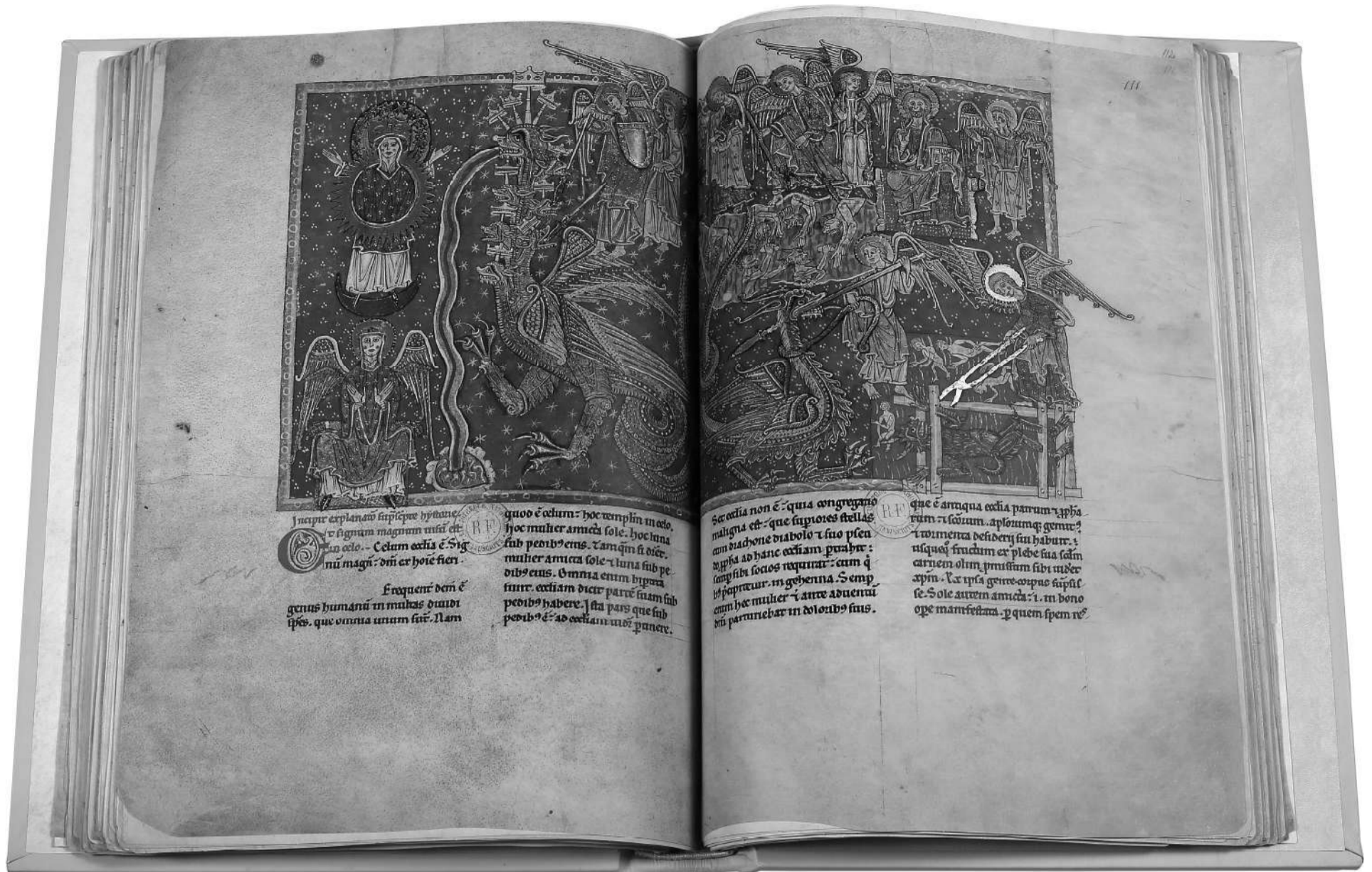


# Beatus of Liébana

## Codex of the Monastery of San Andrés de Arroyo



- 334 pages, 69 miniatures illuminated with gold and silver, 2 columns, 39 lines, 11 3/4 x 18 2/16 inches (300 x 460 mm).

- Written in early Gothic script between 1219 and 1235, and illuminated with precious materials in the Monastery of San Pedro de Cardena, commissioned by Ferdinand III the Saint and his wife Beatrice of Swabia.

- The only BEATUS from a female monastery: Cistercian nuns of the Monastery of San Andrés de Arroyo, in Palencia, with direct dependence on the Monastery of Santa María La Real de Huelgas.

- Volume of studies by a team of experts.

- The Bibliothèque nationale de France bought it in 1882 from M. Toca.

- Unique and unrepeatable print run, rigorously limited to 987 copies duly numbered and authenticated, one by one, by notary.

- Especially handmade paper with the same feel, thickness and smell of the original.

- Bound in calfskin, tanned with the same techniques used in the 13th century.

The only BEATUS with the presence of more than one pictorial tradition in his miniatures.

### THE MILLENNIUM CODEX

M. MOLEIRO decided to celebrate the start of the new millennium by making 987 "clones" of the *Arroyo Beatus* so that, a thousand years from now, in 3000, other eyes will have the joy of his own: to see his overwhelming images and feel the shiver of their contemplation.

"The images of the *Arroyo Beatus*, as opposed to the symbolist patterns of the previous codices, illustrate the corresponding apocalyptic text with an evident tendency towards narrative clarity, which translates into an almost literal transposition of the text in images.... The same does not occur in the other codices of the same branch and similar chronology, whose illustrations are much more hermetic and refer to the symbolic and less intelligible forms of earlier times."

PROFESSOR ELENA RUIZ LARREA

"His lavish images usher in one of the most prodigious iconographic traditions in the entire history of Western art." UMBERTO ECO

The best example of the internationality and prestige of Castilian culture, focused on the court of Burgos.

#### f. 18v The four beasts of Daniel

The Commentary on the Apocalypse of Beatus is made up of texts from different sources assembled by the Beatus of Liébana in a more or less correct way. Thus, in a long prologue to Book II, he alludes to the Church and the Synagogue, and in the second part he dedicates a subchapter to the Beast. It is then when, in speaking of their kinds, the tremendous beings that appear in the book of Daniel are mentioned. It is common to illustrate the text with a vision of all of them in the same folio. But, while in most of the previous Beatus, the artists have not bothered to provide them with a frame, neither singular nor collective, because the model they were inspired by must not have had one, in our Beatus a compositional balance is sought, so that an almost square is divided into four parts, each of which frames a beast. Nor is it normal for the background to be colored, since the framing is missing. On the contrary, here the background is taken care of and a certain chromatic contrast and similarity is sought. The general frame is green and in the division one line is gold and the other silver. The background alternates between red and blue, with a set of simple stars standing out on top of both. The use of color and its brilliance is one of the miniaturist's greatest virtues.

The four beasts present, however, a certain uniformity incompatible in principle with what the texts say about them. They give the impression of lions with attachments. However, Daniel emphasized the differences. In the first one, description and image coincide: it is like a lioness with eagle wings, except that the miniaturist painted a lion. Of the second, which is under the other, it is said that it was like a bear. These animals being common in certain Hispanic regions, they should not have been unknown to the artists. The authors of other Beatuses were more faithful to the animal, which here again resembles a lion of somewhat heavy forms. The third is like a leopard. But the artists have not followed the brief indications given in the Beatus, but have resorted to the illustrative tradition of Daniel. And the prophet explained in more detail what this kind of leopard was like: it had four heads and two pairs of wings. And in this, the Beatus of St. Andrew of Arroyo is more faithful than other earlier manuscripts. The last beast is extremely strong, and has seven heads and twelve horns. However, in the book of Daniel only the horns are mentioned, and we do not see anything else in the miniature. It is even more precise: one of the horns was larger, had eyes and a mouth and spoke. In other Beatus a strange head is seen on the horny tip. Here it has been eliminated.

These beings are understood in two ways. On the one hand, they are this world which is divided into four parts. But, above all, following Daniel again, they are four kingdoms. Beatus explains that they are Babylon, Medes and Persians, Macedonians and, finally, Rome. Was this explanation of the beasts meaningful to the people of the twelfth or thirteenth centuries? Of course, if they were represented, it was by the will of the one who organized in the tenth century the definitive and richest illustration, and because Beatus had recourse to Daniel in his Commentary. The form of the framed image and the order in which the animals are presented recalls the cavalcades of giant animals that appeared in some mural cycles of the 1200s in monasteries such as the Castilian monastery of San Pedro de Afianza.

#### f. 56v Vision of the Lamb (Rev. V)

Contrary to what might be supposed, miniaturists have not always transcribed in exact images the apocalyptic text and, even less, the exegetical Commentary. This is one of the cases. When Magius in the Beatus of Escalada creates a new impressive circular composition, different from what is common in the European tradition, he makes sure that everything obeys rules of rigid symmetry, without forgetting the Apocalypse. But then the four living beings that represent the evangelists are no longer mentioned, and yet here they appear oriented along a horizontal and a vertical axis. The elders are beardless beings, succeeding one who bows to adore the Lamb and the throne, the next who carries a musical instrument and a third who holds a golden cup in his hands. The image that comes to mind is that of a dome-like composition supported by pendentives or trumpets on which angels are placed. With the passage of time, the symmetry is relatively lost, without dispensing with the idea of concentric circles. Within this illustrative tradition we find ourselves at the end with the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo.

The larger circle is framed in a square frame, but is supported by four angels of unequal aesthetic value. However, its interior has been populated by various beings foreign to this area in ancient times. Thus, the Maiestas of God is at the top, when in other circumstances it was above the circle. It is curious, because she must have been seated on a throne and the position of the body indicates it, but there is no trace of the furniture. It has displaced the theriomorphic figure, partly human (body), partly angelic (wings), partly animal (bull's head), of Luke. Both in him and in the other beings in the lower part of the body we see circles that in the ancient copies presented a division in four zones by means of wavy lines allusive to the wheels of fire of the visions of the Old Testament, which were used as a model in the Apocalypse. The original meaning has also been lost, because they are replaced by a decorative motif. The elders, in the version of the Beatus do not seem so, because they maintain the youthful and beardless air of the first copies. Once again, the old symmetries have been broken. There are a total of nine, of which some carry the corresponding musical instrument, others, the golden cups, but some third ones do not bow before the throne, but in their hand can be seen a book that they offer to the Maiestas or to the nearest tetramorphic sign.

The Lamb does not fulfill the monstrous conditions demanded by the Apocalypse: seven horns and seven eyes, and, as is traditional, it maintains a natural form, although the presence of antlers separates it from the more tender ones of before. Seeing that no one is worthy to open the book of the seven seals, John weeps, but is comforted by one of the elders. Almost certainly this is what we contemplate below, where a kind of winged angel, who must be the elder, addresses him. The Lamb must have had the book on one side, it is common, but here there is no trace of it.

This is a remarkable work, a complex and double theophany or manifestation of the divine, which, at first glance, gives the impression that it copies the previous manuscripts of its family. But a detailed observation shows the large number of variants presented. Some are logical, but others (the book in the hands of the elders) are incomprehensible. The force of the illustrative tradition is great in the Beatus, but here it is surpassed, even in certain iconographic forms and formulas. For example, the musicians were said to be inspired by the Caliph Muslims. Now they have ended up distancing themselves from them.

#### f. 70v Vision of the four horsemen (Rev. VI, 1-8)

The image of fantastic and terrible horsemen riding over the earth and leaving traces of destruction and death in their wake has gone beyond the normal scope of the Apocalypse and is still in common parlance a sign of war and destruction. It is the moment when the Lamb begins to break the seals of the book of Revelation. At each opened seal one of the living ones, that is, of the evangelists, turns to John and says: "Come and see", then a horseman riding a horse emerges. The words of the four living ones are completed, while four horsemen appear. In the Ila family of Beato's manuscripts, we only see the successive horsemen arranged two by two on an upper and a lower level. On the contrary, in branch IIb the presence of John and the living one is normal, in addition to the Lamb itself. Belonging to it, we also find them in this way in the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo. This forces to establish a division in four zones or floors, each one framed and with a different color background. The bands of color is one of the characteristics of the manuscripts of family II, at least since Magius. But now, what were mere bands with no other separation than that provided by the color, become thick barriers, here of silver.

Furthermore, Beato and his models have a clear idea of opposition between the first rider and the others. He wears a crown and wields a bow, and his horse is white. He will be Christ and the horse, the Church. He will fight against the other three. He usually turns backward, in the manner of the ancient Parthian horsemen, and draws the bow. Here he has gone further, because the first arrow has been launched and has stuck in the mouth of the second horseman, in spite of which he already has a second one ready. Although he wears a golden nimbus, it should not be considered particularly significant. The illustrative tradition obliges that around the head there was a kind of aura not fully explained. Passing from the High Middle Ages to the Romanesque, the aura becomes a nimbus, without implying sanctity. And in proof we have the third horseman, who does not lack the nimbus, even though he embodies a negative being.

Of the horseman directly attacked it is said that he carried a sword, in order to undo the peace on Earth and get men to slit each other's throats. His horse was red. The colors of the horses, except perhaps that of the first horseman, are not usually respected to the letter. Here it comes to be a shade of brown. But the important thing is to verify that the miniaturists took into account Beato's explanation, who identifies the rider with the "bloody devil". The horse is the people opposed to the Church. Contrary to what might be supposed, these circumstances rarely occur. For the first time we meet the devil. The Apocalypse mentions him repeatedly and the Beatus present a variety of forms without parallel in the Western illustrative tradition of the early Middle Ages. But again, we find that the miniaturists prefer to pick up the representations of the European Romanesque, particularly French and English, and so we have a hairy, naked being, with a face framed with large ears. He still maintains the human form in hands and feet. The third horseman is ambiguous because it is a negative being, where the balance itself is not what it seems, and yet neither here nor in other codices is there a single sign that would allow anyone who has not read the text to guess its true nature.

It is evident that the Apocalypse already implies that the fourth horseman is Death and that he carries Hell behind him. It is normal that no negative signs are manifested in the horseman, while Hell, more than a room, is a monstrous being that seems to fly over the horseman. Again, here everything is clear, but rider and Inferno are the same: hairy devils, with strong spurs on hands and feet, horned Death and with huge ears the Inferno, who also wears on his body a short garment that barely reaches above the waist. This is one of the highest quality miniatures, the work of the best and most active miniaturist of the manuscript. Not in these beings, but in the horses, he shows the best of his capabilities. Their gait is different in the upper ones than in the lower ones, trying to make it seem that the latter have a step, while the others announce a certain trot. Within the conventionalisms to the use, it would be said that a certain will of naturalism exists that gives its best results in the last animal.

#### f. 73v Opening of the fifth seal: the souls of the dead (Apoc. VI, 9-11)

One of the most mysterious miniatures and, in some codices, the most delicate in color. The fifth seal is opened and the souls of those who have died for defending the word of God, that is, the martyrs, are shown. They ask God for vengeance. They are given white clothes because the time for them has not yet come. They stand at the altar of God. Perhaps the memory of this divine character helped to place an unknown character on it. In the ancient illustrative tradition, the story was divided in two, so that in the upper zone a figure in bust, the altar and the souls in the form of birds were well distinguished, while, below, the altar was contemplated from another perspective and the martyrs were dressed in white tunics. Beato's explanation is somewhat puzzling. After a clear indication that there is an announcement of the Last Judgment that must be delayed, albeit for a short time, he loses himself in digressions so foreign to the subject that he must remind himself to return to the Apocalypse.

In the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo the scheme has been broken. There is only one altar in the middle and with gold lamps hanging from a supposed ceiling. The three bands are again reinforced with those thick silver lines. But a subtle vertical separation is drawn defining diverse areas of color in each zone. I don't think the result is fortunate, even though the alternation of colors is played with: blue on the upper right and lower left, and on the contrary, the other tone, while the entire lower part has a red background.

There is no doubt that the bust figure in other codices has become a full-bodied figure with a cruciform nimbus, that is, that it is God, to whom the protests of the souls are addressed and to whom the altar belongs. The souls are in principle small birds, in accordance with an ancient custom that did not lose its validity throughout the Middle Ages. It is curious that the possibility offered by the text of representing the beheading of the martyrs in a real or symbolic way is not used, something that occurs in the other illuminated tradition. But, when these souls are clothed with the white stoles, they will become adult human characters. The color has not been respected on this occasion either, although its positive meaning is clear.

Perhaps the greatest novelty lies in all that surrounds God. It is a sort of paradisiacal garden covered with conventional plants, trees and bushes. The possible fruits of some are circles or spheres of gold. The abundance of this gold and, likewise, of silver, is infrequent in Beato's codices, with the exception of the extraordinary copy commissioned by Ferdinand I and Sancha (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional). For this reason, there are those who have suggested, using other arguments, that we could be dealing with a second royal commission, although destined for the use of the female Cistercian community of San Andrés de Arroyo.

**f. 98 The fantastic locusts and the angel of the abyss (Rev. IX, 7-12)**

The seals continue to open. The opening of the seventh seal is followed by silence. Then seven angels with seven trumpets appear. Each time one blows his, some cataclysm occurs, which Beato does not always interpret as such, but spiritually. At the sounding of the fifth, a star falls and the key to the abyss is handed. From there, smoke and extraordinary locusts emerge. They will attack men with their stings, causing pain, but never death. The locust as a plague was unfortunately familiar to the entire Mediterranean area, therefore, the choice of this animal must have found an echo, both when the Apocalypse was written, as well as in the medieval peninsular Christian kingdoms. But they are given a different dimension, because of their size, and because they do not have the shape that corresponds to them. They are monstrous beings with the sting of scorpions to punish men.

Its king is Abaddon, angel of the abyss. The Essene writings of the Dead Sea already mention him, and he can be identified as a personal being or as a negative abyssal stay. There is no doubt as to who he is, nor is it necessary to turn to Beatus' Commentary. However, one after another, the manuscripts present an angel armed with a shield and a spear that seems to confront those who are his subjects, except in the Beatus of Saint-Sever, where he occupies an unusual place and presents all the necessary negative signs. In the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo the custom is not transgressed: a winged being dressed in a long tunic, barefoot, and armed with a spear and a golden oval shield pierces with it the mouth of the first locust. It is hard to understand why the meaning of the text was not taken into account, since, because of this, anyone who did not read it would think that, once again, we are presented with a classic confrontation between good and evil, when, in addition, Beato says that it is the devil.

The miniaturist has stuck to the description given in the Apocalypse, with some liberties. They are said to be like horses, and yet they have much like lions or the like, with tremendous claws not at all like equine hooves. Their faces were man-like and their heads were crowned. Their hair was long, feminine. Winged, they wore as breastplates, war garters. Their long, pointed tails stung the heads of men who had their eyes closed, while one tried to flee from them. Of course they have a demonic character or are like false Christians, and their human face is a source of deception to others. Each of the parts of which they consist is the subject of an explanation.

Once again, the form is superimposed on the chromatic and uniform intensity of the backgrounds, where the blues and reds stand out above the rest of the colors, something that should be considered characteristic of the codex. This abundance of blue had to be placed among the aforementioned elements of richness, because it is the most expensive of the colors.

**f. 99 The sixth trumpet and the four angels of the Euphrates (Rev. IX, 13-15)**

Immediately the sixth angel sounds the trumpet and a voice is heard coming from the altar, commanding him to loose the four angels standing by the Euphrates. They kill a third of the men. The text is brief and enigmatic. Its translation in images does not seem the most appropriate. First of all, it is not one but two angels who have the trumpet. In reality, it must be the same in two moments of a sequence. First, he blows the trumpet, and then he must unbind the other angels. But, in fact, in both moments he has the instrument in his mouth. The altar and the throne of God are not missing either. It is understood that the voice that commands him comes from Him, and that is why there is never a lack of a majestic vision.

It is traditional for the four angels to be aligned and, below, to the left. They do not carry any object in their hands, except here, where they are carrying a book. The river comes out of the center left, continues down and ends up flowing towards the lower zone. And this is how the illustration usually ends, covering only three-quarters of a sheet of paper.

That is why our miniature presents an iconography without known precedents, neither in the Beatus, nor in other apocalyptic codices, because it is not justified by the text. All the first elements are present. The angel who first sounds the trumpet is placed on the altar with the table covered with gold. But the dead space on the lower right is filled with four naked men attacked by the same number of devils. One of these strikes with a cane, the other, armed with huge pincers, grabs with them the nose of a human being, who must already support on his neck a devil, who strikes him with a whip topped with balls, while a last devil has placed a rope around the neck of a last character. What does he mean? Beato's commentary is particularly cryptic on this occasion. There is no way to justify the scene. It goes so far as to speak negatively of the river Euphrates, although at another point this is not clear: *"The Euphrates is a river of Babylon. And Babylon means confusion. Therefore, this Babylon signifies the world, and the river of Babylon is the people of this world, in which the devil remains bound."* Unbound Satan, it is said, will then do to the Church the harm he so desires. Perhaps this has been the starting point to justify what we see. But it is far from being understood with certainty.

What appears is that the quality of the miniature, as interesting as it is iconographically, is less than on other occasions, but within a great stylistic similarity. The demons, very similar to those seen in the scene of the four horsemen, are harder in form. The folding of the cloths that dress the angels, very short in size, seems a bad imitation of the most careful in the previous scene. It is very probable that we are before two different artists of which the one of worse quality would be a disciple of the first. The color does not show appreciable changes, which would reinforce the idea of master and disciple, as happens in other manuscripts, which admit the participation of even a third artist.

**f. 100v The fantastic horses (Apoc. IX, 17-21)**

It is even easier to compare the naked figures of those attacked by the horses with those martyred by the devils and see the difference in favor of the former. On the other hand, this type of faces and even the anatomical analysis of the nude, allow us to establish a comparison with the miniatures of the Beato de San Pedro de Cardeña, an excellent codex, but of which numerous illustrations are missing, although the main group is preserved in the National Archaeological Museum of Madrid. If I wanted to indicate the figures that come closest, I would say that they are, above all, the naked human attacked and dead that is on the left, below, or the same head of the last of the horsemen, seen almost in three quarters. It would seem that we are before an evolved version of the art of San Pedro de Cardeña, superior in quality, but chronologically earlier by some 20 or 30 years. We know very little about the first origin of the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo. It comes from this monastery, as indicated by a later inscription (f. 167), but there is no other information about it older than 1882, the year in which it entered the National Library in Paris. It is difficult to believe that there was a scriptorium in the monastery where the codex was copied.

The stylistic similarities with the Beato de San Pedro de Cardeña and with some illustrations of the Burgos Bible would point to San Pedro de Cardeña as the place of illumination. There existed in the great monastery an excellent "scriptorium" active between 1170 approximately and an imprecise date that could be fixed in 1204, when the abbot Miguel died, or very little later. Our codex could belong to this final stage. Work had already been done earlier on a book for the monastery of Santa María La Real de Huelgas, near Burgos, on which San Andrés de Arroyo depends.

Returning to the miniature, we are before a scene that impresses, but that does not present any aspect that singles it out. The large frame that occupies the entire sheet is insufficient to contain the bodies of those attacked and killed with the tails of the horses that end in the heads of biting snakes. Following the convention of the Beatus, those attacked when they are dead are naked. It is a rule that is maintained in the tenth and eleventh centuries, even in the twelfth, but that is not always fulfilled in later dates.

The Apocalypse said that the horses had heads like a lion and tails like a serpent, besides spewing fire, brimstone and smoke from their mouths. This transforms them, even though they are horses endowed with hooves. However, the changes with which the previous four famous riders rode are too great to come from the same hand. Neither is the way of using shades of color on the face to obtain an impression of volume the same. It is possible that the author of the fantastic horses is not the same miniaturist as the previous two. In the following miniature we meet again the first of them.

**f. 106v Antichrist kills the two witnesses (Rev. XI, 7-10)**

At one point there is talk of two witnesses of God. We are at the beginning of one of the always interesting cycles of Revelation and one that has never aroused special exegetical misgivings. The vast majority of commentators agree that Enoch and Elijah will now be mentioned. But that is not what the text says. It only mentions the two witnesses of God who will be attacked and killed by the Beast that will emerge from the abyss. When Beatus wrote his Commentary, he used various sources that clearly indicated that one of the witnesses was Elijah, but did not pronounce the second, although the name Jeremiah was suggested and rejected at the same time. In reality, it was thought of two persons of the Old Testament that had not died and had been kept by God until the end of the times in which they would give testimony of him, as long as they were not killed by the Antichrist. In the tenth century in the Christian kingdoms it was already known that the second witness was Enoch and this was reflected in the codices in the inscriptions. But the first commentators knew that the Beast was the Antichrist, this figure that flies here and there over the Commentary of Beatus, although it is not mentioned in the book of Revelation. Several authors dedicate studies to it. Later he will be endowed with a biography. But now he is a counter-figure of Christ who is known to arise at the end of time, therefore, his arrival will be the announcement that these are near. He has come to be identified with concrete, historical personages, now and for a long time to come. His name is resurrected before any millenarian movement. On the other hand, it is only said that the bodies of the dead witnesses will be exposed in the square of the great city. Which is this city? Beatus already says, albeit vaguely: Jerusalem. Beatus will dedicate three folios to them. In the first, the "portrait" of both witnesses is shown. In the second, which is the case before us, Antichrist undermines the walls of Jerusalem and kills the witnesses. In the last, by divine will, they ascend triumphantly to heaven.

What image is given of the Antichrist? Strictly speaking, he should present himself with an aspect very similar to that of his model in which some negative identifying sign could be perceived. However, this is not the case, he is usually seen as a human being, perhaps larger than normal size, wearing a cap that is a badge of power. This, in our manuscripts. In other European Apocalypse manuscripts he tends to be demonized from the second half of the twelfth century. In the Beatus of St. Andrew of Arroyo it is hardly relevant. It must be the crowned individual on the left armed with a sword, but without any protection. He leads the attack on the city. The illustration in the Beatuses is usually accompanied by numerous clarifying inscriptions. At this point it is usually indicated that the Antichrist destroys Jerusalem. But in the Beatus of St. Andrew of Arroyo texts have been completely dispensed with. Therefore, without them, it must be understood that the architectural structure with arches that is collapsing, if we judge by the stones that are detached, is Jerusalem. And those under attack are those who are resisting the Antichrist. He is leading the operation. In the lower area, the soldiers of the negative character kill the witnesses. On many occasions it is in this scenario that the Antichrist kills Enoch and Elijah with his own weapons. One of them has his head cut off. The normal thing is that, immediately, he would be naked and so it happens, but now the rule is not fulfilled. The arches of the upper construction are supported by shaft columns with much entasis or thickening in their central part. Others of this type are also found in some miniatures of the codices from San Pedro de Cardeña. And in the monastery itself there is a cloister where these shafts are used at the end of the 12th century. In addition, it has a capital and as a base an almost identical inverted capital, again as in the aforementioned manuscripts. It is another sign of proximity to its "scriptorium". Also noteworthy is the heraldry on the coats of arms, so far absent, a sign of a new situation that usually appears from the second half of the century onwards. It is not real heraldry, but fictitious.

**f. 109 The opened temple and the beast coming up out of the abyss (Rev. XI, 19)**

Once again we must resort to Beatus' Commentary for the miniature to reach its full meaning. The Apocalypse only says that the temple of God in heaven was opened and the ark of the covenant was seen in it in the midst of a tremendous storm. But here and in other illustrations, moreover, the beast ascends from the abyss, and this beast cannot be but the one quoted above who becomes the Antichrist.

Perhaps the development granted to the temple of God is the most striking. It is an enormous fortified factory with two lines of walls, both armed with merlons or battlements to help its defense, built in well squared stone and culminated in numerous towers. It is still a fictitious architecture unrelated to any real one, except in those general aspects such as the double belt of walls, the constructive rig or the towers. In the middle, a whimsical arch open, almost trilobular, as in previous examples, which allows to see the ark of the covenant. It has the air of a reliquary in the form of a box with a gabled roof, culminating in a cross. The shafts of the columns on the sides, again, have the aforementioned entasis.

As miniaturists are accustomed to, everything is perfectly framed with a line that outlines a rectangle. This allows the background, always inside the frame, to be tinted with alternating colors, blue and red. It has already been said that these are the preferred colors. But this is not only found in the Beato, but also in the miniature that has been baptized as belonging to the 1200s. The Beato belongs chronologically to this period, but it cannot be considered as an example of that kind of sub-style, although common elements such as color are found in it.

Below is the beast that ascends from the abyss. The strangest monstrous beings circulate through the apocalyptic pages, most of them endowed with a symbolism that is precise in every detail of their description. But, at the same time, the variety is even more surprising, when one has the impression that it is normal that the same monster is mentioned several times and represented in different ways. It would be the case of the Beast ridden by the great Prostitute of Babylon, which is found in two parts of the codex and each one presents a different aspect. In the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo there is no great creative fantasy when it comes to conceiving these beings. We have mentioned the case of the four beasts of Daniel's vision that give the impression of being lions with some addition. We see the same here. The beast is nothing but a superb lion, like so many seen in capitals, wall paintings or miniatures. Nothing is out of the rule: body covered with hair, long hair and characteristic head, huge claws and protruding tongue. Although it turns its head back, it gives the impression of walking in the opposite direction. I had previously related these animals to those in places such as the chapter house of San Pedro de Arlanza. The place and chronology are also close.

**f. 147v Babylon burns (Rev. XVIII, 1 and ff.)**

Many things have happened. New beasts have appeared, successively defeated by God. Then, an angel descends from heaven and shouts with loud voices: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen". There is no doubt that Babylon has become in Hebrew thought a paradigm of a city of evil, a place of captivity and the center of all vices. This image has been transmitted to the Christian world. The message launched by the angel is clearly evident: the city of the devil is coming to an end. The angel himself is identified by Beatus with Christ. Therefore, it is he who puts an end to the city of the world, which is the city of the devil. It will be destroyed and its mines will be inhabited by unclean beings.

At the same time the followers of God, the righteous, are warned to flee from the city now because it will be burned with fire. The message in Beatus' exegesis is diversified, nuanced, even contradicted, but in general terms it was not almost necessary because the meaning of everything is intelligible with only one reading of the Apocalypse.

This situation gives rise to a double folio miniature in the great manuscripts. On the verso of one folio is the city in flames and on the next those kings of the earth and rich merchants who mourn the fall of the city and who, it is said, identify themselves with it. This is also the case of the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo, although in the image we only see the first scene. Even here, without results, the miniaturist wanted to frame the city in flames, but both the architectural structure and the flames overwhelm the forecasts.

The city is an immense built mass, a fortress of several walled enclosures that rises in height and opens into windows or niches filled with objects. In older manuscripts these objects have been analyzed and it has been possible to demonstrate their ancient Christian or Visigothic origin. The conservatism of the artists means that something remains of it all, but there has been a certain change. The objects are of gold or silver. What are they? Are they the vessels of the Lord spoken of in the text or are they a token of the untold riches that the city treasured? Most likely they are the former. There are other positive elements. It is said in the Apocalypse, and its exegete comments on it, that there is an external and an internal city, and in one of them dwell those righteous ones. Well, among the openings there are two major symmetrical openings, with an arch that pretends to recall the lobed arch, but is not more than wavy. Under them are seen a kind of sarcophagi or boxes supported on four feet apparently made of wood. Nobody talks about it. However, there was an ancient tradition that affirmed that in the city were buried those three Hebrews, saved from the furnace by God, when they refused to worship idols. All three found convenient burial, when they died later in the city. And what we see here are their monumental tombs. In many manuscripts there is no trace of them, but not in all.

**f. 157v The time of the Antichrist (Rev. XX, 7-9)**

Often, when reading the Apocalypse, one would think that the end of time has come and the Final Judgment is approaching, and yet, once again, it turns back and the calamities are repeated. For a thousand years Christ reigns, but at the end of them Satan will be released. He will deceive everyone, counting among them the mysterious Gog and Magog. The people will gather and will come in battle array and will surround the saints and the beloved city. But finally, they will be definitively defeated. With this simple story it is impossible to clarify the meaning of an excellent miniature, but it must sound familiar to anyone who has contemplated the codex in its entirety.

The city in the upper area surrounded by an army is reminiscent of Jerusalem attacked by the army of the Antichrist. The Beast worshipped by five figures has been seen before. Finally, up to four groups of human beings wrapped in a wavy form are almost exact to those who must have hidden in the mountains, as told in Revelation VI, 15-17, although there those who hide under the mountains are those who flee from the wrath of the Lamb.

In the brevity of history there was only a certain interest in those strange Gog and Magog, which in some circumstances seem to be personal beings, in other countries or places, and even peoples. Much has been mentioned and commented on in the Middle Ages. Nor are they alien to the Beatus, but in branch I, especially in the wonderful Beatus of Burgo de Osma. They do not affect in any way the illustration that we have before us here and its tradition starting from the Beatus of Magius. Since then, the story has been composed in this way, with the normal variants and changes.

Of course, Beato believes that Satan will become one with the Antichrist and will then reign for three and a half years. Now if it is true, we are indeed in critical times, near the end. The brief mention of the siege of the saints and the city is what brings us back to the story of the two witnesses, who do not appear, while, on the contrary, it is the same city as before, defended from the walls by people throwing stones, which is assaulted by an army, that of the Antichrist. The only dark character is the one seated, with a crown and a sword, under the entrance arch. Everything points to it being the Antichrist himself, in a confused vision.

The seven-headed beast, flanked by his followers, is hardly justified, not even with Beato's explanation. It will be necessary to consider what was understood in the thinking of the one who promoted the new iconography of the family II, but he left no written record of what he intended. Finally, those who hide in the mountains are the Christians who must flee before the irresistible attack of the Antichrist and his followers. In this case, the recurrence to a previous text and image is well justified, even if the meaning is inverted.

It may not be the most beautiful of the miniatures, not least because it could be the work of the supposed disciple of the first miniaturist. But, according to the tradition of the family, it is always a composition of great effect. And, at the same time, it is quite evident, as we have been demonstrating, that it is formed by disintegrated parts of previous compositions already known. To a certain extent, in image it translates what happens with the text. Beato made his Commentary using conjunctions that united or contrasted texts of other authors. Here the story is composed on the basis of three fragments of scenes from other parts of the illumination of the Commentary.

**f. 160 The Last Judgment (Rev. XX, 10-11)**

The reign of the Antichrist ends at the end of those three and a half years, being at the end beheaded. The tribunal of God is established. The dedicated sentences are short, so is the Commentary offered by Beatus. Everything is clear. In contrast, the manuscripts have unfolded these immense stories that occupy the double folio, almost without parallels in the rest of Europe. It has been considered that it was a first Christian vision of the Last Judgment. But the formula was not overly attractive. Order presided over everything. The elect made up small groups under the throne of God. And the damned were on the other side, ready to be devoured by a hole that precipitated them into hell. Neither was this one too singular: a rectangular room tinged with a leaden hue in which flaming red ripples emerged. The condemned "swam" naked in more or less forced postures. This changed little with the passage of time. But the Beato de San Andrés de Arroyo presents a panorama that has nothing to do with tradition.

First of all, we only see the second part. The previous folio has disappeared. Therefore, we find ourselves with the damned and Hell. At the first glance, the difference is obvious. Hell is that tremendous monster with a gigantic devouring mouth, known from many European Romanesque works, both in sculpture (Ste. Foy, of Conques) and in miniature, the Leviathan of the book of Job. Particularly striking are the English mined hells, where the head can be presented as here, opening its gigantic jaws from below, or doing so laterally, as seen in the great Winchester Psalter (London, British Library). The punishments of sinners become more developed from the second quarter of the 13th century onwards. In the Beatus we see at least two tremendous scenes. On the left the damned are burned, as if they were in a vessel (although they are not). Among them one seems to carry the bag that characterizes the miser. They are watched on each side by a devil of exactly the same type that we already know. On the right side, the torture consists of a wheel with knives that cut up the naked bodies of the condemned. It is a punishment that was neither found in the Hispanic, nor in the European Romanesque. This punished group is also beaten by devils carrying clubs.

On the upper floors are displayed what we could call the "states of the earth", that is, human beings aligned according to the social order, although pope and emperor are missing. There are kings and bishops, monks and nobles, men and women. Nor were the tonsured religious missing among those punished in the infernal mouth. Those in the second register have been definitively condemned. All of them carry a rope around their necks from which a devil pulls. It is not very frequent, but there is a similar case in the Psalter of Marguerite de Bourgogne (Paris, Saint Genevieve Library), from the 13th century.

In short, the Beatus has internationalized his iconographic language by breaking with an extremely solidly established tradition. But it goes further than its foreign models in the description of certain punishments, for which, no doubt, there must be parallels. There is no need to point out the specific route by which this came in, but neither should we forget the provenance of Eleanor of Aquitaine, the wife of Alfonso VIII, the fluid relations of always with France and the less normal, but effective in the miniature, with the English illuminated books.

Perhaps the impressive nature of the ensemble is somewhat detracted from the technical level of execution. It would seem that the execution was entrusted to the disciple of the first master, the least brilliant of all the artists.

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