

ON THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CLASSIFICATION OF DECORATED INITIALS IN LATIN MANUSCRIPTS OF TENTH-CENTURY SPAIN¹

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In his 1910 description of the *Codex Vigilanus* P. Guillermo Antolin takes the trouble to mention that the opening title on folio 70^v is in four lines, with letters in blue, yellow, and green on alternating backgrounds of yellow and blue—but neglects to mention the splendid page-high initial which opens the text (pl. V, 1).² The reader of the general literature on early medieval art will discover a number of descriptions and reproductions of decorated initials in Carolingian, Ottonian, and Anglo-Saxon art, but hardly anything from Spain without turning to the specialized scholarly literature. When an early medieval decorated letter from Spain does appear in a general work it is likely to be one of the symbolic Alphas or Omegas, rather than an initial.³ Descriptions of the early medieval manuscripts of Spain will generally include a mention of decorated initials, but it will be summary and will rarely indicate where the initials are. Thus, only the student who has examined the manuscripts *in situ*, or through microfilms and photos available only in a few specialized libraries, can deal effectively with the information carried by these complex letters.⁴ Recent research by art historians has focused on

¹I am indebted to the Biblioteca Nacional and Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid, and the Biblioteca del Escorial for providing me with photographs of initials of manuscripts in their collections and permission to reproduce them. The assistance and advice of Dr Frank Taylor and Miss Glenise Matheson of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester and of Professor John Williams of the University of Pittsburgh were of great value in my work. My research was supported by a grant from the Research Foundation of the State University of New York.

²*Catálogo de los códices latinos de la Biblioteca del Escorial*, Madrid, i. 381.

³I have analysed these in 'Northern Influences in the Initials and Ornaments of the Beatus Manuscripts', *Actas del simposio para el estudio de los códices del "Comentario al Apocalipsis" de Beato de Liébana*, Madrid, ii. (1980), 65–82.

⁴I have examined most of the manuscripts discussed in this paper. In some cases I have had to rely on microfilms available in the Archivo Histórico

initials to a greater extent than in the past, but this primarily because their decorative vocabularies are symptomatic of the various influences which contributed to the formation of early medieval Spanish manuscript illumination.¹

Tenth-century Spain was a major area for the production of strikingly handsome decorated letters. Their style depends on earlier forms, but so does the Carolingian, Ottonian, and Anglo-Saxon. Ultimately the most carefully executed and imaginative of these initials become something quite originally distinct from the original models, and from the viewpoint of anyone interested in the history of European ornament and design this would be reason enough to extend our studies of these impressive calligraphic forms. In addition, they constitute a practically untapped source of data in manuscript studies. There are reasons for this besides the obvious one that the study of decorated initials tends to be outside the primary spheres of interest of paleographers as well as art historians. The early medieval Spanish calligrapher-artist tended to preserve old decorative motifs, sometimes mixing or combining them with new forms. Sometimes a new trend may not involve the creation of new motifs so much as an elaboration and increased stress on forms which may have been around for some time. These patterns can create the impression that there was no clear development of initial styles in Spanish tenth-century manuscript illumination, or that the stages in that development can be identified only in the roughest terms.

On the contrary, systematic analysis of the initials reveals that 'evolutionary' stages do exist, and that in those cases where a manuscript contains excellent and inventive designs the decor-

Nacional in Madrid or photographs in the New York Pierpont Library. I know a very few of the manuscripts only through reproductions available in the scholarly literature.

¹See, for example, my own previous publications in this area: 'Zoomorphic Decoration and the Problem of the Sources of Mozarabic Illumination', *Speculum*, xxxv (1960), 17-38; 'Interlace Decoration and the Influence of the North on Mozarabic Illumination', *The Art Bulletin*, xlii (1960), 211-18; 'Observations on Some Interlace Initials and Frame Ornaments in Mozarabic Manuscripts of León-Castile', *Scriptorium*, xv (1961), 23-35; 'Some Observations on Mozarabic Manuscript Illumination in the Light of Recent Publications', *Scriptorium*, xxx, 2 (1976), 183-91.

ated letters may provide clues to place and date as accurate as those provided by other means, if not more so.

I shall demonstrate that three major stages (with the third one in two variants) can be identified in the development of decorated initials in the Latin manuscripts of tenth-century Spain, by using as a foundation works whose dates are satisfactorily documented or about which there is general agreement. Around these manuscripts, others of uncertain date will then be grouped. The three stages are: Period I: from the end of the ninth century to c.935; Period II: from c.935 to c.960; Period IIIa: from c.960 to c.1000—and what I shall call Period IIIb, which really very closely overlaps IIIa, and whose initials are closely related to those of period IIIa: from c.970 to c.1000.

Period I (end of ninth century to c.935). (Plate I).¹

Initials are relatively small in relation to the total page area (as indicated in the upper right-hand insets in some of the line drawing illustrations).

¹In his book *Der ältere Beatus—Kodex Vitr. 14-1 der Biblioteca Nacional zu Madrid* (Hildesheim—New York, 1976), 233 f., Peter Klein discusses informatively the initials of this period in relation to the Beatus manuscript in question, and reproduces a number of them in his second volume as figs 38–40, 178–201, 208–22, 227–36, 240, 241. For information and additional bibliography on the manuscripts from which initials are illustrated in plate I, consult the following: Figs 1, 2: Escorial, cod. P.I.7., 9th–10th century—P. Guillermo Antolin, *Catálogo de los códices latinos de la Real Biblioteca del Escorial* (Madrid, 1913), iii. 257–60; A. Millares Carlo, *Manuscritos visigóticos*, (Barcelona—Madrid, 1963), no. 27, p. 21. Fig. 3: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 10064, 9th–10th century—R. Fernández-Pousa, *Los manuscritos visigóticos de la Biblioteca Nacional*, in *Verdad y Vida*, iii (1945), no. 17, pp. 402–4. Fig. 4: Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 26, c.900—C. U. Clark, *Collectanea Hispanica, Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, xxiv (1920), no. 589, pl. 37, pp. 180–2; Millares, *Manuscritos*, no. 99, p. 49. Fig. 5: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 10029, c.900—Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 628, pl. 21, pp. 151–2; Millares, *Manuscritos*, no. 78, pp. 41–2. Figs 6, 9, 14, 20: Manchester, Rylands Lat. MS 83, 914—B. A. Shailor, 'The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardena', *Bulletin*, lxi (1979), 444–73. Figs 7, 13, 15, 25, 27, 29: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 10007, 902—Millares, *Manuscritos*, no. 77, p. 41; Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 263–4. Fig. 8: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 1872, c.920–30—Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 269–72. Figs 10, 11, 12: León, Archivo de la Catedral, cod. 6, 920—Millares, *Manuscritos*, no. 34, p. 25; Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 269. Figs 16, 17, 19: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 10001, c.900—Millares, *Manuscritos*, no. 84, pp. 43–5; Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 264–7. Fig. 18: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 10067,

Simple early types: In the most rudimentary and probably earliest forms the initials may be constructed mostly or entirely with simple geometric shapes, often drawn with the compass. A compass-drawn circle may be transformed into an abstract fish through the addition of a few dots or lines, or a full compass-drawn circle, modified through a few strokes of the brush or pen, may become two fishes or a face. The various parts of the letter may also be more loosely drawn, include simple wavy lines or interlocking spirals, or take on a vaguely plant-like character (pl. I, 1–5). It is this type of ornamentation which appears in the frames on folio 2^r (combined with ‘realistic’ little birds), and the initial on folio 6^v of the Isidorus, *Etymologiae*, Escorial cod. P.I.7, a manuscript containing a labyrinth with the words *Adefonsi principis librum*, referring to Alfonso III (848–912), thus placing it, perhaps in greater part, still in the ninth century (pl. I, 1–2).¹ It is also a type of ornamentation which occurs in tighter form in the ninth-century *La Cava Bible*.²

The anthropomorphic-zoomorphic types: One of the more elaborate basic types, included men (sometimes clad in ecclesiastic vestments or Persian trousers), angels, various kinds of beasts—such as deer, snakes, rabbits, bulls, horses, birds, and fishes—as well as some simply bizarre creatures. All these crea-

915—Millares, *Manuscritos*, no. 82, p. 43; Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 268–9. Fig. 21: Burgos, Archivo Capitular, *Bible*, early 10th century—Dom Andrés, ‘La Biblia visigoda de San Pedro de Cardeña’, *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, lx (1912), 101–47; Shailor, ‘The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardeña’. Figs 22, 23: Silos, Archivo del Monasterio, MS 1, first section, early 10th century—W. M. Whitehill, Jr, and J. Pérez de Urbel, ‘Los manuscritos del Real Monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos’, *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, vc (1929), 524–8. Fig. 26: León, Archivo de la Catedral, cod. 14, early 10th century—Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 544, p. 36, pl. 42; Millares, *Manuscritos*, no. 36, pp. 27–8. Fig. 28: Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 24, 917—Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 594; Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 412.

¹E. A. Loew, ‘*Studia Paleographica*’, *Sitzungsberichte der königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse*, xii (1910), p. 63, no. 1.

²On the *Bible in Cava dei Tirreni*, Biblioteca della Badia, MS memb. I, see especially May Viellard-Troiekouroff, ‘Les bibles de Theodulphe et la bible wisogothique de la Cava dei Tirreni’, *Synthronon* (Paris, 1968), 162 f., and figs 3, 4, 6, 16, 17. For compass-drawn designs see also John Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination* (New York, 1977), pl. 2 and commentary.

tures pose, recline, twist, or leap into the shape of letters (pl. I, 6–15). In a surrealistic variation of this type only parts of the human body, such as the head and arm, are strangely fused to form a letter (pl. I, 16). In another variation the letter is formed by two beasts, often a bird and a fish, which are sometimes simply juxtaposed, but are more often shown grappling, in all-out combat, or with one creature capturing the other (pl. I, 17–19).

The geometric-plant types: A second developed general form consists of freehand-drawn initials made up almost entirely of fairly elaborate stylized plant forms (palmettes, half palmettes, tendrils, vines, bulbs, leaves), sometimes enclosed in geometric frames, or combined with all sorts of geometric forms (pl. I, 20–24).

Combined types: All sorts of images are formed by combining elements of those two basic forms. A twisted creature will come to grips with an inanimate upright composed of geometric or stylized plant motifs (pl. I, 26, 27), and in one variant a plant stem of geometric and stylized plant motifs is surmounted by an animal head to create a kind of 'totem pole' effect (pl. I, 28, 29). Two birds may appear heraldically arranged around a tree of life in eastern fashion—or grappling with it (pl. I, 14, 25). Sometimes two initials are set close together and drawn in such a way that they appear as a single dynamic design, e.g. as a twisting beast leaping at a 'totem pole' (pl. I, 29).

In all these early forms the drawing is simple, even in the most flamboyant examples. The overall designs are additive, that is to say they appear as the summation of many smaller easily-definable parts rather than fluidly 'organic' wholes; they are quite flat. Decorative embellishments within the initials range from simple elements,—such as lines, waves, spirals and curlicues, circles, arches and arcades, dots, and tear drops—to more elaborate forms—such as rosettes, hearts, and simplified plants; interlacing occurs in the form of simple plaits, usually of two ribbons. The outer outlines of the initials are generally clear, but occasionally have contour ornaments consisting of closely-set bristling hair (pl. I, 28), or widely-separated bulbous loops or bulbs (pl. I, 16, 20, 21, 26, 29). In a few cases initials have contour decorations consisting of double hairy projections alternating

with little arches, a motif which appears to derive from Cufic inscriptions (pl. I, 24). This ornament, although it is not common in early initials, is important because it becomes a widely-used, indeed characteristically, Spanish type of contour decoration in later tenth-century manuscripts, as we shall see.¹

One hesitates to generalize about colour, a feature difficult to describe in words and impossible to illustrate here. Suffice it to say that the colour schemes of early tenth-century Spanish manuscripts do show some general characteristics which should at least be indicated. The manuscript from this period most widely reproduced in colour is probably the 920 León Bible.² The initials, canon tables, and Evangelist figures in this work are finely drawn, wildly imaginative, and sophisticated in design and colour in a way which even the best reproductions do not really convey. However, one can note certain basic features: the palette of the 920 León Bible is extraordinarily simple, and that simplicity is enhanced by the cellular character of the design which compartmentalizes the colour patches. There are mostly bright yellows, reds, and greens, sometimes weighed down by some dark blues, sometimes lightened by their proximity to areas where the parchment is allowed to show. Generally speaking this type of colour scheme is characteristic of the early period, although there may be some variations in the hues and surface qualities of the colours, which may be brighter or duller, thinner or more dense, mat or waxy.

Decorated initials may be combined with several rows of capital letters to form a single design block. In such cases the

¹On this type of contour decoration, see Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, p. 14; Guilmain, 'Some Observations on Mozarabic Manuscript Illumination in the Light of Recent Publications', 187–8, and fig. 1. My line drawing (pl. I, 24) is taken from Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, ii, fig. 241 (discussed in i. 287). Although these bristling forms often appear 'Cufic-like', there are all sorts of variations, and similar forms appear in Carolingian as well as Coptic designs, as I pointed out in my doctoral dissertation *An Analysis of some Major Forms of Ornament in Mozarabic Illumination*, New York, Columbia University, 1958; University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan (L. C. Card No. Mic 58–3225), pp. 55–6, figs 61–6.

²A. Grabar and C. Nordenfalk, *Early Medieval Painting* (Lausanne, 1957), plate on p. 164; Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, plates 3 and 4.

letter block occupies only a relatively small area of the total page surface, i.e. roughly one tenth or less.

There are a good number of manuscripts from this period with documented dates, or with approximate dates on which scholars generally agree. I include here the first section of a manuscript in Silos, no. 1, *Smaragdus, In Regulam S. Benedicti*, which was completed in 945. However, according to Whitehill and Pérez de Urbel, the manuscript is paleographically in two sections. Up to the first two lines of folio 177^r the scribe's hand appears early—perhaps as early as ninth century—whereas after the second line of folio 177^r the hand appears to agree with the 945 dating.¹ The character of the initials generally appears to fit this division. Those in the very first part of the manuscript could, indeed, still date from the ninth century (pl. I, 22), but progressively become somewhat more elaborate and larger, and there is a quite large I on folio 161^r. In terms of its decorated initials it appears as if work on the manuscript may have started in the late ninth century and continued well into the first part of the tenth; there was an interruption (on f. 177^r) and work was resumed, probably around 935, and completed in 945, as we shall see below.

As a number of scholars have observed, the style of decorated initials in Spain in this early period appears as a belated manifestation of a Merovingian-Visigothic tradition.² The style was common to manuscripts made in northern as well as southern Spain, but the future development was to be overwhelmingly a northern phenomenon, with the decorated initials in later southern works—those truly 'Mozarabic'—remaining essentially archaic.³

¹Whitehill and Pérez de Urbel, 'Los manuscritos del Real Monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos', 526–8.

²See, for example, Nordenfalk, in *Early Medieval Painting*, 162–3; J. Guilmain, 'Zoomorphic Decoration', 27–8; Troiekouroff, 'Les bibles de Theodulphe', 163–4.

³Of particular interest in this respect is MS 10001 in the Madrid Biblioteca Nacional (pls 1, 16, 17, 19) in which the decoration has elements relating to southern Spain as well as León. On this see Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 264–7.

*Period II (c.935 to c. 960). (Plate II).*¹

Around 935—it is impossible to be more specific—a change in attitude towards the art of the decorated initial took place in northern Spain, manifesting itself in its full glory in the *Moralia in lob* of 945 by the scribe Florentius, MS 80 in the Madrid Biblioteca Nacional. The decorated initials of the late ninth century to c.935 do not add up to a major tradition in the decorative arts, interesting, lively, and striking though the letters may be. The initials in the *Moralia in lob* of 945 elevate the art of the decorated letter in Spanish manuscripts to a different plane altogether. They reflect a change in taste as well as a greater appreciation of form and design, requiring the establishment of a more elaborate studio (or rather scriptorium) situation and the training of more highly-disciplined, skilled, and inventive artists. The script of the *Moralia* also reflects a high degree of craftsmanship, so that lettering and initials design constitute an impressive harmonious whole.²

This masterpiece of Florentius of Valeránica was not born suddenly and without preparation, for there are indications that the change of attitude was gradual. The simplest way to illustrate this is by isolating some initials which appear to be transitional forms between the old decorated letters, made up of geometric motifs and stylized plant forms, and the intricate interlace

¹ For information and additional bibliography on the manuscripts from which initials are reproduced in pl. II, consult the following: Fig. 1: Madrid, Hermandad Sacerdotes Operarios Diocesanos, *Biblia of Oña*, 943—T. Ayuso Marazuela, *La Biblia de Oña*, Zaragoza, 1945; C. Gutiérrez, '¿Cuando se escribió la llamada "Biblia de Oña"?', *Estudios Eclesiásticos*, xxxiv (1960), 403–11. Fig. 2: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 2855, 951—Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, *Catalogue général des manuscrits latins*, iii (1952), 166–7. Fig. 3: Silos, MS 1, 945—W. M. Whitehill, Jr, and J. Pérez de Urbel, 'Los manuscritos del Real Monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos', 524–8. Figs. 4, 5, 12: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 80, 945—J. Williams, 'The "Moralia in lob" of 945', *Archivo español de arqueología*, vi–vlii (1972–4), 223–86. Figs 6, 9A, B, 10, 13: Manchester, Rylands Lat. MS 89, 949—Shailor, 'The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardena'. Fig. 7: León, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, cod. 2, 960—T. Ayuso Marazuela, 'La Biblia visigótica de San Isidoro de León', *Estudios Bíblicos*, xix (1960), xx (1961). Fig. 8: Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 13, c.945–50—Millares, *Manuscritos visigóticos*, no. 93, p. 48. Figs. 9C, 11: Córdoba, Biblioteca Capitular, cod. 1, c.955—Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 512, p. 31, pls 65–9 and descriptions. Fig. 14: New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 644, c.950—Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 280–6.

² On this manuscript see especially Williams, 'The "Moralia in lob of 945"'.

initials of the 945 *Moralia*. Some clues are provided by the Smaragdus, *In Regulam S. Benedicti*, Silos MS 1, which, as we have seen, is in two parts, the first one containing initials of the late ninth to c.935 period. However, one of these early initials becomes quite large towards the end of the first section. In the later section, which must have been started around 935 and finished in 945, several changes appear: (a) many more initials, even those in the early style, become larger; (b) interlace decoration becomes increasingly prominent as a decorative filling within the outline of the letters. These features come together in the initial illustrated in plate II, 3. The *P* still has such features of the early style as the loop vaguely shaped like a half palmette whose leaves are arranged as a little arcade, and the tendril-like trail at the bottom. However, the letter is quite large in relation to the overall page area, and interlace decoration—a three-lobed pattern in the upper left hand ‘penant’, and a dense ring-chain pattern in the stem—is the dominant decorative motif. This transitional type of decorated letter is found in a number of manuscripts executed mostly during the 940–50 period. The copy of Ildephonsus, *De Virginitate Beatae Mariae*, executed by the skilled calligrapher Gómez in the monastery of St. Martin at Albelda and taken to France in 951,¹ contains some initials of this type (pl. II, 2), and what may be a simpler form appears in MS 76 of the Madrid Real Academia de la Historia, completed in 954.² But surely the best known initial of this kind is the *I* on folio 3 of Florentius’s now fragmentary *Bible of Oña* in the Hermandad Sacerdotes Operarios Diocesanos in Madrid (pl. II, 1), which was completed in 943.³ Thus this type of design was fully developed

¹A. Millares Carlo, *Nuevos Estudios de Paleografía española* (Mexico, 1941), 155–7; Guilmain, ‘Observations on Some Early Interlace Initials’, 29–30.

²The manuscript’s decorated initials are conservative for a work of this date, and in general differ little from those described above from the first third of the 10th century. However, there are a few initials in which interlace decoration is more prominent, and which resemble some of the letters in the second part of Silos MS 1 and Paris BN MS Lat. 2855. See the reproductions of pages from Academia cod. 76 in Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, ii, figs 198–99, pp. 886–7.

³In addition to Ayuso’s *La Biblia de Oña*, see also J. Williams, ‘A Model for the León Bibles’, *Madriener Mitteilungen*, viii (1967), 285–6; J. Pérez y Urbel, ‘Florentio, el miniaturista famoso del monasterio de Valeránica’, *Classica et Iberica*: a

by the early 940s.¹ In a smaller *I* on folio 2^v of the *Oña Bible*,² the outer framework of the form has been reduced to a weak skinlike outline, and essentially the interlace column—a three-lobed base from which there develops a two-ribbon shaft bearing a four-lobed capital—is the letter. It is really with this step, i.e. when the interlace system takes on in one way or another the main architectonic function of the design of the letter, that the 'new' style truly emerges. This is not the place to discuss theories and principles of interlace ornamentation;³ suffice it to say that the initials in Florentius's 945 *Moralia* reflect not only full control of these principles, but their masterful and virtuoso application. This can be only inadequately illustrated here with some black and white drawings and photographs, and discussed only in general terms. In the *V* on folio 5^v (pl. V, 2), the heavy interlace base is still contained in a thin outline, but shoots up two pairs of outer frame ribbons which contain panels of precisely-crafted plaits; each pair of outer ribbons enters a complex knot to slow the upward movement, which is finally stopped by the curved terminals formed by the rejoined outer ribbons. The hanging and projecting curlicues—which also alternate with rows of dots to form contour ornaments—are typical of the decoration of the initials of the *Moralia*; they are always used sparingly and never weaken the clear silhouettes of the letters. A *Q* on folio 72^v is a marvellous rose window of contracting and expanding ribbons, strikingly bright yellow on a mauve background with touches of salmon; the similar letter on folio 56^v is finished on top with animal

Festschrift in Honor of the Reverend Joseph M. F. Marique, S. J., P. T. Brannan, ed. (Worcester, Mass., 1975), 395–401.

¹The *I* initial on f. 445 of the 960 León Bible, which has often been compared to the *I* in the *Bible* of Oña reproduced in pl. II, 1, is indeed almost identical, except that the interlace filling is a structurally more complex plait. See Ayuso, *La Biblia visigótica de San Isidoro de León*, plate between pp. 170–1, and Williams, 'A Model for the León Bibles', fig. 70b.

²Williams, *Ibid.* fig. 69b.

³On this see especially J. Romilly Allen, *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times* (London, 1904), 257–78; N. Åberg, *The Occident and the Orient in the Art of the Seventh Century*, Stockholm, i (1943), 31–5, ii (1945), 72–5, 113–14; G. Bain, *The Methods of Construction of Celtic Art*, Glasgow, 1951, and New York, 1973. In reference to the Spanish Initials see Guilmain, 'Interlace Decoration', 1960; 'Observations on Some Early Interlace Initials', 1961.

heads holding palms in their mouths (pl. II, 4).¹ In both initials are found the curlicue projections, as well as delicate plant forms with two long horizontal leaves and vertically projecting pointed central leaf which tie together interlace loops and points, and 'streamline' the outer contours of the letters. These initials, elaborate as they may be in colour and design, are not exceptionally large in relation to the page as a whole; flamboyant gigantism in the *Moralia* was reserved for the Alpha and Omega at the beginning and end of the manuscript.² The best known initial in the *Moralia* is the *B* illustrated in plate II, 5, but that is probably because it is the most 'French' rather than the most typical,³ and indeed in its fragile golden splendour it remains a rather isolated form in the history of the early medieval initials of Spain. In the structure of all these letters the earlier additive, compartmentalized character is gone, for the very nature of the interlace framework transforms them into fluid designs in which even the tightly-packed panels of interlace filling become active parts of a dynamically organic whole. In relation to the question of northern influence on tenth-century manuscript illumination in Spain, it may appear as if Florentius's initials revived a Carolingian style which had reached its apogee seventy-five years earlier. However, it must be remembered that the Franco-Saxon or Franco-Insular style remained a major source of inspiration for painters of decorated initials, not only to the end of the ninth century, but deep into the tenth—and indeed becomes part of the fabric of Romanesque design.⁴ Once Spanish illuminators developed a taste for elaborate initials, they could hardly have avoided being

¹This type of animal head did not evolve from the animal forms of the earlier 'Merovingian-Visigothic' style. It is, like the interlace decoration, a northern form ultimately going back to Hiberno-Saxon art. On this, see Guilmain, 'Zoomorphic Decoration', 28–38.

²See above, p. 369, n. 3 and Guilmain, 'Early Interlace Initials', pls 7, 8.

³See, for example, the comparison presented by Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, pp. 21–2, and pls X–XI.

⁴For a general treatment of this complex phenomenon, see the last chapters of G. L. Michel's *L'Enluminure du haut moyen âge et les influences irlandaises* (Brussels, 1939), 144f. C. Nordenfalk's 'Ein karolingisches Sakramentar aus Echternach und seine Vorläufer', *Acta Archaeologica*, ii (1931), 208–46, remains a classic study of a particular aspect of the problem.

influenced by the complex and often monumental forms constructed of interlace, animal heads, and stylized plant motifs of northern inspiration. These artists were really doing little more than rejoining the mainstream of the European tradition of initials design. Within that tradition the Spanish illuminators quickly developed their own expressive mode.

Fragmentary as they are, records indicate that Florentius's active career spanned at least forty-one years, and that he was the master of some talented disciples.¹ That he was instrumental in the vigorous diffusion of excellent calligraphy and the painting of fine initials is evident in the extant manuscripts. In this context one must attempt to reconstruct, if only generally, the development between 945 (the date of completion of the *Biblioteca Nacional Moralia*) and 960 (the date of completion of the *Florentius and Sanctius León Bible*).² To begin at the end, the initials in the *Bible* tend to be elaborate and sometime gigantic. The great initial reproduced in plate II, 7 bristles with no less than eight animal heads, of which four hold palmettes or other plants in their mouths. Unruly curlicues hang loosely from the bottom of the giant *H*. The initial becomes a kind of flagpole from which banners bearing rows of capital unfurl. In some ways the creator of this monumental introduction to *Deuteronomy* appears to have been more interested in spectacular effects than precision of craftsmanship.³ In comparison the style of the 945 *Moralia* appears thoroughly restrained. However, the initials of the 960 *Bible* are not uniform in design. Some hark back to the tight transitional style of the *Bible of Oña*,⁴ a style to which the initial illustrated in plate II, 7 hardly seems related at all. That initial's type of interlace and animal heads go back to the 945 *Moralia*,

¹Documentation exists on the disciple Sanctius of the 960 *Bible* (see, for example, Williams, 'A Model for the León Bibles', 286). There must have been others.

²On the 960 *Bible* see Pérez y Urbel's 'Florentio', 411–13, in addition to Ayuso's *La Biblia visigótica*, and William's 'A Model'.

³The initial is reproduced by M. Gómez-Moreno, *Catálogo monumental de España: provincia de León* (Madrid, 125–6), ii, pl. 104. Another spectacular initial, on f. 14^v, is reproduced by Ayuso, *La Biblia visigótica*, plate between pp. 20–1; this form has extravagant plant terminals.

⁴See above, p. 378, n. 1. The *V* on f. 325^v (Ayuso, *La Biblia visigótica*, plate between pp. 180–1) also appears to derive from an earlier form.

Plate I

Figs 1, 2 Escorial, cod. P.I.7. S. Isidorus, *Etymologiae*, ff. 2^r, 6^v. Galicia, late 9th–early 10th cent. Fig. 3 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 10064. *Forum Judicum*, f. 16^v. Toledo (?), late 9th–early 10th cent. Fig. 4 Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 26. Smaragdus, *In regulam S. Benedicti*, f. 155^v. San Millán, late 9th–early 10th cent. Fig. 5 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 10029. Draconius et al., *Opera*, f. 7^r. Toledo (?), beg. of 10th cent. Fig. 6 Manchester, John Rylands University Library, Latin MS 83. S. Gregorii Magni, *Moralia in Iob*, f. 274^v. Cardeña, 914. Fig. 7 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 10007. *Vitae Patrum*, f. 176^r. Asturias-León, 902. Fig. 8 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 1872. *Conciliorum Collectio*, f. 53^v. Southern León, c.920–30. Fig. 9 As fig. 6, f. 308^r. Figs 10, 11, 12 León, Archivo de la Catedral, cod. 6. *Biblia*, ff. 203^v, 214^r, 203^r. Albares, 920. Fig. 13 As fig. 7, f. 157^v. Fig. 14 As fig. 6, f. 268^v. Fig. 15 As fig. 7, f. 48^r. Fig. 16 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 10001. *Breviarum Mozarabicum*, f. 105^v. Southern Spain, late 9th–early 10th cent. Fig. 17 As fig. 16, f. 36^v. Fig. 18 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 10067. S. Isidorus, *Libri sententiarum*, f. 49^v. León, 915. Fig. 19 As fig. 16, f. 48^v. Fig. 20 As fig. 6, f. 33^r. Fig. 21 Burgos, Archivo Capitular, Expos. Vitr. *Bible*, Introduction to *Deuteronomy*. Cardeña, early 10th cent. Figs 22, 23 Silos, Archivo del Monasterio, MS 1, first part. Smaragdus, *In Regulam S. Benedicti*, f. 15^v. 128^v. Silos, late 9th–early 10th cent. Fig. 24 Toledo, Bibl. Capitular, cod. 35–4. *Missale*, f. 67^r. Toledo, late 9th–early 10th cent. Fig. 25 As fig. 7, f. 211^r. Fig. 26 León, Archivo de la Catedral, cod. 14. *Homiliarium*, beg. of XXVth Homily (2nd book) on the Gospels. Asturias-León, early 10th cent. Fig. 27 As fig. 7, f. 81^v. Fig. 28 Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 24. Cassian, *Collationes Sanctorum*, f. 91^r. San Millán, 917. Fig. 29 As fig. 7, f. 185^v.

Plate II

Fig. 1 Madrid, Hermandad Sacerdotes Operarios Diocesanos, unnumbered fragments. *Bible of Oña*, f. 3^v. Valeránica, 943. Fig. 2 Paris, Bibl. Nationale, MS Lat. 2855. Ildephonsus, *De Virginitate*, f. 71^v. Albelda, before 951. Fig. 3 Silos, Archivo del Monasterio, MS 1, second part. Smaragdus, *In Regulam S. Benedicti*, f. 265^r. Silos, completed in 945. Figs 4, 5 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 80. S. Gregorius, *Moralia in Iob*, ff. 56^v, 408^v. Valeránica, 945. Fig. 6 Manchester, John Rylands University Library, Lat. MS 89. Cassiodorus, *In Psalmos*, f. 397^v. Usually placed in Cardeña, but initials very close to style of Valeránica, 949 (?). Fig. 7 León, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, cod. 2. *Bible*, f. 76^v. Valeránica, 960. Fig. 8 Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 13. *Vitae Sanctorum*, f. 39^v. Usually placed in San Millán, but initials very close in style to Valeránica, c.945–50. Fig. 9 A, B As fig. 6, f. 196^v. Fig. 9 C Cordoba, Bibl. Capitular, cod. 1. Smaragdus, *Liber homiliarum*, f. 3^v. Valeránica, c.955. Fig. 10 As fig. 6, f. 141^v. Fig. 11 As fig. 9, f. 2^v. Fig. 12 As fig. 5, f. 34^r. Fig. 13 As 6. Fig. 14 New York, Pierpont Morgan Lib., MS 644. Beatus, *In Apocalypsin*, f. 239^r. San Miguel de Escalada (?), c.950.

Plate III

Fig. 1 Gerona, Museo de la Catedral, MS 7. *Beatus, In Apocalypsin*, f. 20^v. Southern León, perhaps Tábara, 975. Fig. 2 Valladolid, Bibl. de la Universidad, MS 433 (Olim 390). *Beatus, In Apocalypsin*, f. 3^v. León, 970. Figs 3, 4, 5 León, Archivo de la Catedral, cod. 8. *Antiphonarium mozarabicum*, ff. 281^v, 34^r, 211^v. Northern León, late 10th cent. Fig. 6 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 494. *Vitae Sanctorum*, f. 13^r. Castille, c.970.

Plate IV

Figs 1–4 Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 8. *Expositio Psalmorum*, ff. 98^r, 15^v, 199^v, 126^r. San Millán, c.980. Fig. 5 Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 38. S. Gregorius, *Homiliae in Ezechielem*, ff. 187^v. San Millán, last quarter of 10th cent. Figs 6–7 El Escorial, Real Bibl. del Monasterio, cod. d.l.1. *Codex Aemilianensis*, ff. 226^v, 316^v. San Millán, begun 976, completed 994.

Plate V

Fig. 1 El Escorial, Real Bibl. del Escorial, cod. d.l.2. *Codex Vigilanus*, f. 70^v. Albelda, 976. Fig. 2 Madrid, Bibl. Nacional, MS 80. S. Gregorius, *Moralia in Iob*, f. 5^v. Valeránica, 945. Fig. 3 Manchester, John Rylands University Library, Lat. MS 89. Cassiodorus, *In Psalmos*, f. 37^r. Fig. 4 Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 13. *Vitae Sanctorum*, f. 73^v. Usually placed in San Millán, but initials very close to the style of Valeránica, c.945–50. Fig. 5 El Escorial, Real Bibl. del Escorial, cod. b.l.4. *Passionarium*, f. 59^r. Generally attrib. to Cardena; probably early 11th cent. Fig. 6 As 4, f. 90^v. Fig. 7 Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 56. *Manuale Mozarabicum*, f. 10^v. San Millán, last quarter of 10th cent. Fig. 8 As fig. 5, f. 3^v.

Plate I

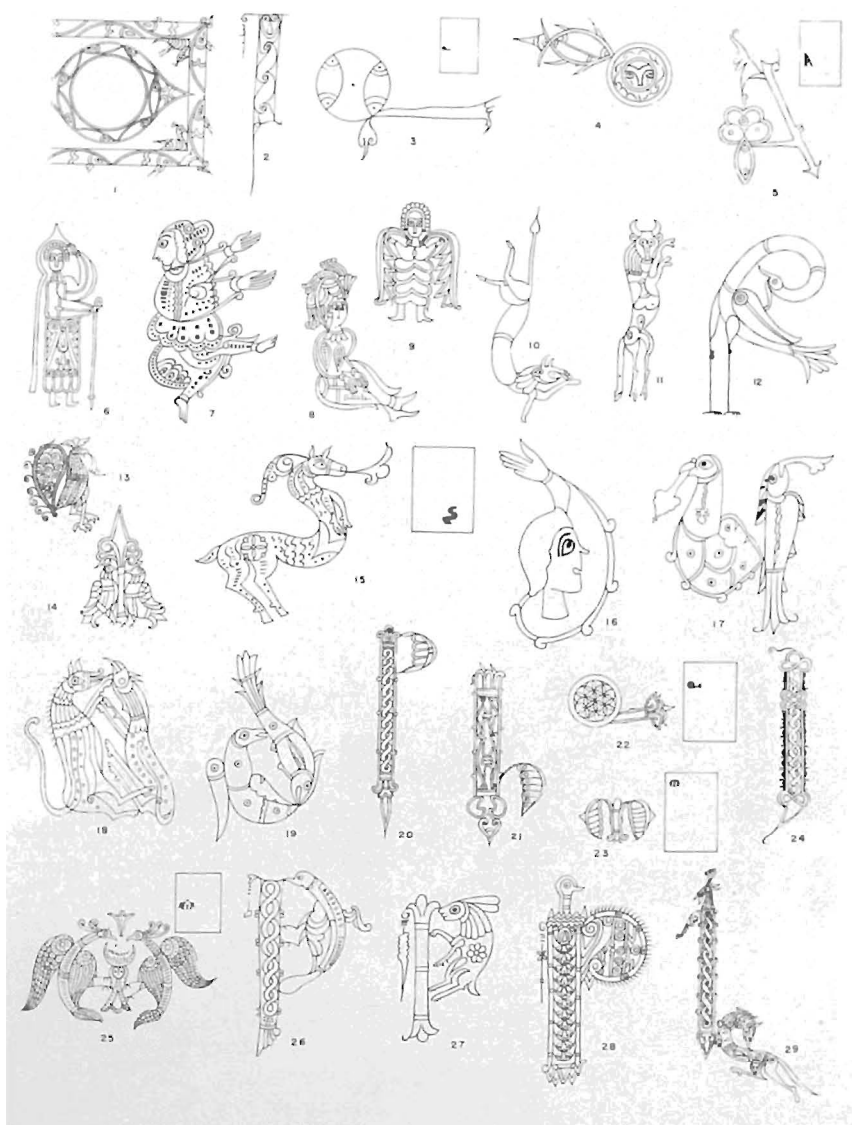


Plate II

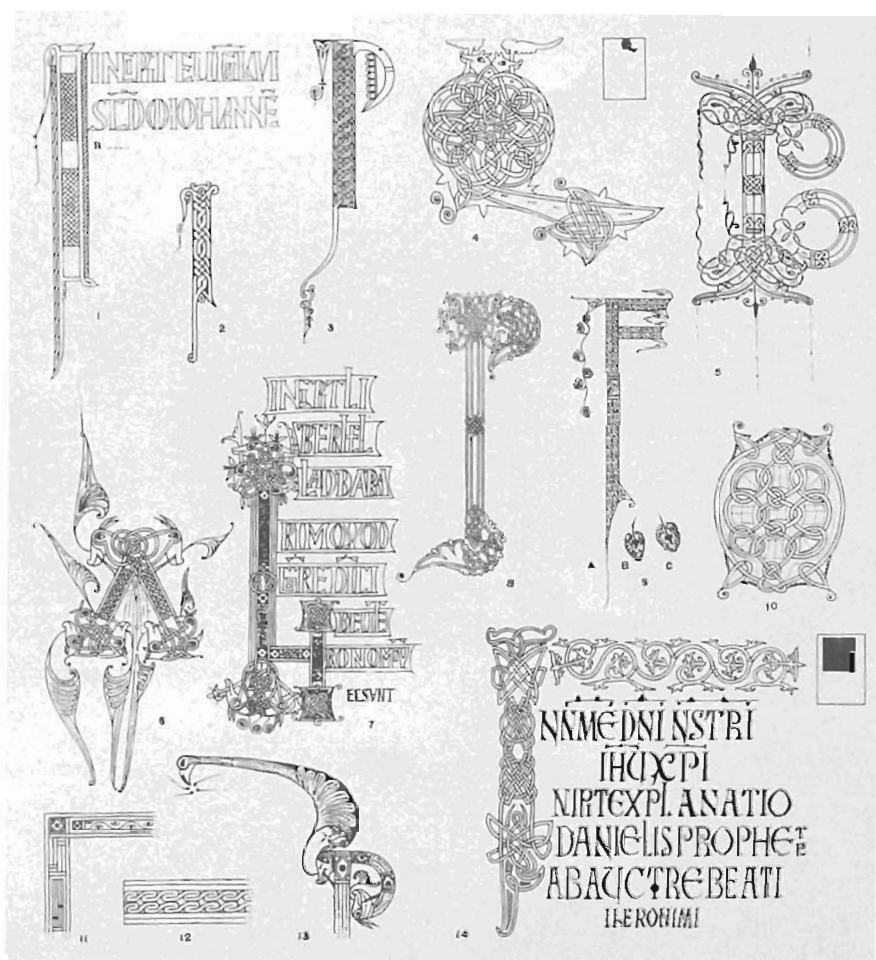


Plate III

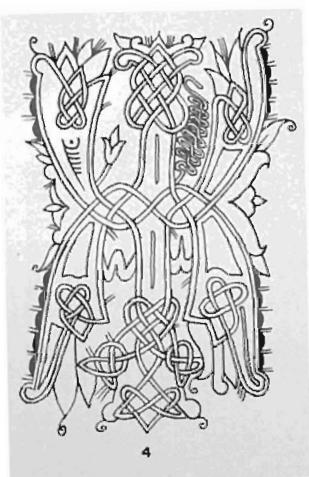
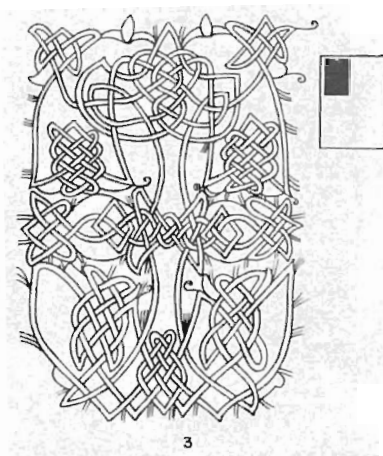
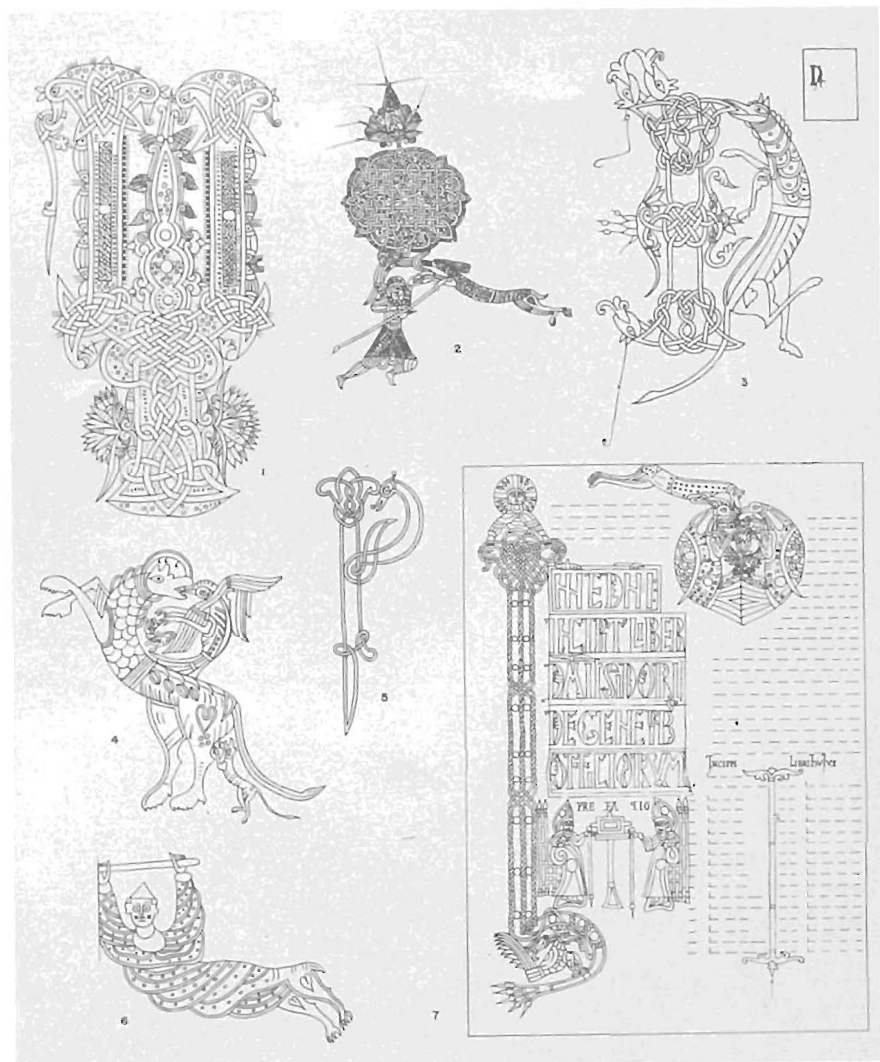
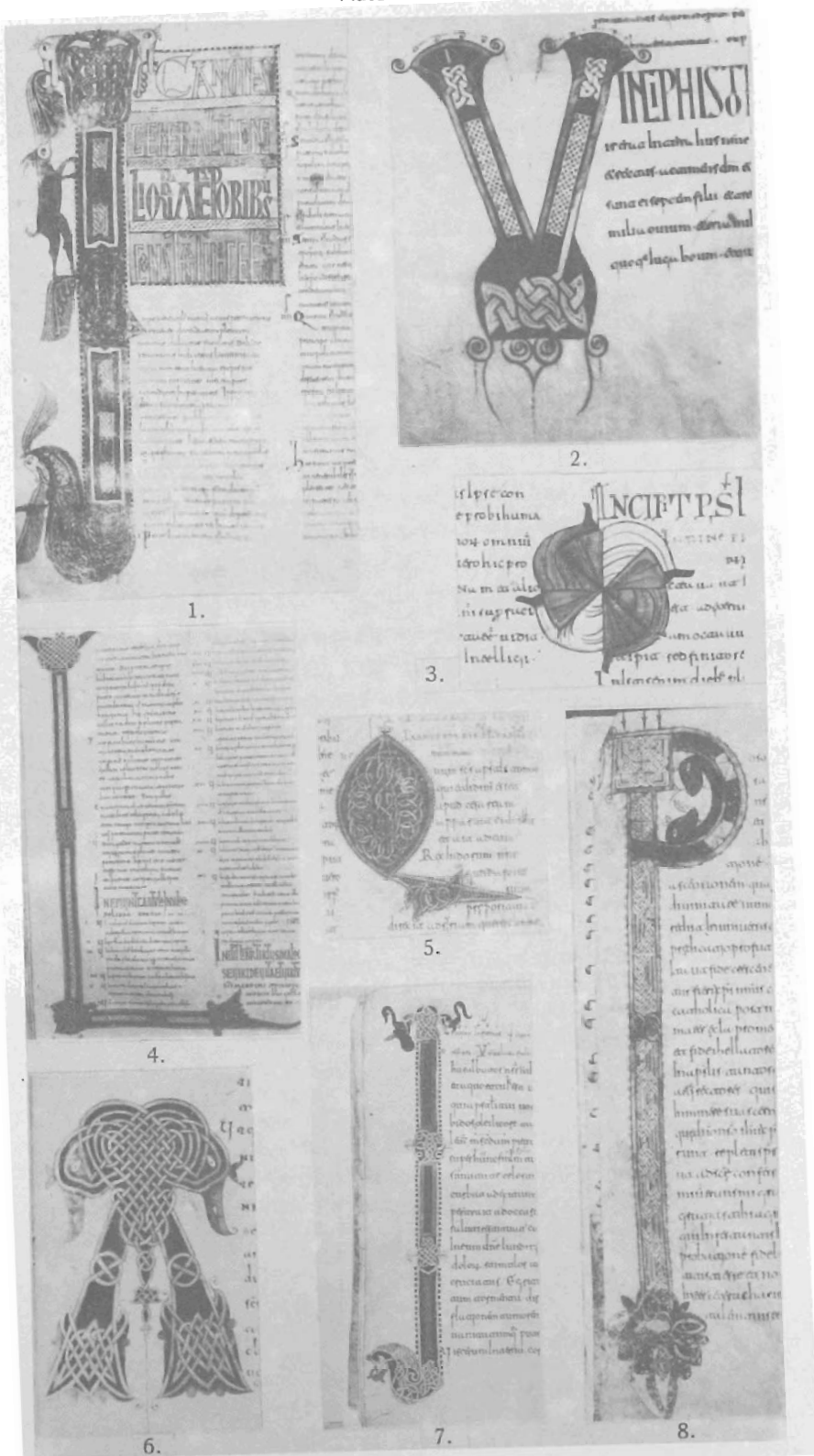


Plate IV





but others of its elements appear to belong more to what may be inferred to have been Florentius's style of the late 940s and 950s. Particularly interesting is the punctuation of the panning of the letters with squares or rectangles whose corners are cut inwardly by curves to form rounded-out Greek crosses, in which are set little circles or bull's eyes. This is a motif which appears in the frames of Florentius's version of the *Smaragdus Homiliae* in Cordoba, usually dated c.955 (pl. II, 11).¹ The León *Bible* of 960 was evidently partially patterned after the Bible of Oña,² but that cannot be the whole explanation, for the design of its initials appears to reflect the cumulative development during the c.935–60 period. There is one great letter in the 960 *Bible* which appears to bring together the beginning and the end of this development, the often-reproduced Omega on folio 515^v.³ The main body of that letter does not have the fluid outer interlace framework of the 945 *Moralia* initials (or its Omega),⁴ but is composed rather like the *I* in the Oña *Bible*, i.e. as a tight geometric frame containing precisely-drawn interlace plaits (pl. II, 1).⁵ However, there projects from the 960 *Bible* Omega all sorts of 'Arabic' trees and palmettes closely related to those of the frames of the Cordoba *Homiliae*, and amongst its other decorative motifs is found again the little square containing a 'Greek cross' typical of the Cordoba *Homiliae* frames and some of the initials in the *Bible* of 960 (pl. II, 7, 11). The huge half-palmettes

¹ Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 512, p. 31; J. Williams, 'A Contribution to the History of the Castilian Monastery of Valeránica and the Scribe Florentius', *Madridrer Mitteilungen*, ii (1970), 231–48; Pérez y Urbel, 'Florentio', 406–11. The motif of the square containing a 'Greek Cross' with curving sides is related to a form which appears in the apsidal paintings of the Castilian church of Sta. Maria de Wamba, which have other connections with the art of Florentius. On this see Williams, 'The "Moralia in lob"' of 945, p. 228 and fig. 9. The detail is reproduced also by M. González, 'Pintura mural de la iglesia de Sta. Maria de Wamba', *Boletín de estudios de arte y arqueología* (Universidad de Valladolid), xxxii (1966), plate opposite p. 436.

² Williams, 'A Model for the León Bibles', 285–6.

³ Nordenfalk, in *Early Medieval Painting*, colour plate on p. 167; Guilmain, 'Early Interlace Initials', pp. 33–4, n. 37; Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, pl. 11, and analysis on p. 6.

⁴ The 945 *Moralia in lob* Omega is reproduced in Guilmain, 'Early Interlace Initials', pl. 8.

⁵ As is also the V on f. 325^v (see above, p. 380, n. 4).

inside the loops of the Omega reflect the taste for extravagant ornamental forms found elsewhere in the 960 *Bible*, but rare in the *Moralia* of 945 or the Cordoba *Homiliae*. There is another important manuscript of which the decorated initials belong to this 'school of Florentius', namely the Cassiodorus, *Super Psalmos*, Latin MS 89 in Rylands. The interlace initials in the first pages of this manuscript tend to be relatively modest in size, tight in outline, and extremely refined in execution;¹ they are close in design to the initials of the 945 *Moralia*. A *B* initial on folio 19^r has long half-palmettes extending from both ends so that it appears to be caught in a vertical stream, like the *Moralia B* illustrated in plate II, 5. A beautiful *I* on folio 24^r is unusually large, but initials generally continue to be relatively small. On folio 37^r there occurs for the first time an *O* made up of little swirling legs and feet, an archaic type given special forms (pl. V, 3). Progressively designs, colour schemes, and sizes become bolder. On folio 48^r a large spectacular *I* with red-orange outer ribbons and animal heads and palmettes at the top jumps at the spectator. In another *I*, on folio 56^r, the artist plays a deep red against a chartreuse and a deeper green; on folio 57^r an *I* takes almost the whole page. On folio 141^v an *O* is constructed almost entirely with ring chains (pl. II, 10), and folio 153^r is split down the middle by a huge initial. The great *F* on folio 196^v (pl. II, 9A) is not an interlaced letter—except for two small three-lobed motifs—but a simple geometric form packed tightly with doubled folded ribbons, a motif which appears in the frame of the *Chi-Rho Monogram* of Florentius's 945 *Moralia* (pl. II, 12),² and the tendrils growing from it sprout fuzzy leaves virtually identical to those on the stylized trees on some pages of Florentius's Cordoba *Homiliae* (pl. II, 9B, C).³ There is one great *F* on folio 292^v, and then until

¹Although it appears in the later part of the manuscript and is rather large, a good example of this general type of initials is the *P* reproduced in M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Latin Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library at Manchester*, (Manchester, 1921), ii, pl. 121 (f. 263^v).

²The folded ribbons motif continues to appear as a frame ornament in later manuscripts from León as well as Castile. It is found, rather crudely drawn, on f. 96^r of the *Beatus* of Valcavado of 970 (reproduced in Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, ii, fig. 75). In single rows it is found on f. 58^r of the *Codex Vigilanus*, completed in 976.

³See Clark, *Collectanea*, pl. 66.

folio 370^r the initials become more sparse, less interesting—and one even finds some archaic bird or snake initials. On folio 370^r the flamboyant type of initial illustrated in plate II, 6 begins. The style of these letters is akin to the more spectacular form of initials in the Florentius *Bible* of 960, bristling with multiple animal heads and enormous half-palmettes, which themselves sometimes sprout additional animal heads. The illuminator splits folio 397^v down the middle with a structure composed of geometric motifs, animal heads, and half-palmettes forming a three-sided frame for the text on the left and a double initial on the right (of *Primo* and *Psalmus*) (pl. II, 13).¹ This structure is not an interlaced initial, but is—like the *F* described above and other initials on folio 196^v—a combination form consisting of geometric motifs related to those in the frames of Florentius's Cordoba *Homiliae* (pl. II, 11) fused with animal heads biting half-palmettes. That there should be a close relationship between the decorated initials of the Rylands *Cassiodorus* and Florentius's manuscripts should come as no surprise, for Pérez y Urbel has pointed to some remarkable similarities also in the phrasing of their prefaces and colophons.² All this may however raise more questions than it answers. The Rylands manuscript is usually dated 949, attributed to two scribes, Endura and Sebastianus, and placed in Cardeña. Pérez y Urbel accepts all this, and postulates a close relationship between Endura and Florentius and the scriptoria of Cardeña and Valeránica. He attributes the 'French' character of Florentius's decorated letters to the influence of Cardeña, a monastic centre with close ties to France. This ingenious theory is unfortunately unstable. Actually in the manuscript proper only Endura is mentioned;³ the name of Sebastianus, the date, and the Cardeña attribution are inferred from a seventeenth-century document. In her recent study Barbara Shailor, after a systematic examination of the manuscript, comparison with works securely attributed to Cardeña, and a thorough review of the evidence, concludes that Rylands MS Lat. 89 is written in a single hand, and

¹The entire page is reproduced in James, *A Descriptive Catalogue*, ii, pl. 122.

²In 'Florentio', 405–6.

³The page bearing the inscription is reproduced by James, *A Descriptive Catalogue*, ii, pl. 120.

was not made in Cardeña.¹ I should mention also that another manuscript attributed to Cardeña—Isidorus, *Etymologiae*, in Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, Cod. 76—again copied by an Endura (actually spelled NDVRA) and a Didaco, and completed in 954, contains mostly archaic initials of the general type of the c.900–35 period, and nothing like the advanced forms found in the Rylands manuscript.²

There are other mysteries about Florentius. As a scribe he is associated not only with excellent calligraphy, but with the design of the superb initials of the 945 *Moralia* and the 960 *León Bible*. However, his Cordoba *Homiliae* is poor in decorated initials. There are some, but they are uneven in quality, the best ones being carefully-executed, but small interlace forms. The Alpha hanging from its *Cross of Oviedo* is a miniature version of the great Alpha in the 945 *Moralia*, but the corresponding Omega is not related to the one in the 945 *Moralia*, appearing rather like an earlier form which served also as the model for the giant Omega in the 960 *Bible*.³ Gómez-Moreno believed the Cordoba *Homiliae* to be one of Florentius's earlier manuscripts,⁴ but it is placed by Clark, Williams and Pérez y Urbel as one of his later works, i.e., to be set after the date of completion in 953 of a lost Cassiodorus, *Super Psalmos*, by Florentius and to about the completion of the 960 *Bible*.⁵ However, the *Homiliae* may be based on an earlier model, as suggested by a passage in its preface.⁶ This possibility is reinforced by the existence of a *Cross Page*, obviously related to the one in the *Homiliae* (though it is less accomplished in execution) in a work of mixed text, the Escorial MS a.II.9, placed in Silos and dated 954. In my opinion the comparison of the two pages suggests that one page was not

¹The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardeña', 472.

²See above, n. 2, p. 377. The manuscript was dated 924 by earlier scholars. Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 604, p. 43, accepts that early date, and surmises that the Endura of Rylands Lat. MS 89 and the NDVRA of Academia cod. 76 are the same person. See also Millares, *Manuscritos visigóticos*, no. 110, p. 53.

³Guilmain, 'Northern Influences in the Initials and Ornaments of the Beatus Manuscripts'.

⁴In *Iglesias Mozarabes, arte español de los siglos IX a XI* (Madrid, 1919), 361–2.

⁵Williams, 'A Contribution', 244–5; Pérez y Urbel, 'Florentio', 409; Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 512, p. 31, 231–2, dates the manuscript c.960.

⁶Williams, 'A Contribution', 246.

copied from the other, but rather that both were derived from an earlier model.¹

The image which emerges from these observations is that of a vigorous development between c.935–60 of a vital school of calligraphy, the design of decorated letters, and such other forms as frames, *Chi-Rho Monograms*, and *Cross Pages*. The crucial centre of that school was Valeránica, the leading personality Florentius. The major works of the school known to us are, in probable sequence: the *Oña Bible* fragment of 943 in the Madrid Casa Central de la Hermandad de los Sacerdotes Operarios; the *Moralia in Iob* of 945 in the Madrid Biblioteca Nacional, MS 80; despite the fact that it has not been placed in Valeránica nor attributed to Florentius himself, the *Super Psalmos* in the Rylands University Library, MS Lat. 89, to be dated c.950 (?); the *Homiliae* of c.955 (?) in the Cordoba Biblioteca Capitular, cod. 1; the *Bible* of 960 in the Real Colegiata de San Isidoro in León, cod. 2. A number of problems remain unresolved. Where was Rylands MS 89 executed, and what is its relationship to the lost Cassiodorus, *Super Psalmos*, by Florentius?² What is to be made of Endura, whose name appears in three manuscripts not closely related in other ways?³

Even at the beginning Valeránica could not have been the only centre in the creation of the new style in Castile, for symptoms of its development appear also in such works as the Smaragdus manuscript in Silos, MS 1, the later section of which was completed in 945, and the Ildephonsus manuscript in Paris,

¹The page is reproduced by J. Fernández Pajares, 'La Cruz de los Angeles en la miniatura española', *Boletín del Instituto de Estudios Asturianos*, xxiii (1969), fig. 9. See also B. Bischoff, 'Kreuz und Buch im Frümittelalter und in die ersten Jahrhundert der spanischen Reconquista', *Biblioteca Docet, Festgabe für Carl Wehmer* (Amsterdam, 1963), 29. For descriptions of the manuscript, see Antolín, *Catalogo*, i. 42–5; Millares, *Manuscritos Visigóticos*, no. 18, pp. 16–17.

²Pérez y Urbel in 'Florencio', p. 405, suggests that Endura was a disciple of Gomez, the scribe of the early 10th century *Bible* in the Archivo Capitular of Burgos and sections of the *Moralia in Iob* of the same period in Rylands Lat. MS 83. However, he takes for granted a number of dates and attributions which are in fact quite unstable. Compare his arguments with the observations of Shailor, 'The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardeña'.

³Madrid, Real Academia, cod. 76 (see above, n. 2, p. 377; n. 2, p. 384), Rylands Lat. MS 89 (see above, n. 1, p. 384); London, BL Add. MS 25600 (see below, n. 1, p. 392).

Bibliothèque Nationale, Lat. MS 2855, completed by 951. There exist, furthermore, some lesser known manuscripts which also contain initials in the style of the 'school of Florentius' of the c.950 period. Especially interesting is the *Vitae Sanctorum*, Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 13. This work has some handsome decorated letters which are models of fine craftsmanship, monumental clarity, and precision in drawing and execution. They are accomplished forms, close to the initials of the *Moralia* of 945, and include such telling details as the curlicues projecting from the tips of the letters and the three- or four-lobed leaves tying together interlace loops and 'finishing' the outlines (pl. II, 8; pl. V, 4, 6). However, some of the initials are very large, and there is sometimes a tendency to multiply terminal animal heads, as in the later initials of Rylands Lat. MS 89 and the León Bible of 960. I am inclined to date this work around 945–50, in accordance with Klein's dating in the second third of the tenth century.¹ This manuscript is placed in San Millán de la Cogolla,² but does not appear to fit well in the development of the San Millán styles of decorated letters.³ However, we may be missing the relevant connecting links, or the initials in Academia cod. 13 may have been executed by someone not trained in San Millán, and their new design not immediately adopted by its scriptorium. Finally, one should mention the fragmentary *Liber Comitis* in the Burgos Cathedral archives, which may contain initials in the style of the 'school of Florentius' of the c.950 period.⁴

¹*Der ältere Beatus*, i. 412, 559, n. 108.

²Millares, *Manuscritos Visigóticos*, no. 93, p. 48.

³The interlaced initials in the later 10th-century San Millán manuscripts discussed below under IIIb are quite distinct from those of Academia cod. 13, which much more closely resemble the initials of the school of Florentius of c.950. Real Academia cod. 25, usually placed in San Millán and dated 946, contains initials, but they are few, archaic, and undistinguished—and Shailor has recently placed this work in Cardena rather than San Millán ('The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardena', 459–62). Academia cod. 29, from San Millán and also placed by Klein in the third quarter of the 10th century, does contain some interlace initials, but they are poorly understood, undistinguished, and in no way comparable to the fine decorated letters in Academia cod. 13.

⁴The manuscript is to be attributed in parts to Florentius on the basis of its calligraphy and decoration, according to T. Rojo Orcajo, 'La exposición del "Liber Comitis" del archivo catedralicio de Burgos', *Boletín de la Real Academia*

In the León–Asturias region the appearance of the new initials style appears to be a response to the strong development in Castile rather than an independent movement. The key manuscript here is the famous *Beatus*, *In Apocalypsin*, in New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 644, illuminated by Magius (in San Miguel de Escalada ?). A confusing inscription in the codex has led to ‘specific’ dates ranging from the end of the ninth century to the beginning of the eleventh, but it can also be dated mid-tenth century.¹ Large interlace initials appear in the Morgan *Beatus* in two places: the first page of the preface of *Beatus* to Etherius (f. 10^v) and the first page of the *Book of Daniel* (f. 239^v). These initials have been analysed elsewhere,² and in the context of the present study only a few additional remarks must suffice. Unlike the Castilian decorated letters, the initials in the Morgan *Beatus* do have the appearance of having been directly and rather unimaginatively borrowed from northern models, and do not appear to have been developed as part of a more broadly-based development. Although generally well done, these initials do not reflect the kind of attention to precision of drawing and sophisticated polish of the best work of the school of Florentius. The initials are integral parts of blocks of capitals which occupy a large area of the page (pl. II, 14). It is not likely that these designs are earlier than the impressive Castilian ones. Thus, the mid-century or slightly later date for the Morgan *Beatus* appears to be most likely, i.e., c.950–60.³

Period IIIa (c.960–1000) (pl. III)⁴

The decorated letters in manuscripts of the c.960–75 period generally represent a continuation of the traditions developed

de la Historia, xcvi (1930), 638–62. I am not familiar with the initials in this fragment, and so cannot comment on Rojo’s opinion.

¹For review of this complex problem, see especially Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, i. 280–6; and also Williams, ‘The “Moralia in Iob”’, 232–3, n. 38.

²Guilmartin, ‘Early Interlace Initials’, 25–8.

³This is the date attributed to it by Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, i. 413.

⁴For information and additional bibliography on the manuscripts from which initials are reproduced in pl. III, consult the following: Fig. 1: Gerona, Cathedral, MS 7, 975—A. M. Mundo and M. Sanchez Mariana, *El Comentario de Beato al Apocalipsis*, catálogo de los códices (Madrid, 1976), pp. 25–6, no. 6. Fig. 2:

in northern Spain during the c.935–60 period, but with some modifications and additions. The best way to illustrate this is by examining some initials—and blocks of capitals—in works securely dated within this period. The design illustrated in plate III, 1, from the *Beatus, In Apocalypsin*, in the Museum of the Cathedral of Gerona, was completed shortly before 975 in southern León, probably Tábara. This display of decorated letters—the introduction to *Revelation*—obviously belongs to the same family as the design from the Morgan *Beatus* illustrated in plate II, 14, but in the earlier work of Magius the initials, the stylized vine, and the capital all retain their own clear spatial identities. In the Gerona *Beatus* design the tendency to set the lines of capitals in ‘pennants’ which are attached to a ‘flagpole’ initial—as in the 960 León *Bible* system illustrated in plate II, 7—is carried to extremes. All the capitals are now enclosed in a single large panel, forming literally a page within the page, which is attached to the initial. The whole large composite form has furthermore become an environment for plant and beast. Birds are perched on little arches on top of the panels of capitals, and also sit on the projecting interlace loops of the initial; beneath, they inhabit a little garden complete with trees. With few exceptions these natural forms are neither like the ‘Merovingian-Visigothic’ stylized plant and animal forms of the early initials nor like the ‘Insular-Carolingian’ animal head interlace terminals of the school of Florentius initials. They are rather truly ‘realistic’ forms of Late Antique or Early Christian type, which occur in Carolingian as well as Islamic art.¹ The birds do appear in associa-

Valladolid, Biblioteca de la Universidad, MS 433, 970—ibid. pp. 50–2, no. 30. Figs 3–5: León, Archivo de la Catedral, cod. 8—J. Yarza Luaces, ‘Las miniaturas del Antifonario de León’, *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología*, lxii (University of Valladolid, 1976), 181–205. Fig. 6: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 494—A. Millares Carlo, *Contribución al ‘corpus’ de codices visigóticos*, Madrid (1931), 45–76.

¹ See, for example, the vault mosaics of the fourth-century Santa Costanza in Rome (W. F. Volbach, *Early Christian Art* (New York, 1963), pl. 34); the *Fountain of Life* page in the Carolingian *Godescalc Gospels* (A. Grabar and C. Nordenfalk, *Early Medieval Painting*, plate on p. 139); the late 10th-century casket from Cordoba in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art (J. Beckwith, *Caskets from Cordoba* (London, 1960), pl. 5).

tion with the Alpha and Omega in Florentius's 945 *Moralia*,¹ and the trees appear in his Cordoba *Homiliae*.² But the idea of populating an initial-capitals environment with them appears to be a later development. There are other interesting novel features in the Gerona *Beatus* design. The contour decoration consists partly of little arches separated by bristling hair or spikes. This cufic-like motif is found occasionally in associations with initials during the earlier periods (pl. I, 24),³ but now becomes common, and in the Gerona *Beatus* design crawls like a column of beetles all over the edges and bottom of the *I*. There are other hairlike projections (as well as little plants) sprouting from edges, of a type which also occasionally occurs in earlier forms (pl. I, 28). Finally, the decorative fillings inside the *I* have become vines, replacing the interlacings or other geometric motifs of the initials of the c.935–60 period. In the 'classic' initials of the c.935–60 period the architectonic integrity of the giant letters is never lost, for even in the more flamboyant examples—in Rylands Lat. MS 89, or the 960 León *Bible*—plants and animal heads project from the interlace terminals without undermining the linear solidity of the initial as a whole. But the architectonic ribbon framework of the Gerona *Beatus* initial is softened and even partially dissolved.

¹C. Nordenfalk, *Die spätantiken Zierbuchstaben* (Stockholm, 1970), Texband, 65–7; Guilmain, 'Northern Influences in the Initials and Ornaments of the *Beatus* Manuscripts'.

²See above, p. 382, n. 3.

³See above, p. 374, n. 1. The motif appears in some of the initials of *Beatus*, cod. Vitr. 14–1 in the Madrid Biblioteca Nacional (Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, ii, figs 79g, 80e), but is more conspicuous around arches and frames (Klein, *ibid.* figs 41–4, 48). Klein places the manuscript in southeastern León, and dates it c.930–50. However, J. Williams, in his review of Klein's book, *The Art Bulletin*, lxi (1979), p. 635, has cast some doubts on these attributions, and has suggested that the date of the *Beatus* might be a decade later. His argument is based partly on the observation that the bristling contour decoration in association with interlace initials and frames appears to be a 'late', i.e. second half of the 10th-century phenomenon. There is certainly some substance to William's opinion. The motif appears in interlace initials of the Paris, BN MS Lat. 2855, completed by 951, discussed above under period II (i.e. on the *D* on f. 73^v—see Guilmain, 'Early Interlace Initials', pl. 5); it is very common on the frames and arches of the *Codex Vigilanus*, completed in 976, and the *Codex Aemilianensis*, completed in 994, as I pointed out in my doctoral dissertation, *An Analysis of some Major forms of Ornament*, p. 54, and figs 26, 27, 29, 30, 54, 55, 130).

The transformation of the interlace initial into a kind of trellis full of growing things is complete in the *I* from the 970 Valcavado *Beatus* illustrated in plate III, 2, and here the architectonic form of the letter is almost completely obscured. In the page from the *Codex Vigilanus*, completed in 976, illustrated in plate V, 1, the introduction, 'Canones generalium . . .', is set within a flag which hangs from the animal head atop the giant *I* of 'In precedentibus . . .'. The great initial itself bristles with hair and cufic-like forms, and at the upper left a 'realistic' goat stands up to chew the leaf hanging from the animal's mouth. The relationship of this design to those from the León-Asturias area—i.e. the *Beatus Manuscripts* from Gerona, Valcavado, and Tábara (completed in 970)—is obvious,¹ but the *Codex Vigilanus* initial, made in the scriptorium of Albelda in Navarre, appears to retain more of the strict discipline in design and craftsmanship of the creations of the school of Florentius. Despite all its accretions of bristling projections, the architectonic solidity of the *I* is not so strongly undermined, and its interior spaces are strengthened by cores of tightly-packed and geometrically stable interlace panels rather than loose, wavy plant forms. The 'flag' itself is divided into four panels bordered by strong interlace mouldings.² The famous *Antiphonary*, MS 8 in the León Cathedral Chapter, has been the subject of much discussion. On the basis of documentary interpretation it has been dated early tenth century, but also as late as 1069. However, on the basis of its decoration it has been dated late tenth century by Yarza,³ which is in accordance with my own observations, for surely its decorated initials belong to the type under discussion here and are no earlier than the 960–70 period, and perhaps later (pl. III, 3, 4, 5). Actually, most of the large initials in this work are monograms of *Vespertinum* (VPR),⁴

¹On the Tábara *Beatus*, see Mundo and Sanchez, *El Comentario*, 31–2. Its Omega is reproduced in Guilmain, 'Early Interlace Initials', pl. 10; *idem*, 'Northern Influences in the Initials and Ornaments of the *Beatus Manuscripts*', Fig. 3.

²Tight control and excellence of craftsmanship is characteristic of the decoration of the *Codex Vigilanus* decoration in general; see Guilmain, 'Interlace Decoration and the Influence of the North'.

³'Las miniaturas del Antifonario de León', 205.

⁴Dom Louis Brou, OSB, 'Le joyau des antiphonaires latins: le manuscrit 8 des archives de la Cathédrale de León', *Archivos Leoneses*, 1954, 67–8; Yarza, *ibid.* 203–4.

but these were sometimes completely transformed into rather shapeless abstract designs. The interlace tends to be loosely drawn, and the over/under alternation rhythm of the ribbons is sometimes misunderstood. The interlace structure of the two forms illustrated in plate III, 3, 4 is of northern ancestry, but the ribbonlike stems sprouting foliage inhabited by birds shown in plate III, 5 could be purely Islamic.¹

This later, modified form of the interlace initials style was quite widespread, appearing well entrenched not only in León, but in other manuscripts from the Castile–Navarre area, besides the *Codex Vigilanus*, the decorated letters of which remain close to those of the school of Florentius of the c.950–60 period, but also reflect the ‘new’ taste. Plate III, 6 illustrates a giant *P* in a *Vitae Sanctorum*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 494. This is a complicated work, made up of several fragments, of which the last part appears to date from the eleventh century; however, the decorated letter shown here is datable c.970 and seems quite Castilian.² Another manuscript containing giant initials, packed with tightly-executed ribbon patterns, with animal heads as well as

¹Compare it, for example, to the 11th-century stone panel from Aljafería in the Zaragoza Museo Provincial, or the 11th-century marble panel from Toledo in the Museo de Santa Cruz in Toledo, which are reproduced by Beckwith, *Caskets from Cordoba*, fig. 12, p. 9, fig. 14, p. 11. For a good review of the question of Islamic influences in the Spanish manuscripts, see O. K. Werckmeister, ‘Islamische Formen in spanischen Miniaturen des 10. Jahrhunderts und das Problem der Mozarabischen Buchmalerei’, in *L’Occidente e l’Islam nell’ Alto Medioevo. Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di Studio sull’ Alto Medioevo*, xxi (Spoleto, 1965), 933–67.

²The manuscript is analysed by Millares, *Contribución*, 47–76. It appears to be made up primarily of fragments from four manuscripts distributed as follows: I, ff. 4^r–11^v and 79^r–86^v; II, ff. 12^r–78^v; III, ff. 87^r–93^v and 102^r–112^v; IV, 94^r–101^v. Millares dates the work 11th century. However, Loewe counted three fragments, which he dated 9th–10th century (in W. von Hartel and G. Loewe, *Biblioteca Patrum Latinorum Hispaniensis* (Vienna, 1887), 331. This is accepted by Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 608, p. 44. J. Domínguez-Bordona, *Exposición de códices miniados españoles: catálogo* (Madrid, 1929), p. 175, dates the whole manuscript 10th century and likens its ‘artistic calligraphy’ to that of the 945 *Moralia* of Florentius. There are large interlace initials in the first two groups of folios—i.e. ff. 4–93. Some interlace initials, for example a great *I* on f. 81^v, would not be out of place in a Castilian manuscript of the school of Florentius of the 950–60 period, but in my opinion the fragments making up ff. 4–93 as a whole must belong to the 960–75 period.

foliated terminals, and bristling with hairy Cufic-like contour decorations, is a *Martyrologium* in the British Library, Add. MS 25600.¹ This manuscript has sometimes been dated 919 and attributed to Cardeña and the scribe Gomez on the basis of a problematic note, which is in fact contradicted by an inscription in the manuscript itself, attributing it to the scribe Endura;² a date in the mid-tenth century has also been suggested for the manuscript.³ However, Professor Shailor has recently convincingly argued that neither Rylands Lat. MS 89 nor BL Add. MS 25600 (both presumably made in Cardeña by the same Endura) appear to have been made in Cardeña, and furthermore were made by different copyists at different times. On the basis of its script and decorations she places BL Add. MS 25600 in the same time period as Florentius's *Bible* of 960.⁴ On the basis of my research on initials I am inclined to agree with her on all points. I would go one step further and suggest that the decorated initials in the British Library manuscript may be slightly later than 960, though strongly attached to the style of that period, and place it c.965.

This style of decorated letters evidently persisted until the end of the tenth century—and even into the eleventh—for example, in a *Vitae Patrum*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 822,⁵ and a work to which I shall return at the end of this paper, the *Passionarium*, Escorial cod. b.l.4.

¹For a description of the manuscript, see A. Fábrega Grau, 'Pasionario Hispanico (siglo VII–XII)', *Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra*, vi (1953), 35–50. I should say that I have not had the opportunity to examine this manuscript, and know its initials only from Fábrega's and Shailor's articles.

²For a review of this problem, see Shailor, 'The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardeña', 466–7. Millares, in *Manuscriptos Visigóticos*, 32–3, no. 44, still accepts the 919 date and argues that the Endura of BL Add. MS 25600, Madrid, Academia Codex 76, and Rylands Lat. MS 89 are the same man. Pérez y Urbel, 'Florentio', 405, accepts the 919 date and assumes that the Endura of BL Add. MS 25600 and Rylands Lat. MS 89 are the same man.

³Fábrega, 'Pasionario', 28; Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, n. 133, p. 566.

⁴The Scriptorium of San Pedro de Cardeña', 469–73.

⁵The manuscript is a composite work made up of three fragments: 1. ff. 1^r–22^v; 2. ff. 23^r–28^v; 3. ff. 29^r–59^v. The first two sections contain large interlace initials, sometimes bristling with hairy Cufic-like contour decorations, which very much resemble the decorated letters of the c.960–975 period, but are rather loosely and indifferently drawn. Millares, in *Corpus de codices visigóticos*,

Period IIIb (c.970–1000) (pl. IV)¹

This late development in the design of decorated letters in tenth-century Spain is really a variant of the style discussed under period 3a, but is clearly associated with the scriptorium of San Millán de la Cogolla. Its two major works are the *Codex Aemilianensis*, cod. d.I.1. in the Escorial, and the *Expositio Psalmorum*, cod. 8 in the Madrid Real Academia de la Historia. The *Codex Aemilianensis* was derived from the *Codex Vigilanus*, started at the time of that work's completion (976), and finished in 994.² The illuminator of the *Codex Aemilianensis* evidently started to make a close copy of the *Codex Vigilanus*. On folios 14^r and 15^v of the *Codex Aemilianensis* there are unpainted drawings of Adam and Eve and the Cross of Oviedo which appear to be unfinished direct copies of the same subjects in the *Codex Vigilanus*. But on folio 16^v a new finished painting of the Cross of Oviedo painting appears which is in the distinctive style of San Millán de la Cogolla in the last quarter of the tenth century.³ Thus by c.977–8 that distinct style was apparently already fully developed. The date of the Academia *Expositio Psalmorum* cannot be documented, but the style of its decorated initials is so close to that of the *Codex Aemilianensis* that it must date from the same period, i.e. c.980.⁴ The late tenth-century initials'

81–95, dates the manuscript 11th century. Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, 412, dates it 10th–11th century. Actually the last section of the manuscript contains large interlace initials which are tighter and more precisely drawn than those in the first two sections, and may be earlier in date.

¹For information and additional bibliography on the manuscripts from which initials are reproduced in pl. IV, consult the following: Figs 1–4: Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 8—Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 584, p. 40, 172–80, pls 33–6. Fig. 5: Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 38—Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 597, 42, 183–6, pl. 39. Figs 6–7: Escorial, cod. d.I.1, 994—Guillermo, *Catalogo de los codices de la Real Biblioteca del Escorial*, i. 320–68.

²As stated on f. 453, the MS was copied by the scribes Velasco and Sisbuto. See Millares, *Manuscritos Visigóticos*, no. 21, p. 17, and Guilmain, 'Interlace Decoration', p. 212, n. 17.

³See also J. Guilmain, 'The Forgotten Early Medieval Artist', *Art Journal*, xxv/1 (1965), 36–7, and figs 3 and 4.

⁴It is so dated, with no explanation, by J. Domínguez Bordona, in *Spanish Illumination* (Florence, 1929), pl. 6A, and repeated by A. Millares Carlo, *Tratado de Paleografía Española* (Madrid, 1932), no. 138, p. 462, as well as Werkmeister, 'Islamische Formen', 938.

painters of San Millán appear to have been willing to discard nothing, accept everything, and to throw it all together with great enthusiasm. Fortunately, the process appears to have been overseered by a vitally imaginative and talented personality, and the result is a strong series of spectacular original designs. In the V illustrated in plate IV, 1 from Academia cod. 8, the great interlace structure, in terms of its tightly-packed interlaced fillings and its bulb-like terminal animal heads, derives from the style of the Florentius style of the c.945 period, but its bristling contour ornamentations brings it closer to the initials of the c.975 period. The clusters of fishes sprouting like flowers from spreading leaves on either sides of the lower part of the V seem to hark back to designs from the early part of the century, being perhaps of the same family as the fishes penetrating and attaching themselves to decorated concentric circles in the Evangelist portraits of the 920 León Bible.¹ The outer contour ornaments of the upper branches of the V—elaborations of the hairy forms on the inner sides—have become huge turtle-like forms, and the space between the branches is filled by an expanding and contracting growth. Surely such lack of purity and flagrant mixing of motifs would have shocked Florentius and his immediate followers. Furthermore, this is not simply a variation of a school of Florentius design made ornate through accretions, but a new synthesis based on the recombination of older motifs. Spanish illuminators often retained older motifs and mixed them with new ones, but what we see here is really more like the formation of a new 'style'. A letter such as the Q from the Academia *Expositio Psalmorum* illustrated in plate IV, 4 may appear at first like nothing more than a late and somewhat elaborate version of the early 'struggling beasts' initial type. And it is indeed that, but also a fantastic new form, for there is now a veritable hierarchy of beasts dominated by the great lion twisting back to snap at

¹See Grabar and Nordenflak, *Early Medieval Painting*, plate on p. 164, or Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, pl. 3. A. Grabar, in 'Éléments sassanides et islamiques dans les enluminures des manuscrits espagnols du haut Moyen Age', *Arte del primo millenio; atti del II° convegno per lo studio dell' arte dell' alto medio evo tenuto presso l'universita di Pavia nel settembre 1950* (Viglongo, 1950), p. 316, describes these forms in the 920 Bible as tears, but in my opinion they are clearly meant to represent fishes.

the large tormenting bird on its back, as two smaller lions (or dogs?) contribute to the forray by barking up at the giant. Besides the complexity of the action itself, the design of the letter achieves a new degree of sophistication, being conceived as a fluidly modified figure 8 composed of vibrantly twisting and oscillating forms. The Q from the *Codex Aemilianensis* illustrated in plate iv, 6 is no longer simply a reclining human shape become letter, but some wildly imaginative centaur-clown aerialist. The P from cod. 38 in the Madrid Real Academia de la Historia, illustrated in plate IV, 5, derives from the earlier combination form of a beast coming to grips with an inanimate upright (plate I, 26, 27), but the twisting snake is combined with an 'advanced' interlace form. In the D from the Academia *Expositio Psalmorum* illustrated in plate IV, 3, this same type of combination is used to create a superb surrealistic design, for now the interlace stem of the letter is a monumental form activated by projecting plant and animal heads wagging outrageously-developed tongues. The loop of the letter is a dancing dog, its tail caught in the interlace rhythm of the stem below, which twists wildly backward to bite the stem above. The fabulous Q in the same manuscript illustrated in plate IV, 2 develops the genre even further. The great ornate interlace body of the Q is a form inspired by the northern type of initials so prominent in the style of the school of Florentius, but the *design* of the interlace may well be more Islamic than northern,¹ as is also the pinnacle-like tree growing from it above. This interlace fantasy is carried by a snake-like creature springing from the shoulder of an Islamic warrior lancing a beast, which is literally trying to jump into the snake's mouth! These elements of Islamic art are of some significance from the point of view of the general development of style. 'Eastern' influences are evident in early tenth-century Spanish initials, but they appear in terms of mixed forms of widespread origins which permeate much of Western European early medieval decoration.² It is only as time goes on, and evidently increasingly so during the second half of the tenth century, that specifically *Islamic* influ-

¹ See Guilmain, 'Some Observations on Mozarabic Manuscript Illumination', 188-90.

² Guilmain, 'Zoomorphic Decoration', 21-8.

ences become more prominent.¹ The composition of folio 316^v, and a number of other pages, in the *Codex Aemilianensis* indicate a new level of sophistication in the composition and design of the page as a whole (pl. IV, 7). The gigantic architectural *I* is literally surmounted by the image of the Lord, and the rest of the title—IN NOMINE DOMINI . . .—hangs as a great flag from the right upper loop of the letter and the snout of the terminal beast head. Below this, two bishops are seated around a book on a stand, stressing the 'prefatio'. Then, on the upper right the text opens with a fantastic *D* of grappling heraldic birds and dogs attacked above by a leaping quadruped. Below, to the left, there is a formally-organized block of text introduced by the INCIPIT. Initials, capitals, decorations, illustrations, and text have been composed into an integrated full-page design.

How did this late San Millán style of decorated initials evolve? The sources of individual motifs are not hard to find. Fantastic animal forms and bizarre combinations had continued to be developed after the introduction of elaborate interlace initials. For example, the palmette held in the mouth of the terminal animal head in the *P* from Rylands Lat. MS 89 illustrated in plate III, 13 is transformed into a fantastic inverted bird with claws, whose tail becomes another bird head—and an extremely odd type of *O* initial composed of swirling legs and feet is common in the same manuscript (plate V, 3). The combination of a whole 'realistic' beast, a great interlace design, terminal animal heads, plant forms, and bristling contour decoration is fully realized in the *I* from the *Codex Vigilanus* illustrated in plate V, 1. But, as we have seen, the characteristic late San Millán style cannot be explained as simply a mixture of existing form evident in works from other artistic centres. It is at its best in five manuscripts: Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, codices 8,² 38,³ 39,

¹For a good general review of this development, see Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, 16–21.

²A reproduction of the initial illustrated in pl. IV, 2 appears in J. Domínguez Bordona, 'Miniatura', in *Ars Hispaniae*, xviii (1962), fig. 28; the one illustrated in pl. IV is reproduced in Clark, *Collectanea*, pl. 36 (his no. 584).

³See also the reproduction of an initial from Academia MS 38 in J. Domínguez Bordona, *Manuscritos con pinturas* (Madrid, 1933), i. p. 211, fig. 199. A reproduction of the initial illustrated in pl. IV, 5 appears in Clark, *Collectanea*, pl. 39 (no. 597).

56,¹ and the *Codex Aemilianensis*.² All of these works must belong to the same general period, datable through the *Codex Aemilianensis* of 976–94, with some earlier and later manifestations, yielding rough outer limits of c.970–1000. A precise chronological order within the group is difficult to establish. Largely on the basis of an unclear inscription, Hartel and Loewe, as well as Clark, dated Academia cod. 39 in the beginning of the tenth century.³ On the other hand Millares, following Vázquez de Parga, dates the manuscript in the eleventh century.⁴ On the basis of its initials the work—at least the main section to folio 244—must definitely be placed in the second half of the tenth century.⁵ The early dating may not be entirely wrong, for Academia cod. 39's initials seem to reflect the earlier phase of the late San Millán Style. It does contain a number of initials of the type shown in plate IV, 1, 3, 5, i.e. large interlace forms with terminal animal heads, running or leaping beasts making up (or included in) the loops of the letters and projecting hairlike or plantlike contour ornaments.⁶ However, the majority of its initials are still in the style of the early tenth century, and sometimes wildly imaginatively so. For example, a siren with a blue body, a green and yellow arm, and a striped tail grabs its tresses and becomes a Q;⁷ a madly dancing human figure with an outrageously elongated left arm struggles with a snake and

¹For the bibliography on this manuscript, a *Manuale Mozarabicum*, see Millares, *Manuscritos Visigóticos*, 1963, 51–2 (no. 105).

²The *Codex Aemilianensis*, one of the best known of the 'Mozarabic' manuscripts, has been the subject of much discussion. The article by O. K. Werkmeister, 'Das Bild zur Liste der Bistümer Spaniens im Codex Aemilianensis', *Madriider Mitteilungen*, ix (1968), 399–423, includes an extensive bibliography in the notes. References to the manuscript in my own previous publications stress the northern character of its decorated initials ('Zoomorphic Decoration', and 'Interlace Decoration').

³Loewe-Hartel, *Bibliotheca*, 499; Clark, *Collectanea*, p. 42, no. 598, p. 164.

⁴Luis Vázquez de Parga, 'El Pasionario hispanico de San Millán de la Cogolla', *Archivo Paleografico Italiano*, nuova series, II–III, II (1956–7), pp. 367–77; Millares, *Manuscritos Visigóticos*, no. 102, p. 50.

⁵Klein, *Der ältere Beatus-Kodex*, 412, places the work as a whole in the second half of the 10th–11th century.

⁶Clark, *Collectanea*, pls 28, 29.

⁷Guilmair, 'Some Observations' (1976), fig. 1A.

becomes a *D*.¹ On folio 5 there is a large but fairly simple interlace initial along with an image of the Lord set in a medallion borne aloft by two angels—a type of imagery related to Visigothic representations of the sun and moon borne aloft by angels.² And I should add, as a general impression, that the character of the initials in this work appears less 'Islamic' than that of the initials in *Academia cod. 8*. In brief, in regard to its initials *Academia cod. 39* appears as a bridge between the rich, but archaic tradition of the early tenth century and the mature style of the late San Millán tradition of *Academia cod. 8* and the *Codex Aemilianensis*. It should thus perhaps be dated somewhat earlier than those last two works, i.e., c.970. The small *Manuale Mozarabicum*, *cod. 56* in the Real Academia de la Historia, which has been dated tenth century, second half of the tenth century, and eleventh century,³ contains initials related to those of the *Codex Aemilianensis* and certainly belongs in the last quarter of the tenth century, perhaps c.990 (pl. V, 7). At the present state of research it would be difficult to describe the chronological series more precisely.⁴

In relation to the connection between the works which I have grouped under IIIa and IIIb, as well as the question of the survival of both into the eleventh century, one manuscript in particular stands out, the *Passionarium*, *cod. b.I.4*. in the Escorial. This codex is always placed in Cardeña and dated eleventh century, and Grau has suggested that it was probably composed slightly before the last quarter of the eleventh century.⁵ In terms of its initials this work is both fascinating and puzzling. The great initial reproduced in plate V, 8 could fit neatly into plate IIIa, with the manuscripts of the c.960–1000 period outside of San Millán,

¹Clark, *Collectanea*, pl. 30.

²H. Schlunk, 'Observaciones en torno al problema de la miniatura visigoda', *Archivo español de arte*, xviii (1945), 241–65, figs 16, 17, 20.

³J. Domínguez Bordona, *Catalogo*, p. 176 (siglo XI); Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 601, p. 43 (saec. XI?); Klein, *Der ältere Beatus*, p. 412 (2.H. 10. Jh.).

⁴See also the general discussion of decorations in San Millán manuscripts of the second half of the 10th century in Klein, *ibid.* 251–2.

⁵Millares, *Manuscritos visigóticos*, no. 20, p. 17; Clark, *Collectanea*, no. 517, p. 32; Grau, 'Pasionario hispanico', i. 240–5.

and in fact the lower part of the letter, with its elaborate interlace and plant design, would not be out of place in Florentius's *Bible* of 960. A Q on folio 59^r appears like an elaboration of the ring-chain O in Rylands Lat. MS 89 (pl. V, 5; cf. pl. II, 10), but the same letter on another page is quite different, being, structurally, virtually identical with a somewhat more elaborate form in the *Codex Aemilianensis*.¹ Thus, in Escorial MS b.I.4. the stylistic variations of northern Spanish decorated letters of the last third of the tenth century appear thoroughly mixed and even fused. The execution of the initials retains much of the vitality of their models, and somehow does not seem very far removed from them. It appears that a date in the earlier part of the eleventh century is more appropriate for the manuscript, rather than a date which would separate its decorated initials from their sources of inspiration by seventy-five years, as suggested by Grau.

As a whole, the art of the decorated letter in tenth-century Spain represents a uniquely instructive phenomenon, appearing during the first half of the century almost as a recapitulation of the development of the Continental European early medieval initial. The simplest geometric and compass-drawn forms seem to hark back practically to the very dawn of that development.² Most forms of the c.900–35 period are related to motifs best known to us in eighth-century Frankish manuscripts.³ The stage at c.945 in the development of the 'school of Florentius' style obviously depended heavily on models of the late Carolingian Franco-Insular school or its derivatives. However, Spanish initials after that quickly acquired their own distinct character, partly due to a stronger influence from Islamic art, but perhaps even more because Spanish illuminators relied more and more upon their

¹The Q in Escorial cod. b.I.4. is reproduced (backwards) by Domínguez Bordona in *Manuscritos con pinturas*, ii, fig. 450, p. 17. The Q in the *Codex Aemilianensis* is reproduced by Guilmain, 'Interlace Decoration', fig. 3.

²See Carl Nordenfalk's discussion of the *Virgilius Augusteus* in *Die spätantiken Zierbuchstaben* (Stockholm, 1970), i. 69–88, ii, pls 17–23; J. G. Alexander, *The Decorated Letter* (New York, 1978), 8–9.

³However, these initial forms appear as early as the 6th and early 7th century in manuscripts made in Italy and other Mediterranean areas—e.g., see Nordenfalk, *Die spätantiken Zierbuchstaben*, ii, pls III–VIII.

own creative sensibilities. Far from being backward, the fantastic clown-acrobats and surrealistic combat scenes forming initials in late tenth-century San Millán are as wildly imaginative and advanced as anything being done at the same time anywhere—and, indeed, not only herald the Romanesque fantastic initial¹ but are strangely akin to the whimsical images of Klee and Miro.

Beyond the first third of the tenth century the development of the decorated letter is fundamentally a northern Spanish phenomenon. Thus, the famous Andalusian *Biblia Hispalense*, begun in the late ninth-early tenth century but completed in 988, contains only initials of the type discussed here under period I (c.900–35), but with somewhat more 'Islamic' overtones. As for the eleventh century development—which would require, and deserves, a separate study—it remains rooted in the tenth, but with enormous variations. Thus, for example, the *Psalter*, MS 1277 in the Madrid Archivo Historico Nacional, invariably dated eleventh century, is filled with initials overwhelmingly of the fantastic zoomorphic-anthropomorphic and plant-geometric style of the early tenth century, though rather unsophisticated in execution. Interspersed with these are interlace-zoomorphic forms in the later tenth-century style, but, on the whole, there is little that is specifically and clearly 'eleventh-century' about the initials of this derivative work.² On the other hand, in eleventh-century decorated manuscripts by excellent scribes and illuminators, such as the *Beatus* of 1047 executed by Facundus for King Ferdinand and Queen Sancha of León,³ or the *Prayer Book* by the scribe Petrus and the painter Fructuosus for the same royal couple,⁴ the decorated letters reflect a continuing development and high degree of sophistication.

¹For a general discussion of these, see C. N., in A. Grabar and C. Nordenfalk, *Romanesque Painting* (Lausanne, 1958), 172–82.

²For a general description of the MS. (which was evidently executed by four different hands) and bibliography, see Millares, *Manuscritos visigóticos*, no. 89, p. 47.

³Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS vit. 14–2. On this *Beatus*, and bibliography, see Mundo and Sanchez, *El Comentario de Beato al Apocalipsis*, 33–5. See also the analysis of its Alpha in Guilmain, 'Northern Influences in the initials and Ornaments of the Beatus Manuscripts'; Alexander, *The Decorated Letter*, pl. 27.

⁴On the *Prayer Book*, dated 1058, in the Biblioteca Universitaria of Santiago

Only a broad outline of the chronological development and classification of decorated initials in tenth-century Spanish Latin manuscripts can be presented in this short paper, but one hopes that it will open the door to further and increasingly precise studies. A great deal of research remains to be done on the early medieval manuscripts of Spain, and old dates and attributions can, and should, be reexamined through systematic codicological analysis as Professor Shailor, for example, has recently demonstrated. Decorated letters are complex structures, which can yield certainly as many clues about scriptoria, hands, traditions, quality, and chronological development as other forms of illumination or script. It is true that some Spanish decorators remained conservative and continued to work with earlier forms of initials after new designs had been introduced—sometimes even mixing them all together—and even some of the progressive artists evidently retained and reworked old 'models'. However, these patterns may apply as well to the habits of scribes (as they do certainly to the habits of the illuminators of images), and may in themselves constitute symptoms worthy of our scrutiny.¹

de Compostela, MS 5, see Millares, *Manuscritos Visigóticos*, no. 155, p. 71; Williams analyses one of its initials in *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*, pl. 35b.

¹In a paper of the type presented here full documentation would be virtually unmanageable. I have therefore referred mostly to those sources from which the reader could glean the most additional information—as appears, for example, in M. C. Díaz y Díaz's important *Index Scriptorium Latinorum Medii Aevi Hispanorum*. And I must also express my sincere gratitude to Professor Meyer Schapiro, who many years ago aroused my interest in the study of the history of ornament and design.