God.’

This explanation that the trees were meant to show the benefits of Islam and its ultimate triumph have precedent in other general discussions of plants represented in Islamic mosaics. Klaus Brisch discusses the remaining mosaics in the eighth-century Great Mosque of Damascus (Figure 5.22), identifying the surreal depictions of varied architectural structures and foliage as visions of paradise surrounding all those that enter into the courtyard. Brisch further argues that these images of paradise would have been familiar and appealing to Christians and Jews alike, allowing the Damascus mosaics to express the superiority of the Muslim faith as a ‘missionary act of propaganda fidei, an invitation to the Jewish and Christian subjects of the Islamic ruler, to convert.’

While the medium and presentation of the large scale, public mosaics are quite different from the smaller and more personalised access that one would have with one of these manuscripts, perhaps similar indications of religious and political victory are implicit in these scenes. In other words, the comparison between the general foliage in the Great Mosque of Damascus, palm trees from the Dome of the Rock and the Beatus palm trees is not intended to imply that the Beatus images were designed as depictions aimed at directly converting viewers (it is unlikely that those outside the faith would have access to such valuable books), but perhaps there is something that can be gained from considering them as images of religious superiority. Just as Islam sought to and

and is now in the Louvre is the earliest example of a cycle of royal themes on an Iberian ivory. The image show two horsemen that face each and pick dates from the palm tree as birds fly above their heads (Figure 5.37), representing abundance, wealth and power of the caliph through these images and material. Similarly, Syrian and Egyptian textiles include regal imagery. For example, one textile shows two falconers are flanked by palm trees and enclosed in an interlace border while the Chasuble of Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Tashfin that probably was made in Almeria in 1107 features two lions inside a roundel that look in toward a stylised tree. Pairs of animals, sphinxes, plants and palmettes surround the central image. Thus in these examples, the palm tree is a prominent element in images related to dominance and authority.

95 Ibid., p. 18.
succeeded in conquering vast territories and peoples, perhaps these Iberian Christians were attempting to deliver a similar message through these images.

In conclusion, by utilising physical and symbolic properties from other arboreal traditions, the Beatus *Palm Trees* suggest heaven and triumph, offering reassurance of Christian victory on earth and in the next life. They also, however, mark the limited entrance into a sacred and heavenly realm, ensuring victory through adherence to Christ and his teachings. As these works were developed by communities whose faith, territory and finances were compromised by a religious and political other, perhaps these palm tree scenes functioned also as a reminder to maintain, preserve and spread the faith so that those closest to it could enter through that narrow gate into paradise.
Chapter 6: Triumph Despite Hardship in the *Fox and the Cock*

Morgan Beatus

Valladolid Beatus

Girona Beatus
Beatus Commentary Text Describing the *Fox and the Cock*

Outside he [the heretic] is a sheep, but inside he is a wolf, whose ravages know no bounds... Does he not seem to you to be a wolf, who with insatiable bloodthirstiness for human death has sought to satisfy his fury with the death of faithful people? Such a one howls the Scriptures, he does not comment on them, for he denies the author of the word. Such is the one who wished to be among the Disciples, saying to the Lord not guilelessly but fraudulently: ‘Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest’ (Matthew 8:19). To him the Lord replied: ‘the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head (Matthew 8:20). He saw his spirit, in the shape of devious foxes, and birds, that is, the demons dwelling within him. The Lord does not seek an outward appearance of worship, but rather purity of intention...For that reason, man should as far as he is able show a sincere faith, and keep the observance of the commandments with a religious soul, let he be told: ‘the foxes have holes.’ For the little fox is a false animal, always eagerly driven to rapine with it treacherous wiles. It suffers nothing to be safe, nothing tranquil, nothing secure, for it seeks out its prey among the lodgings of men. He compares heretics to foxes. Then, when He calls the nations, He excludes the heretics...He did not say that to the one in whom He saw that a fox had taken up its abode: for the fox is most commonly a deceitful animal, who prepares a pitfall for souls, and always wants to stay hidden in that pit. Just so are the heretics, who do not know how to prepare themselves a dwelling, but seek to mislead others with their deceitfulness.

‘Foris ouis, intus lupus est qui modum non habet rapinarum...Non uobis uidetur lupus, qui humanae mortis insaturabilis crudelitate, fidelium morte populorum, rabiem suam desiderauit explere? Vlulat iste, non tractat, qui negat uocis auctorem. Iste est qui cum disciplulis cupiebat esse et non simpliciter sed fraudulenter / Domino ait, Magister, sequar te quocumque ieris. Ad quem Dominus dixit, Vulpes foueas habent et uolucres caeli nidos ubi requiescant: nam Filius hominis non habet ubi caput suum reclinet. Videbat mentem eius more uulpium tortuosam: et uolucres, id est, daemones, in eo demorantur. Sed Dominus non obsequiorem speciem sed puritatem quarerit affectus...Proinde quantum potest homo sinceram exhibeat fidem et obseruantiam mandatorum religiosa mente custodiat, ne dicatur ei, Vulpes foueas habent. Vulpicula enim fallax est animal, et insidiis semper intenta rapinam fraudis exercet. Nihil tutum,
nihil otiosum, nihil patitur esse securum, quod inter ipsa hominum hospitia praedam requirat. Haereticis autem uulpes conparat. Denique cum gentes uocat, haereticos excludit.... Sed hoc dicit ei cuius patrem iam sciebat mortuum, id est diabolum, de quo dictum est, Obluiscere domum patris tui. Hoc illi non dixit, in quo uulpes habitare conspexit. Vulpes enim plerumque fraudis est animal, animarum foueam parans et in/fouea semper latere desiderans. Ita sunt haeretici, qui domum sibi parare non sciunt, sed circumscriptionibus suis alios.'

(For the full Beatus Commentary text on the Fox and the Cock, see Appendix 5G)

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Description of the Placement, Style and Features of the Fox and the Cock

Function of the Image:
- To elaborate on the heretical beast described in Revelation 13:11 and to further discuss heresy and blasphemy in relation to the heretical beast

Placement in Manuscript:
- These images appear in the fourth section of the Book Six of the Commentary, which discusses Revelation 11:19 through Revelation 14:1-5
- They were included in the Morgan, Valladolid and Girona manuscripts, but not in the Urgell manuscript
- The scene occurs shortly after the illustration of the heretical beast described in Revelation 13:11

Direct Textual Link:
- Beatus inserted text from Matthew 8 in order to discuss the heretical fox

Physical Characteristics
- In each of these images, a yellow or orange fox leaps towards the blue or purple bird, grabbing the neck of the bird in its mouth
- The bird has a curved neck, which is lowered in submission
- The figures occupy marginal space or, are found in between sections of text
- These illustrations are significantly smaller than the majority of other scenes represented in the illustrated Beatus Commentaries
Placement of the *Fox and the Cock* in the Morgan Beatus

*The Heretical Beast, Book Six of the Beatus Commentary*

*Table Numbering the Names of Antichrist*

*Three Full Pages of Text Explaining the Beast and Discussing Heresy in terms of Animals*

*Nine Full Pages of Text*
Placement of the *Fox and the Cock* in the Valladolid Beatus

**The Heretical Beast, Book Six of the Beatus Commentary**

**Table Numbering the Names of Antichrist**

Two Full Pages of Text Explaining the Beast and Discussing Heresy in terms of Animals

Four Full Pages of Text
Placement of the *Fox and the Cock* in the Girona Beatus

The Heretical Beast, Book Six of the Beatus Commentary

Table Numbering the Names of Antichrist

Three Full Pages of Text Explaining the Beast and Discussing Heresy in terms of Animals

Seven Full Pages of Text
I. The Fox and the Cock in the Context of Beatus Imagery

The fifth and final Commentary-based image in the Beatus illustrative programme is the Fox and the Cock (Figures 6.01, 6.02 and 6.03). Despite its relevance as one of the few illustrations of the Commentary text, the Fox and the Cock is frequently overlooked in scholarship. Perhaps because of its small size and lack of affiliation with the text of the Book of Revelation, the vast majority of references to the Fox and the Cock occur in survey texts on the Beatus manuscripts or in monographs of specific works.¹ While Noureddine Mezoughi’s article entitled, ‘Gallina significat sanctam ecclesiam’ addresses representations of chickens specifically and references the Beatus illustrations generally, it does not explain the relevance of the Fox and the Cock in the context of these manuscripts.² As such, this chapter will explain the contextual, visual and cultural relevance of these images within the tenth-century manuscripts.

Before delving into a deeper analysis of the images, it is important to distinguish this illustration from other small images rendered throughout these manuscripts. While large-scale, framed scenes dominate the Beatus illustrative programme, there are smaller illustrations that are not related to either the text of the Beatus Commentary or the text of the Book of Revelation.³ These details function in different ways throughout these editions of the Beatus text and are worth noting, as they are distinguished from the Fox and the Cock, which is embedded into the text itself and is associated with specific lines of that text.

Decorated initials are probably the most prominent example of ornamental illustration (Figure 6.06). The increased size of these letters and the added patterns, designs and colour accentuate the beginning of sentences or sections of text. Despite

the heightened attention given to these letters and the focus that they draw to parts of the text, the illustrations very rarely include figures, nor are they based directly on the text into which they are incorporated. The same can be said for the marginalia, which occur after sections of text, filling the empty space with designs and patterns that are not related to the text itself. For example, small floral designs mark the end of a section of text in the Morgan Beatus (Figure 6.07). As in the ornamental letters, these non-figural designs that occur after excerpts of text are related to the text in that they provide embellishment to it and mark sections of it, but unlike the *Fox and the Cock*, they are not based on descriptions or narratives presented through the Beatus Commentary text or the text of the Book of Revelation.

In addition to these relatively simple, small illustrations, other embellishments included in these works are figural and more complex. Perhaps because it is a more richly decorated manuscript, the Girona Beatus features more decorative, non-narrative images than the Morgan, Valladolid and Urgell manuscripts. Two particularly fine examples of ornamental imagery include a series of fantastic creatures (Figure 6.09) and a number of decorative animals (Figure 6.10). Both of these additions occur in the lower sections of the pages on which they are presented. Again, these scenes are not related to any aspect of the text but are carefully rendered, detailed, and fill empty spaces on the pages that they occupy.

Finally, in addition to ornamental letters and decorative figures, there are a few examples of marginal drawings and notes that could have served to direct the viewer to sections of the text. The most pronounced of these is found in the hand drawn on folio 233v of the Morgan Beatus (Figure 6.08), which is similar to *maniculum* found in Byzantine texts, which served a liturgical function, marking significant places in the text. While there are a few drawings or notes of this nature throughout these manuscripts, they are not a prominent feature, and therefore it is possible that readers added these images, which do not directly reflect the content of the text, for other purposes as they were progressing through the manuscripts. In either case, the small designs do not directly illustrate the text.

Thus while examples of smaller images do exist, they are infrequent and contrast with the *Fox and the Cock*, which is referenced several times in the text of the fourth section of the sixth book of the Commentary. This section of text is divided into ten sections that cover Revelation 11:19 through Revelation 14:1-5. Within this span of
text, the images of and references to the fox and the cock help to explain the heretical beast from Revelation 13:11, which is described as ‘another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, but he spake as a serpent.’

In discussing this beast, Beatus continued to address ideas of heresy and blasphemy in terms of beasts and animals such as dragons, wolves and foxes, transitioning into a discussion of the heretical fox. Such extrapolation on the fox in particular and the addition of an image of it can be explained by several possible factors. In one sense, it is important to remember that Beatus’ Commentary is a compilation of texts that Beatus copied and assembled. Therefore, the repeated references to Matthew 8 and discussion of the fox could have been inherited through that copying. Furthermore, as will be suggested in the sections of this chapter that follow, there were a number of associations with the fox and the cock that would have been meaningful to early medieval Christians. The significance of this scene and early medieval associations with the fox and the cock will now be examined in relation to the physical attributes of this image.

II. The Details of Images of the Fox and the Cock

The illustrations of the Fox and the Cock appear only three or four pages after the image of the heretical beast and are embedded within the columns of text that explain its heretical nature. This close proximity to the image of the heretical beast and the selected positioning of the figures within the Commentary text are significant as they accentuate negative associations with the fox. In all three of these scenes, which are similarly structured, the physical dominance of the fox over the cock is apparent. In each of these illustrations, the fox, which is consistently rendered in a yellow or orange hue, is shown as an aggressive and pouncing beast. Its front paws are elevated combatively as its mouth firmly grips the neck of the bird. Developed in a blue or purple colour in each of these scenes, the cock’s head is lowered in a submissive manner, demonstrating that it has succumbed to the force of the beast. In comparison to the active posture of the fox, the comparatively limp body of the bird highlights that it is under attack and enduring the inflictions of the aggressor.

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4 Pages 205-207 provide diagrams that give a better sense of the placement of these images in the Morgan, Valladolid and Girona manuscripts.
Beyond the contrasting colours and revealing poses, each of the Morgan, Valladolid and Girona scenes is emphasised by its placement with regards to the text. In the Morgan scene, these figures are rendered in a gap in the right-hand column of text along with an inscription that announces that the fox is attacking the cock. This break comes after the line of Commentary that reads: 'The fox is a false animal, always eagerly driven to rapine with false wiles.' The placement of the image after this line of text rather than after the Matthew passage on which the image is actually based, is significant. Such placement creates a pause in the momentum of the text, allowing readers to consider the described disingenuous fox. Furthermore, the text that follows the Morgan image is also of particular importance, as the fox’s feet rest just to the side of it. The feet direct the viewer down to the line that begins, 'It [the fox] suffers nothing to be safe, nothing tranquil' and then continues onto the next line down with the words, 'nothing secure, for it seeks out its prey among the lodgings of men.' Again, the positioning of the fox, and the placement of its feet in particular, direct the reader towards the text that emphasises the devious nature of the animal.

Similarly, the figures in the Valladolid and Girona Beatus manuscripts are positioned prominently. The *Fox and the Cock* in the Valladolid Beatus is found at the top of the right-hand column, holding a place of prominence on the page. It is also rendered above the line of text that begins, 'It suffers nothing to be safe, nothing tranquil,' again drawing attention to these ideas. The Girona image of the *Fox and the Cock* was developed in a break in the left-hand column of text. The illustration was inserted just before the line that declares that the fox is a ‘false animal, always eagerly driven to rapine with it treacherous wiles.’ Thus the way these illustrations are integrated into the columns of text emphasises the evil nature of the fox and the danger presented by such a figure.

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5 Figures 6.04 and 6.05 demonstrate how these images were incorporated into the text.
For early medieval viewers this suggestion of the constant struggle to overcome malevolence and sin would have been perpetuated through associations with the fox and the cock. In biblical and patristic literature, the fox was described negatively. For example, Ambrose explained in his Commentary on Luke that ‘What the man can do is to show a sincere faith and religiously keep the observance of the commandments, lest it be said to him: the foxes have burrows.’ Furthermore, Hrabanus Maurus, Augustine and Jerome address the fox as a symbol of the devil. The Physiologus, which Isidore drew upon in his Etymologies and which therefore must have been available in early medieval Iberia, describes the fox as ‘an entirely deceitful animal.’ It continues by declaring that,

The fox is a figure of the devil. To those who live according to the flesh he pretends to be dead. Although he may hold sinners within his gullet, to spiritual men and those perfected in faith, however, he is dead and reduced to nothing. The devil is, in fact, utterly dead as is the effect of his work. Whoever wishes to partake of his flesh will die, for his flesh is made of fornication, greed, desire, and hostile times. For this reason Herod is likened to a fox. And the scribe hear the saviour say, ‘The foxes have holes.’ And in the Song of Songs, ‘Catch us the little foxes that spoil the vineyards.’

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12 ‘Vulpis igitur figuram habet diabolic: omnibus enim secundum carnem uiuentibus fingit se esse mortuum; cum intra guttur suum peccatores habeat, spiritualibus tamen et perfectis in fide, uere mortuus est et ad nihilum redactus est. Qui autem volunt exercere opera eius ipsi desiderant saginari carnibus eius (id est diabolic), quae sunt: Adulteria, fornications, idolatricia, veneficia, homicidia, furta, falsa testimonia, et caetera his similia; dicente apostolo: Scientes hoc quia, si secundum carnem uixeritis, moriemi; si autem spiritu opera carnaliter uiuent, diabolicis operibus occupati, ab eo tenentur obnoxii, et pares, eius effecti, simul cum illo peribunt; dicente David: Inrabunt in inferior terrae, tradentur in manus gladii, partes vulpium erunt.’ Curley, Physiologus, pp. 27-28; and Carmody, Physiologus Latinus, pp. 29-30.
In addition to describing the evils of the fox, this excerpt is also significant in this context because it references Matthew 8 and Song of Songs 2:15. The illustration of the *Fox and the Cock* is based on text from Matthew 8 and Song of Songs 2:15, both of which are referenced by Beatus in this section of the Commentary. This suggests that Beatus drew on similar ideas and texts embracing those biblical references when he developed the discussion of the heretical beasts and included these references to the fox.

With regard to the ideas conveyed through these verses, Song of Songs 2:15 reads, ‘Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom.’ Beatus integrated this line and its associated ideas into the Commentary shortly after he introduced the chicken in this section of the Commentary. He wrote,

This animal can never be tamed, nor does it serve as food, neither is it of any other use. That is why the Apostle says: “Avoid a man that is a heretic after the first admonition” (Tit. 3:10). For Christ does not say of him: “My meat is to do the will of my Father, who is in heaven,” (John 4:34). Indeed, the Lord ordered that they be taken fast in His vineyards, saying: “take for us the little foxes, that destroy the vines” (Song 2:15). That is, that destroy the smaller vines, not the larger ones. And that is the reason Samson tied burning firebrands to their tails, and sent them forth among the crops of the foreigners: this meant that heretics try to burn up the fruits of others.13

Thus the fox was portrayed as a destroyer of the faith, Christian principles and those who adhered to them.

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Gregory the Great also interprets this line in *Super Canticum cantocorum expositio*, II, 17. Gregory wrote that ‘foxes are designated as heretics; the vines, the church in each of its parts. And if the foxes ravage the vines, it is because they are deprived of the true faith of the church.’ (‘Per vulpes haeretici, per vineas singular Ecclesiae designantur. Sed vulpes vineas demoliuntur; quia per haereticos Ecclesiae a rectae fidei viriditate exsiccantur.’) These common negative descriptions indicate the connotations of evil, deceit and the destruction of the faithful that the illustration of the fox embodied. For more see PL 70.0500 and Gregory the Great, *Expositiones in Canticum Cantocorum in Librum Primum Regum* (Turnholt: Brepols, 1963), p. II, 17; and Mezoughi, ‘Gallina Significat,’ p. 59.
In contrast to the dominant fox, however, Beatus also addressed the species of the chicken as a faithful creature. He wrote,

The simple man always dwells in his house. The heretic on the other hand is in a hole, like the deceitful fox, ever intending to harm that hen of the Gospel, of whom it is written: “how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate” (Matthew 23:37-38).14

Additionally, as a species, the chicken was frequently referenced as a symbol of the Church and God, as is evidenced in the writings of Augustine, Gregory, Jerome and Ambrose.15 Despite Beatus’ specific reference to the chicken and the references to chickens that are found in early medieval literature, the bird depicted in these scenes is clearly male—its comb and wattle are prominently displayed. In spite of this discrepancy, similarly favourable descriptions, which address the cock specifically, are found in relevant early medieval texts. More specifically, however, Prudentius, the fourth-century Iberian-born writer, expressed such connections in his series of hymns, the ‘Liber Cathemerinon’ that were to be sung throughout the day. The first of these hymns was titled, ‘Hymn for Cock Crow’ and begins with the cock crowing to wake people from their sleep, equating a sleeping person to the sleeping soul in sin and furthermore forming a comparison between the rise of daylight over darkness to the

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15 In addition to citing these patristic writers whose writings were available in the Iberian libraries, Mezoughi also identifies several other prominent early medieval church figures that may not have been read directly by Iberians Christians but that suggest the degree to which this symbolism was known and understood in the early medieval world. For example, the third-century bishop of Trier, Eucharius identifies the chicken as the church in chapter five of his Liber Formularem spiritualist intelligentiae by writing ‘Gallina sapientia sive Ecclesia, sive anima.’ Similarly Mezoughi also cites the eighth to ninth-century Carolingian Benedictine monk, Rabanus Maurus who wrote in De Universo, ‘Gallina significant sapientiam, sive sanctum Ecclesiam, seu animal (sic) justum, u test illud Dominicum testimonium ad Hierusalem: Quotiens volui congregare...’ Thus the chicken was commonly and frequently identified as a symbol of the Church. Mezoughi, ‘Gallina Significat,’ pp. 57-59.
triumph of life over death.\textsuperscript{16} The hymn also references the look that Christ directed at Peter after being denied three times through the lines, ‘Christ’s warning dignified that bird, / Its power He did to Peter show; / Thrice would his bitter reckless word / Deny Him ere the cock should crow.’\textsuperscript{17} Following this reference, the hymn reminds those reciting it of the importance of recognising Christ who led Christians away from that sin and heretical beliefs. It continues with the lines, ‘False speech that flowed from hasty lips / The saint repentant rues with tears. / Steadfast his faith : nor careless trips / His tongue through all the future years.’\textsuperscript{18} Thus again the cock was affiliated with Christ who triumphs over sin and heresy.

Given the common early conceptions of foxes and cocks, the trapping of the bird in the jaws of the fox in the Beatus illustrations suggests the captivity of the faithful by a powerful adversary before their ultimate triumph. Similar images with comparable messages occur in other early medieval art, such as in the representation of the lion-like quadruped gripping the neck of a peacock in an initial from Folio 111r of the Book of Kells (Figure 6.11). This scene is understood to represent Christ locked in the jaws of heresy.\textsuperscript{19} Furthermore, as Heather Pulliam explains, the lion frequently represented the heretical Jewish faction and therefore in this image it was intended to represent those plotting to kill Christ who are referenced in Matthew 26:3, which is marked by the initial in which this scene is developed.\textsuperscript{20} Thus the depiction of the death of a Christ-like bird at the hands of a heretical force had currency in the early medieval world. The type

\textsuperscript{16} For more specific evidence of this, see Appendix 7B for the full text of the hymn. Prudentius, \textit{Translations of Prudentius: A Selection from his Works, Rendered in English Verse}, Francis St. John Thackeray, trans. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1890), p. xxxvii.
\textsuperscript{17} ‘Speramus adventum Dei / Quae vis sit huius alitis/Salvator ostendit Petro,/Ter Antequam gallus canat/Sese negandum praedicans.’ Prudentius, \textit{Translations of Prudentius}, pp. 13 and 15.
\textsuperscript{18} ‘Flevit negator denique/ Ex ore prolapsum nefas / Cum mens maneret innocens / Animusque servaret fidem./ Nec tale quidquam postea / Linguae locutus lubrico est.’ Prudentius, \textit{Translation of Prudentius}, pp. 13 and 15.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 138. There is another illustrated initial on folio 96r of the Book of Kells, which Pulliam, Françoise Henry and Bernard Meehan also discuss as an image of an evil figure trying to ensnare Christ. While the figure with its hands around the neck of the peacock is human, it continues to suggest that birds were commonly represented as an endangered Christ figure, similar to the presentation of the \textit{Fox and the Cock}. For more on this, see Françoise Henry, \textit{The Book of Kells: Reproductions from the Manuscript in Trinity College, Dublin} (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), p. 174; and Bernard Meehan, \textit{The Book of Kells} (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), p. 66.
of image, however, was particularly fitting for the monastic communities in northern Iberia.

The Corbie Psalter also provides a striking parallel to the Beatus images in the decorative letter that opens Psalm 73 (Figure 6.12). In this image a fox-like creature sinks its teeth into the body of a large nimbused bird, whose tail curls around the body of the attacking animal. The aggressor in this image has previously been identified as a dog.\footnote{Heather Pulliam and Jean Desobry both suggest that this is an image of a dog: Heather Pulliam, ‘Exaltation and Humiliation: The Decorated Initials of the Corbie Psalter (Amiens, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 18),’ Gesta 49/2 (2010), pp. 97-115 (pp. 99-100); and Jean Desobry, 1974, ‘Le manuscrit 18 de la B.M. d’Amiens,’ Actes du colloque de l’Association des mediévistes anglicistes de l’enseignement supérieur, ed. by A. Crépin (Amiens: U.E.R. de langues et cultures étrangères, 1974), p. 97.} Despite this earlier labeling of the animal, however, it has an unusually thick tail for a dog, which is quite similar to the tails of the Beatus foxes, as well as slightly pointed ears. These traits present the strong possibility that this figure is actually a fox, laden with the negative associations discussed above.

With regards to the represented bird, its nimbus and possible liturgical attributes suggest that it was meant to be a holy figure.\footnote{Pulliam, ‘Exaltation and Humiliation,’ p. 100.} In the context of Psalm 73, the bird has been interpreted as the sanctuary, which is described in verse seven: ‘They have set fire to the sanctuary: they have defiled the dwelling place of thy name on earth.’ In interpreting this verse, Cassiodorus wrote, ‘the dwelling-place of His name was the temple which Solomon built as a wondrous structure...this dwelling place, then, which was the power of heaven visited, was defiled by the hand of the plunderer, who leveled to the ground the towers known to have been erected for the Lord’s praise.’\footnote{See Appendix 6E for the full text of Psalm 73.} He elaborated on the consequences of this destruction, explaining that, ‘The harshness of the deed continuously intensifies, so that those who transgress so dreadfully must be confronted by the almighty Judge.’\footnote{‘Crescit enim subinde atrocitas facti, ut tam immaniter excendentibus ab omnipotenti Judice debeat obviari.’ PL 70.0528C-0529A and Cassiodorus, Explanations of the Psalms, Vol. 2, p. 215.} Thus this initial represents the sacred space of the


22 Pulliam, ‘Exaltation and Humiliation,’ p. 100.

23 See Appendix 6E for the full text of Psalm 73.


Church being attacked by a combative enemy, who ultimately will have to face judgment.

This is similar to the Beatus imagery in that it shows the Church under attack. What is quite different between the initial from the Corbie Psalter and the Beatus scenes of the *Fox and the Cock*, however, is the postures and positioning of the figures. In the Corbie Psalter scene, the bird is alert, looking forward and much larger than its attacker. The size and sturdy stance of the bird suggest that it could certainly ward off the attacks of the lesser creature. In contrast, the cock which is represented in the Beatus scenes is smaller and clearly in the control of the fox. Its lowered head and nearly lifeless body suggest that, rather than fighting back immediately, the cock was submissive to its enemy, in the same way that Christ was submissive before his Crucifixion. Thus the suggestion in the Beatus images is that the figure of the cock, which represented the Church and the faithful, would have to endure suffering before triumphing at judgment—in a manner similar to Christ and his ultimate triumph over death.

Locked in the jaws of the beast, the cock begins to acquire a status similar to that of Iberian Christians at that moment—confined in a threatening, uncomfortable and non-advantageous position. Continuing to accent ideas of heresy and captivity such as those expressed in the *Four Beasts* scene, these illustrations suggest the persistence and the triumph of adherents to Christ over a seemingly overwhelming opposition. As the cock was associated with faith and life after death in early medieval sources, these scenes suggest that they will be victorious over the threatening and apparently dominant fox. This is perhaps suggested in excerpts from the Beatus Commentary, which emphasise God’s support of the innocent over devious creatures such as the fox. For example, the fox is admonished and the innocent celebrated when Beatus wrote, ‘And so, you should understand that God does not drive away elegant attire, but fraud. He who had repudiated the deceitful one, chose the innocent one, saying: follow me.’

Thus, the bird in these images represents the innocent who are supported and protected by God, while the fox is scorned.

This sense of enduring great hardship in order to obtain great rewards was articulated in terms of Iberian Christians in early medieval Iberian literature. Christians

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considered themselves to be captives on the Peninsula. Iberian Christian writers drew
parallels between their circumstances and biblical instances of persecution and
captivity. For example, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* that was written in 883 explains,
‘remember that He who opened the waters of the Red Sea to allow the passage of the
children of Israel, buried these Arabs who were persecuting the Church of God under
the immense mass of the mountain.’

Similarly, as was mentioned in the chapter on the *Four Beasts and the Statue*, the chronicle known as the *Continuatio Isidoriana Hispana ad annum 754*, which was composed in or shortly after 754, states that ‘whatever Troy
suffered when it was captured, whatever Jerusalem endured following the utterances of
the prophets, whatever Babylon underwent as a result of the words of the Scriptures,
and finally whatever Rome lived through when adorned by the noble martyrdom of the
Apostles, I shall preserve a memory both in honour and in shame of just as many things
which Spain—once delightful, now wretched—experienced.

Later literature perpetuates these themes, as is evidenced in the *Historia de España*, which was written
in the thirteenth century.

Despite this sense of being held captive, the aforementioned historical narratives
and the Iberian texts all express the eventual triumph of the persecuted and those being
held captive. In the same way that the Jews who were led by Moses away from the
Egyptians across the Red Sea and those in captivity in Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar
were ultimately saved by God, so too do the Iberian texts express Christian salvation
and triumph through God. For example, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* addresses Christian
salvation by suggesting that ‘Because they [unfaithful and unbelieving Christians] had
abandoned the Lord and had not served Him in righteousness and truth, they were

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27 ‘…recordamini quia, qui Rubri Maris fluenta ad transitum filiorum Israhel aperuit,
ipse hos Arabes persequentes eclesiam Domini immenso montis mole oppressit.’ Smith,
*Christians and Moors in Spain*, pp. 28-29.

28 ‘…quidquod historialiter capta Troia pertulit, quidquid Iherosolima predicta per
prophetar, eloquia baiulabit, quidquod Babilonia per scripturarum eloquia substultit,
quidquod postremo Roma apostolorum novilitate decorate martialiter confectit, omnia
et to ut Spanis condam deliciosa et nunc misera effecta tam in honore quam etiam in

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23. The *Historia de España* is likely exaggerated in many ways, though it
discusses the situation on the Iberian in relation to Babylon and several of the kings that
overtook it, Rome, Jerusalem and Carthage. The comparisons are similar in many ways
to the descriptions in the *Continuatio Isidoriana Hispana ad annum 754*, though there
are more specific references to rulers and exaggerated detail.
abandoned by the Lord and were not allowed to dwell in the promised land.'

Similarly, this text describes the first Christian victory over the Muslims, where Pelayo, the founder of Asturias, declared, ‘In this battle with which you are threatening us, we have our Lord Jesus Christ as our advocate before the Father, and He is powerful enough to save us few from them.’ Thus as these examples suggest, the chronicles suggest Christian discomfort with the Islamic heresy and the sense that Christianity will endure, eventually overcoming the Muslim foe with the assistance of the Christian God, ideas that are mirrored by the Fox and the Cock.

The extra-Apocalyptic illustration of the Fox and the Cock, like the other scenes discussed throughout this thesis, was included in these early manuscripts in order to accentuate these messages, encouraging Christians to maintain their participation in the faith and to resist Muslim advances. The ideas projected through the selected iconography parallel prominent sentiments expressed in biblical patristic and early medieval Iberian literature, suggesting that the Fox and the Cock was included as a reminder of the power of the Christian faith over a seemingly dominant enemy.

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30 'Et quia dereliquerunt Dominum ne seruient ei in iustitia et ueritatem, derelicti sunt a Domini ne auitarent terram desiderauilem.' Ibid., pp. 24-25.

31 ‘Prelium ergo quam tu minas nobis, habemus aduocatum aput Patrem Dominum Ihesum Xpm qui ab istis paucis potens est liuerare nos.’ Ibid., pp. 28-29.
Chapter 7:
Conclusions
I. Initial Conclusions

This thesis offers a new way of evaluating the tenth-century Beatus manuscripts, through an iconographic and contextual evaluation of the extra-Apocalyptic imagery. Focusing on four relatively complete manuscripts from the tenth century, the preceding chapters have demonstrated the significance and function of the five Commentary-based illustrations, which are frequently overlooked in scholarship—the Mappamundi, the Four Beasts and the Statue, Noah’s Ark, the Palm Tree and the Fox and the Cock. By comparing these illustrations to related Late Antique and early medieval material as well as to other images within the Beatus manuscripts, the earlier discussions have shown that all of these scenes served a defined function within these works. More specifically, the thesis argues that these images reflect the specific considerations, traditions and circumstances of the Northern Iberian Christians who were producing them during the tenth century, suggesting that the images were designed to promote a number of shared concepts, including ideas of Christian dominance, the benefits of adhering to Christianity and the dangers of supporting or succumbing to the heresy of Islam. These conclusions are significant as the images suggest, to varying degrees, a greater and different tension between Christianity and Islam in early medieval Iberia than has previously been recognised.

The first chapter argues that the Mappamundi presents the viewer with an image of a complete vision of a harmonious world, dominated by Christianity and void of any heresy—namely Islam. Within the oceanic border, which defines the expanse of the scene, mountains, rivers and the figures of Adam and Eve in paradise are emphasised. These features draw attention to that paradisiacal destination of the faithful after judgment and, as is argued throughout the chapter, also encourage those viewing the manuscript to embrace and participate in the Church, avoiding the prominent heresy described in the early medieval Iberian texts—Islam; the universal nature of the Catholic Church and its distinction from the regional, heretical groups such as Muslim communities are paramount.
Furthermore, the geological details included prominently on these scenes facilitate a connection between these images and the mountainous regions in which the works were produced. Again, this discussion of the link between these map images and the new environments of the emigrated communities is important, as it demonstrates that these scenes were designed to relate ideas of spreading and maintaining Christianity. Thus while the primary message relayed through the Mappaemundi was related to Christian domination and dispersal of the Word, this study also demonstrates that these messages were particularly promoted due to the Northern Iberian monastic communities’ primary concern over the Islamic threat, which is expressed in the early medieval Iberian sources.

The promotion of the Church and disdain for Islam is further accentuated by the second extra-Apocalyptic image discussed in Chapter 3, the Four Beasts and the Statue. It has been argued that, in contrast to the orderly and harmonious Mappaemundi, the illustrations of the Four Beasts and the Statue represent the disorganisation and evil of Islam. This chapter introduces early medieval Iberian texts which describe Muslims in animalistic and beast-like terms. These texts, which de-humanise Muslims on the Peninsula are used to suggest that the narrative and illustrations of these beasts from the Book of Daniel were specifically included as expressions of the Christian understanding of Muslims in Iberia during this time. Furthermore, the third chapter examines the formatting of the image of the Four Beasts in relation to other early medieval imagery, suggesting that the scene was composed in a way that mimics common early medieval types, including Fountain of Life Scenes and images of the Four Evangelists. By inverting and altering known formats within sacred Christian imagery, the Four Beasts ultimately demonstrate the demise of evil and the triumph of the Church over bestial heretics.

Additionally, as representations of the empires of Macedon, Babylonia, Medes and Persia and Rome, which are identified specifically in the selected narrative, these evil beasts suggest the danger in denying the Christian faith by relating the Iberian situation to other historical scenarios. Chapter Three argues that by representing a scene from the Book of Daniel, which is primarily concerned with the Kingdom of Babylon and the captivity of the Jews, the
illustrators connect the Christian movement North and away from Muslim rule in the South to ideas of captivity. There are a number of references in the early medieval Iberian sources which relate the political, social and religious circumstances of Christians under Muslim rule in Iberia to the Babylonian Captivity and thus this chapter argues that early medieval Iberian Christians considered themselves to be in a situation similar to the that of the Jewish population moved from Judah and held in Babylon during the seventh century BCE. This again reflects the negative Christian conception of the Muslim population and asserts that, similar to the Jews in Babylon, Christianity will prevail.

This sense of triumph through the Church is perpetuated in the image of Noah’s Ark. Unlike the majority of other early medieval images of the ark, the focus in this scene is on those preserved by the protective ark, representative of the Church, during the flood. In addition to representing a moment in the flood narrative that is not commonly depicted in the early medieval world, the structure of the ark in these early images bears strong similarities to the shape of Iberian churches from the period and to the Foncalada in Oviedo. The connections to these structures promote the idea of salvation through the Church and its rites, such as baptism, which are affiliated with the flood. As these scenes place great emphasis on the Church as a protective entity, and as the faithful are represented in the midst of trial and awaiting salvation, this thesis has argued, for the first time, that this moment in the flood was deliberately chosen to parallel the situation of the Iberian Christians who were also enduring challenges from the Muslim forces, while striving for victory.

The image of the Palm Tree functions somewhat similarly to Noah’s Ark in that it is less focused on specifically condemning Islam than on demonstrating the value of the Church in the face of the Islamic threat. The forms used in the Palm Tree indicate a path from earth, as represented by the roots, to heaven, which is indicated through the palms, by way of Christ and the Church, which are suggested by the trunks. The disproportionately thin and long appearance of the palm tree trunks demonstrate that access to heaven is limited to those who are willing to endure the hardships of Christian life on earth. Again, as in the representation of Noah’s Ark, the image itself does not seem to specifically
reference Islam, but rather parallels the compromised status of Iberian Christians on the Peninsula, providing a necessary reminder of why the faithful should continue to participate in the Church despite the challenges posed by an alternative faith.

Additionally, this chapter also presents a new way of considering floral imagery and palm trees in medieval art more generally. The concept of transition or passage into a sacred space, which is central to the structural makeup of the Beatus Palm Tree, is investigated and applied to other early medieval palm tree imagery. Through a close examination of the placement and context of Late Antique and early medieval palm tree representations found in a range of artistic traditions, such as on the exteriors of buildings, in manuscripts, in mosaics, on sarcophagi and a range of other materials from western European, Byzantine and Islamic traditions, this chapter presents a new possible function for early medieval palm tree images, as markers of transition into a sacred space. This interpretation lends new insight into the representation of plant motifs generally and the use of the palm tree in medieval imagery more specifically.

Finally, the eventual triumph of Christianity despite hardship and imposing opposition is demonstrated in the last of the extra-Apocalyptic representations in these manuscripts—the Fox and the Cock. Although this illustration in small, it suggests that, like Christ and Christians, the represented fowl will triumph at death despite being persecuted by a menacing and dominant enemy. Again, this parallels life for Christians during the tenth century, living in a Muslim-dominated Iberia, and furthermore suggesting victory after captivity, oppression and suffering. This discussion of a comparatively small image indicates the potential that lies in studying other ornamental and marginal imagery included throughout these manuscripts. There have not been any large-scale, published studies conducted on the marginal or decorative imagery in these works, and the chapter on the Fox and the Cock provides a starting point for such research.

This analysis of this group of extra-Apocalyptic images not only provides a different way of examining the Beatus material, but also offers new evidence regarding Christian-Muslim relations on the Iberian Peninsula and the concerns of northern Iberian Christians who developed and used these works in tenth-
century León. The arguments put forward regarding these five illustrations show that, in conjunction with patristic and Iberian literature from the early medieval period, the extra-Apocalyptic images in the Beatus manuscripts reference Christian discontent with Muslim rule and articulate ideas, which were key to the success of the Church at that time. The context and forms adopted in the imagery promote the sense of a triumphant Christianity despite hardship, encouraging viewers to adhere to the faith despite the challenges of conversion, invasion and the imposition of limiting laws and taxes.

II. The Significance of these Findings within the Discipline

The findings described above contribute to the ongoing scholastic debates concerning cross-cultural interactions on the Iberian Peninsula during the early medieval period. Scholars of medieval Iberia have, in recent years, largely embraced ideas of tolerance and convivencia. Despite this trend in scholarship, however, this thesis provides a different way of considering these questions by examining previously overlooked imagery and by focusing on early medieval Christian communities in the North, which have not garnered the same academic interest as art produced in al-Andalus under the Cordoban caliphate. Indeed the analysed scenes and related text indicate the centrality of the struggle with Islam within the early medieval monastic communities in Northern Iberia Church, and their need to promote the faith.

These discussions of the Mappamundi, the Four Beasts and the Statue, Noah’s Ark, the Palm Tree and the Fox and the Cock are developed with specific consideration of the Leónese communities in which the manuscripts were produced and made. As is demonstrated throughout the arguments put forth in this thesis, those migrating to and living in the northern regions of the Iberian Peninsula has priorities, concerns and aims which were specific to their communities and which were expressed in this very important Iberian manuscript tradition. With regards to the debates surrounding cultural interactions, this sort of geographic specificity is an important and, in this instance, close analysis of these regionally-created works demonstrates the Christian uncertainty over Muslim presence and the intricacy of Christian-
Muslim interaction. Thus this study has shown the importance of considering regional discrepancies and circumstances, aspects that ought to considered more precisely in future studies.

Furthermore, the adopted methodology offers a new way of approaching the Beatus imagery specifically, and medieval Iberian art more generally. As one of only a handful of studies to specifically address the relevance of the placement and context of imagery within the Beatus iconographic programme, and the only study to argue that such importance be placed on the extra-Apocalyptic images, it demonstrates that significant conclusions can be drawn from comparative iconographic studies. This research demonstrates that context and the physical placement of scenes are important to understanding the Beatus illustrations and that both have the potential to reveal a range of new insights into the function of the images and these works.

By utilising comparative material to establish how the Beatus scenes are similar to or different from known early medieval types, the arguments developed throughout this work offer theoretical and methodological advancements to the field of medieval Iberian studies. As was mentioned in the introduction, Hispanists have hesitated to adopt the frameworks provided by post-colonial and translation theories. Prior to this thesis, comparisons were drawn between the Beatus imagery and outside visual sources, though this was done almost entirely to determine where these works were made and what contributed to the style of the illustrations. Here, however, parallels between Iberian material and that produced outside of the Peninsula suggest meaning and context for the Beatus scenes, a significant departure from earlier studies.

The adoption of this comparative and cross-cultural approach, has contributed to the emergence of post-colonialism and translational thought within studies of early medieval Iberia. More generally, however, it has demonstrated how the examination of cultural intersections and the evaluation of when and how visual and ideological trends were transferred between cultures is a viable and productive way of considering medieval art. Gaining a clearer understanding of how and when iconographies, forms and trends were

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1 See pages 38-39 of the Introduction for more on this debate.
transferred and used within the medieval world has the potential to enhance future scholarship by suggesting specific meanings and interpretations of imagery within the medieval world.

Finally, the consideration of this group of early works according to their temporal connection, rather than according to the *stemmae* with which they are associated, presents an additional dimension to the contextualisation of the imagery. Rather than tracing the threads of history and links between manuscripts, the discussions found in the previous chapters address broader themes specific to the tenth century, encouraging further study of the later manuscripts using similar methodologies. While there has been the scholastic tendency to generalise medieval Iberian art both temporally and regionally, this examination of the tenth-century Leónese material focuses analyses and explanations to those related directly to the northwestern Iberia, facilitating a more precise understanding of the circumstances and concerns in that region at that time. Similar to the theoretical approach, such temporal restrictions can and perhaps should be employed in future analysis of Iberian art.

### III. Future Studies

As the analyses and conclusions developed through this study relate only to the circumstances of the tenth century, a natural next step would be to utilize a similar postcolonial and translational approach to analyse the later Beatus material. The extension of the Beatus manuscripts into the thirteenth century marks an unusually prolific tradition; the longevity of these illustrated Iberian Apocalypses, which maintained most of their iconographic features from the beginning to the end of the tradition, is notable and the artistic features worthy of consideration.

As was suggested in the introduction to this thesis, which justified the study of the tenth-century manuscripts as a group in their own right, the political environment in Iberia began to shift around the year 1000. The start of the eleventh century brought a switch of momentum, which favoured the Christians living in northern Iberia. With the start of the unpopular and unsuccessful reigns
of abd Al-Malik and his brother, abd al-Rahman, which began in 1002, the caliphate began to weaken. This decline of Umayyad rule was met by the rise of Sancho el mayor around 1000 in the North, which brought unity to the Christian regions and began a period of internal development and the expansion of Christian territories through programmes based on revitalising the monasteries.

In order to combat what amounted to an eleventh-century ‘spiritual and disciplinary decline in conservative, isolated cenobitism’ the king made efforts to enforce ‘policies of internal development and territorial expansion through programs of monastic revitalisation, designed with Benedictine considerations in mind.’ In particular, Sancho el mayor opened communication and exchange with France. He embraced the region just north of the Pyrenees and was in frequent contact with Abbot Odilo at Cluny, sending Spanish monks to study there and starting the tangible effects of the Cluniac reform by opening the monasteries of Oña, Lerie and San Juan de la Peña. He also encouraged participation in the pilgrimage route, improving the path through Álava and the Cantabrian Mountains and thereby facilitating the transmission of foreign ideas and practices into Spain (Appendix 2D). French feudal traditions crossed the border and, most pertinent to this discussion and the later Beatus manuscripts, the Romanesque style in France made its way across as well.

Following in Sancho’s footsteps, the Iberian kings now allowed the mostly-French Benedictines from Cluny to impose their own rules on the Iberian monasteries. The Benedictines rejected the Mozarabic liturgy, discarding the uniquely Iberian traditions that stemmed from the writings and sermons of

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3 Rose Walker, *Views of Transition: Liturgy and Illumination in Medieval Spain* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998): p. 24; Friedrich Rahlves, *Cathedrals and Monasteries of Spain* (London: Nicholas Kaye, 1966): p. 59, and Gerli, *Medieval Iberia*, p. 731. As has been noted by C.J. Bishko in *Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History 600-1300*, there is ‘no satisfactory comprehensive treatment of Hispano-Cluniac history.’ As, to my knowledge, such a work has not been produced in the time Bishko published his book in 1984 and therefore this discussion is a compilation of facts acquired from several sources that are not explicitly on the subject.

Isidore of Seville, which governed monastic life and forced the Iberian Church to take up new policies and practices that connected it to the rest of Christendom, and Rome, in particular.\(^5\) Despite the discontent expressed by the monks, the Cluniacs transformed the Church and monastic life in Iberia,\(^6\) leading to a shift in the priorities and practices of the monastic communities producing these works.

In addition to the import of religious and political philosophy by way of Cluniac reform, an increasing number of Europeans from beyond the Pyrenees flooded the Iberian Peninsula with the rise in popularity of the pilgrimage route to Santiago. While the the monk Pelagius discovered the remains of St. James in the eighth century, and though Alfonso III, who reigned from 866-910, contributed to the expansion of pilgrimage generally, it was not until 950 that the first recorded pilgrim, Bishop Godescalc of Le Puy, made his way across the Pyrenees into Spain.\(^7\) Furthermore, as was mentioned earlier, when Sancho el mayor took up his reign in 1000, a prominent component of his efforts was the promotion of the pilgrimage route and the facilitation of travel along it.\(^8\) As such, pilgrimage increasingly became an industry in Iberia, seemingly prompting the manufacture of Beatus manuscripts as an attraction to the monasteries and churches along the route.

The heightened religious and cultural presence from the rest of Europe forced fundamental changes in the nature of Iberian Christianity and in the motivations for producing these works. Increasingly Iberian Christianity gained the upper hand in the struggle against Islam, shedding fears of invasion and a declining population and increasingly capitalising on newfound connections to the rest of Christendom. In essence the tenth-century status of the Church exists

\(^5\) Rahlves, *Cathedrals and Monasteries of Spain*, pp. 59-60. Rahlves explains further that Isidore ‘did not hesitate to display a national pride justified by the enduring firmly-based power of the Visigothic kingdom’ in his correspondences with the Popes. Thus in rejecting the liturgy and practices that Isidore established and influences, the shift to the Roman liturgy and Benedictine traditions was a sort of rejection of part of the Iberian heritage.


\(^8\) Gerli, *Medieval Iberia*, p. 731; and Rahlves, *Cathedrals and Monasteries of Spain*, p. 60.
in striking contrast to that of the eleventh-century, which was ‘characterized by
the integration of Christian Spain into western Christendom [and the]
intensification of relations with northern Europe,’ due in no small part to the
influx of knights, monks, scholars, pilgrims, merchants and artisans that all came
from beyond the Pyrenees after the turn of the century.9 All of these factors
contributed to the distancing in style, religious foundations, financial incentives
and promoted ideals developed in the post-1000 manuscripts from those made
before the turn of the millennium.

Considering these rapid and abrupt changes in the regions where the
Beatus Apocalypses were produced, it would be of great value to evaluate the
increased richness of both the material and illumination of the post-1000 works
in relation to the rise in pilgrimage industry and in comparison to the less
opulent tenth-century editions. Future study of the post-1000 Beatus imagery
and iconography would contribute greatly to a better understanding not only of
some of the largest, richest and most elaborate of the Beatus manuscripts, but
also would lend insight into the status, aims and role of the Iberian Church
during that period. Certainly by the thirteenth century, the original motivations
for the production of these Apocalypses had been lost and/or changed.
Therefore, an iconographic study of the later Commentary-based imagery would
be an excellent place to start to decipher the developing functions and
significance of these manuscripts.

Questions regarding how and why the style of the manuscripts changed
and how their function evolved between the tenth and thirteenth centuries
remain largely unanswered despite offering interesting avenues to pursue. Was
the presence of Islam still a great impetus for the production of these works or
were their greater areas of interest for the monastic communities? Which
iconographic elements endured and which evolved with changing
circumstances? What was the impact of the earlier iconography on later works?
What kinds of new styles and forms were integrated into the later works, and
when? These questions, and myriad others, are lines of inquiry which would

9 Joseph O’Callaghan, A History of Medieval Spain (London: Cornell University
further contribute to a better understanding of medieval Iberian culture and the developments that occurred within it.

IV. Final Thoughts

This study is only the beginning of what could become an extensive reconsideration of these images and Iberian culture during the time in which they were produced. Continuing to trace the priorities and concerns of northern Iberian Christians could shed further light on the ongoing debate over Christian-Muslim relations on the Iberian Peninsula throughout the early medieval period. Certainly the evidence and analysis developed throughout this thesis supports the suggestion that the tenth century was not one of convivencia and tolerance, but rather that there was great animosity between Muslims and Christians on the Iberian Peninsula. Later manuscripts, however, could reveal different priorities and shifts in production patterns that suggest more amicable relations between the two groups. Thus while there is much work to be done, perhaps this approach could offer a more nuanced way of addressing the seemingly age-old question of religious and cultural tolerance, or intolerance, as the case may be: a new take on an old but perpetually relevant theme.