

FROM CHAOS TO COSMOS: THE CREATION ICONOGRAPHY IN THE CATALAN ROMANESQUE BIBLES

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In the study of iconography of the Creation, few images result as original and striking as those of the Romanesque Bibles of Ripoll (Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 5729, f. 5v) [1] and Rodes (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 6, I, f. 6r) [2].¹ This study concerns two illuminated codices produced in the Benedictine abbey of Santa Maria de Ripoll (Girona). They originate from the second quarter of the eleventh century, under the government of abbot Oliva (1008-1046). In both manuscripts, the upper register of the initial page of Genesis is taken up by three synthetic and elaborate compositions. The majority of the scholars have attempted to connect the aforementioned representations with the great Old Testament iconographics, whether it be with Byzantine Octateuch narratives, which some of its motives,² undoubtedly refer to; or with Roman synthetic typology.³

Nevertheless, at first sight, the most surprising aspect of these Catalan representations is the absence of the Creator⁴ and the use of an abstract-allegoric artistic language very characteristic of the way Platonic cosmology was taught at schools. In fact, authors such as J. Zahlten, M. Mentré and B. Obrist had related its structural circles of the Cosmos to the ancient theory of the elements which had been handed down in the Middle Ages through hexameral literature and treaties on nature written by Bede and Isidore.⁵ However, until now nobody had observed that the exceptional scholarship of these images is partly resulting from the blossoming monastic school of Ripoll. More specifically from monk Oliva, the school's *quadrivium* master.⁶

In my opinion, only starting from the premise of the enriching scholarly attitude in respect to the Classical legacy exhibited at that time in Ripoll, can the elevated grade of conceptualization and exegesis of these and other cosmological figures be understood. This fact can be signed in the Ripoll manuscripts as well as in other works of art related to the monastery environment. Hence, the much debated and delicate question about the reception of traditions of biblical illustrations in the Ripoll *scriptorium* acquires a new meaning.

1. The Ripoll illuminators have attempted to establish the First Day of the Creation by means of a conceptualized representation of the passage through Chaos to Cosmos. As we shall see, this visual discourse links up with the principles of Platonic Alexandrine cosmogony and its survival in Medieval hexameral literature. In the Ripoll Bible, following the story of the text from Genesis (1, 1-2),⁷ the visual narration begins with the image of a shapeless watery mass crowned with a monstrous mask whose interior squirms with fish and birds. In this shape, primitive Chaos is represented, identified here as the Abyss by means of a revealing *explanatio* (caption): «*Abyssus retinens in se cuncta creata*» ('The Abyss has in itself all created things').⁸

This interpretation of initial Chaos with the Abyss originates from classical mythology, namely, that in Hesiod's *Theogony*.⁹ Ovid describes this in the *Metamorphoses* as a «*rudis indigestaque moles*» ('a confused and disorganised mass'),¹⁰ whose appearance corresponds to the Ripoll and Rodes depiction of the Abyss.

Turning to a classical image is the best way of visually expressing this ancient concept. One can deduce from this that the mask on the Creation of the Ripoll waters explicitly refers to the Roman personification of *Oceanus*. This iconography was greatly diffused

in Late Antiquity Hispania's pavement mosaics. One of them particularly stood out for its resemblance to the Ripoll *Oceanus* [5]: the one which decorates Villa of Materno's fountain in Carraque, Toledo, from the second half of the 4th century.¹¹

All of the representation's motives in Ripoll seem to derive from the Platonic exegesis of Creation's First Day. Its origin is in Alexandria and lives on by means of hexameral literature into the Middle Ages.¹² Philo of Alexandria imagined in his *De opificio mundi* a bodiless God, the divine Logos, creating from nothing an incorporeal heaven and an invisible earth. The first one – the heaven – consisted of the darkness' air and the second – the earth – consisted of the Abyss' waters.¹³

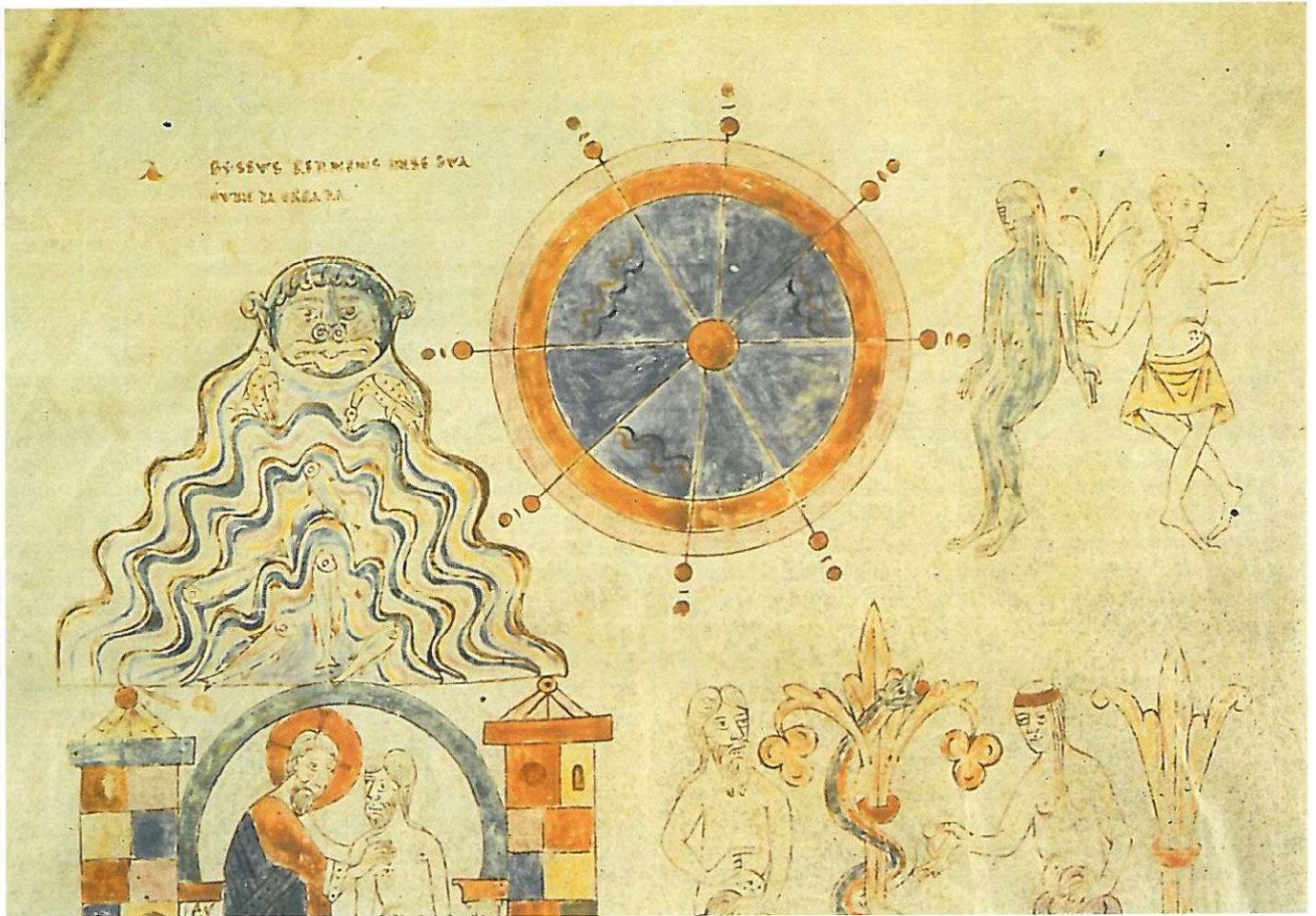
Both elements are suggested in the Ripoll Abyss: in the lower part, the fish, in the upper part, the birds. In his *Philosophia Mundi* (I, 21), William of Conches defines primordial Chaos as a kind of confusion of the elements. Its description bears a resemblance to the Catalan Bible images, with a thick mountain of water covering the earth and the dark air hiding the sky:

«*Fuerunt (elementa) in prima creatione ubi nunc sunt: et enim terra coperta aquis, aqua vero spissior, aer item spissior et obscurior quam modo sit; quippe, cum neque sol, neque luna, neque aliae stellae essent quibus illuminarentur. Ignis spissior quam modo sit, id vero quod terra aquis coperta, nec aliquo lumine illustrata, nec aedificiis distincta, nec suis animalibus repleta: nec aliquo gramine ornata: quod aqua et aer, et spissi, et obscuri erant: quod superioribus stellae non apparebant, vocaverunt Cháos, id est confusionem elementorum. Unde Moyses: Terra, inquit, inanis et vacua, et terra erat super faciem abyssi (Gen. 1, 2), haec dissolvit. Cum aqua usque ad maximam partem aeris elevata est, aer vero spissus, et ignis similiter in ea spissitudine aliquid terrae et aquae sub se inerat*».¹⁴

The Platonic commentaries therefore appear to provide the reading key to understand the Ripoll Abyss. In fact, Chalcidius, whose work was partially compiled by the monk Oliva, dedicated the second part of this *Commentary on the Timaeus* to explaining *Silva's* concept, a Latin term to designate the Greek *Hylê* or *Chaos*.¹⁵ His definition corresponds to the caption which appeared in the Catalan representation and equally helps to explain the explicit presence of animals in it: «*Hic mundus cuncta continebat animalia perinde ut intellegibilis, ad cuius aemulationem fiebat*».¹⁶ In fact, according to Chalcidius, Chaos was the holder of bodies, qualities and other sensitive things:

«*Quod silva receptaculum est corporum et qualitatum ceterorumque sensilium, generatione porro, quia haec non diu perseverant in uno statu, sed alia ex aliis inuicem subrogantur*».¹⁷

In this way, in the Ripoll work, what will happen on the second day (*Gen.* 1, 7) is anticipated with the division of the upper and lower waters which respectively leads to the creation of the sky and the ocean. The separation between *Aer* and *Aqua* is represented in such a way in one of the miniatures in the *Hortus Deli-*



1. Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 5729, f. 5v, Creation (photo Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

ciarum (f. 8r Engelhardt 955 5/a) (1176-1196) [6].¹⁸ Along with the Ripoll image, this representation appears to confirm the existence of a tradition based on the personification of the elements, thus the Ocean procuring with it the appearance of Neptune. The God is depicted sitting on a mountain of water holding his attributes: the fish and the trident.¹⁹

For this very reason it is relevant to return to the original mask which appears in the Ripoll Abyss. To a certain extent, it is perhaps necessary to relate its unpleasant appearance to the ugliness which Philo of Alexandria attributed to primordial disorder. In fact, in the 12th century illustration from Honorius Augustodunensis' *Clavis Physicae*, the platonic *materia informis* or *hyle* is represented as a monstrous mask [7].²⁰ Alternatively, the animalistic character of both could correspond to the platonic idea articulated in Cicero's *Timaeus*, in which the world was an animal gifted with intelligence: «*mundum animal esse*».²¹ This idea could be related to the pavement mosaic from the monastery of S. Maria delle Stuoie in Pavia, dating back to the second half of the 12th century [8]. The centre of a circle with the Labours of the Months is dominated by the figure of an animal with the caption: «*SALUFUS*»,²² who equally seems to possess a cosmological meaning.

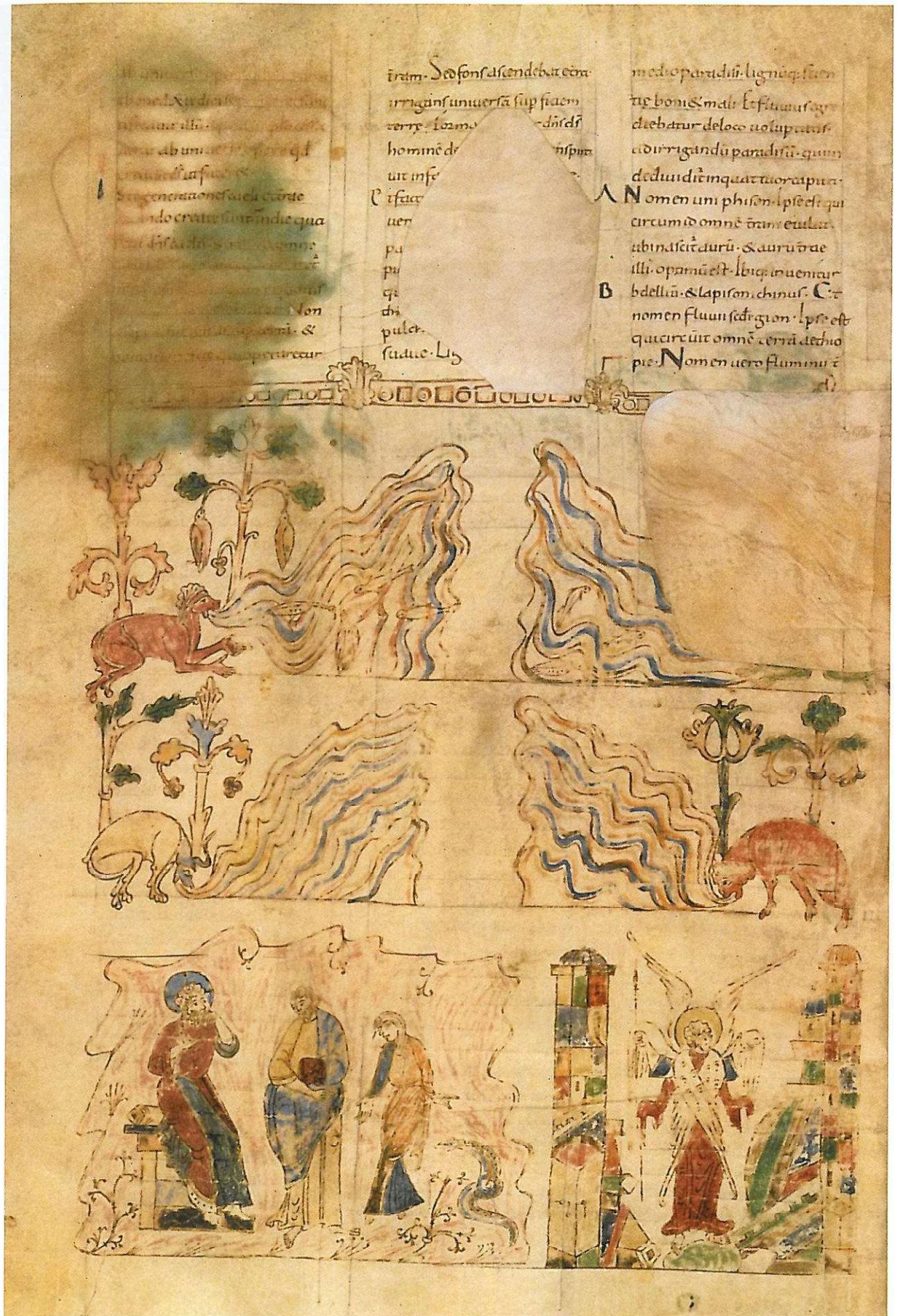
2. Nevertheless, the inclusion of a mask personifying the Abyss-Ocean theme in the First Day's scene of Creation only finds parallels in the Mediterranean area where it had some success. It subsequently appears in both Byzance, in the Octateuch of the Seraglio (Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, cod. G. I. 8, f. 26v; ca. 1150)²³ and in Southern Italy, in an ivory plaque exhibited in the Berlin Museum [9], produced in Montecassino around 1070,²⁴ or in Monreale Cathedral's mosaics from around 1180 [10].

It is necessary to analyze closely the example of Montecassino due to its chronological and cultural proximity to Ripoll. According to H. L. Kessler, the ivory plaque in Berlin is early evidence of an Italian recension of the Cotton Genesis with a Byzantine character, possibly carried out in Montecassino abbey in the 11th Century.²⁵ The Catalan Bibles do not seem to be very far away from this area of influence when considering that other images from the Ripoll Genesis confirm this italo-byzantine dependence. Ripoll probably obtained this by means of two trips made by abbot Oliva to Rome: the first being in 1111 and second in 1116/1117, during which he had the opportunity to visit Montecassino abbey, origin of the Benedictine Order. This was the place where his father, count Oliva Cabreta, had died in the year 990 having lived as a monk during the last two years of his life.²⁶ In fact the Ocean mask had been previously used in a very classical version in Montecassino as an illustration of the Eridanus constellation in codex Cass. 3 [11], carried out by abbot Bertario (853-883).²⁷ This image repeats itself in a *Hyginus* made in Ripoll in the year 1055 (Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Lat. 123, f. 202r). It presents some dependences on the cassinese model,²⁸ even though Catalan Ocean acquires a young appearance and has a cornucopia as an attribute.²⁹

The personifications of the Night in grey and of the Day in yellow bearing a torch in the Ripoll Bible lead us to Byzance. They are very similar to *Nyx* and *Hemera* from the Octateuch Vat. Gr. 747, f. 15r (around 1070-1080) [3].³⁰ The motive of Abel, dead and closed in a circle, belongs to the very same *repertoire*. Equally as present in the Ripoll [4] and Rode works, its diffusion in Southern Italian art is confirmed by the right-hand arch of Sessa Aurunca's Cathedral doorway (Campania).³¹ According to R. Sherman, its precedent



12. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 61, f. 6v, Creation of Heaven and Earth (photo Bibliothèque Nationale de France).



13. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 61, f. 7v, Four Rivers of Paradise (photo Bibliothèque Nationale de France).

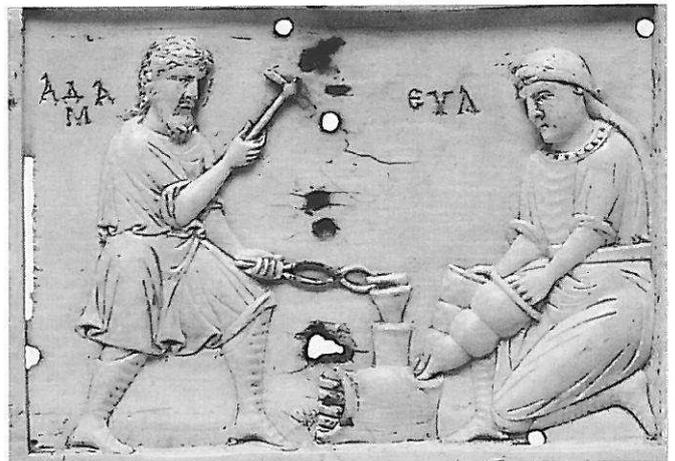


14. Salerno, Cathedral Museum, ivory plaque, Adam and Eve at work.

not dominate the cosmology. This did appear in San Paolo fuori le mura's Early Christian frescoes (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. Lat. 4406, f. 23r) or in the late 12th century paintings of San Giovanni a Porta Latina [16] and of the Saint Thomas Beckett Oratory in the Anagni Cathedral.⁴¹ In the two mentioned here, primitive Chaos returns to its ancient iconographic representation of *Oceanus* both by means of a sea with confronted dolphin and fish – Porta Latina – and by a mask surrounded by fish – Anagni. This raises the possibility of common archetype in Southern Italy. Two branches derive from this archetype: the first being the Catalan Bibles making up part of the older origin; the second being the aforementioned examples of Cassino and Lazio.

In contrast to the Rodes Bible, the Ripoll Bible is more independent and original, even if both were made in the Ripoll Abbey in the second quarter of the 11th century. Whereas the Ripoll Bible conserves the Byzantine Octateuch sequential character, the Rodes Bible proposes a synthetic Creation scene, very much in the traditional Roman style. In fact, other motives found in the composition present this link again: the origin of the Third Day's rocky mountain lies in the polemical Ashburnham Pentateuch, which was probably composed in Rome in the 7th century.⁴² Other peculiarities of the Creation of Rodes are connected to the 11th century Mediterranean milieu. In the most ancient Greek Octateuch, the Florence's Octateuch,⁴³ the Second and Third Day scenes on the first page [20] are very similar to the motives found in the Catalan Bible: the separation of the waters and the earth covered with plants.

Rodes' Southern Italian filiation establishes itself in the following scenes, relative to the Creation. The way in which Christ-Logos appears enthroned between two Seraphims (*Isaiah*, 6, 1-3) and a procession of angels in page 6v [12] reminds us of the iconography of *Majestas Domini* and *Angelica turba caelorum* in the *Exultet*.⁴⁴ The composition of the caelestial procession over birds and four-legged animals celebrating the Creation of Heaven and Earth («*In principio creavit Deus (coelum) et terram*») is also depicted in the Bible of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere (1110-1125)⁴⁵ and in the Sorrento *Exultet* (1105-1110) [19].⁴⁶ Furthermore, the figuration in the Rodes Bible of Paradise's four rivers (*Gen.* 2, 10-14) [13],⁴⁷ reminds us of the separation between the earth and water,



15. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, ivory plaque, Adam and Eve working in the forge.



16. Roma, S. Giovanni a Porta Latina, Creation.



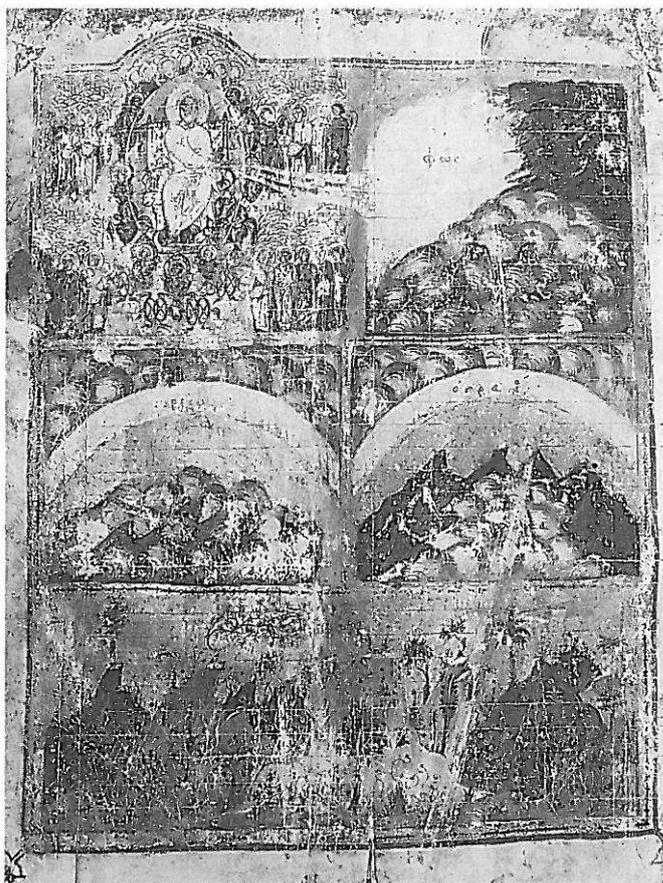
17. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Bibl. 94, f. 154v, Saint John's Gospel.



18. Tortosa, Arxiu Capítular, cod. 20, f. 5r, Creation.



19. Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia, Exultet 2, section 2, Tellus.



20. Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteus 5.38, f. 1v, the Second and Third Day of the Creation.

From the 10th century onwards, there was also a great tradition of the appreciation of the divine value of geometry in the Catalan Abbey. Subsequently, it was affirmed in Gisemundo's prologue to his *Treaty on Agrimensura* (ca. 950) that geometry was useful for enlightening the senses thus allowing man access to the superior soul with the object of knowing the world's secrets and reason.⁵⁹ The geometrical shapes were repeated and used in the Ripoll manuscripts to express divine order, consisting of a perfect way to learn the rudiments of *quadrivium* in the monastic school. The cosmological and mnemotechnical value of the schemes such as the four-sectioned *orbis terre* in the *Treaty on Agrimensura* (f. 81v)⁵⁷ or the diagram of the Year in the Ripoll *Hyginus* (f. 34v)⁵⁸ [23-24] help the scholars to understand the Cosmos wheels of the Ripoll and Rodes Bibles.

The separation of the four elements is highlighted in the Rodes work by the four-sectioned division of the wheel and its different coloration. According to J. Zahlten, this would have to be very well arranged: the upper part consisting of light elements, red fire and blue air; the lower part consisting of yellow earth and turquoise water.⁵⁹ Just as Barbara Obrist states, this usage of colours, derives from scholarly cosmological tradition.⁶⁰ Its antecedent must have been in the circle of seasons from a manuscript of Isidore's *De natura rerum* (Laon, Ms. 422, f. 6v; ca. 850), in which the oppositions between elements and temperatures of the year are shown. Thus the dark, wintery blue (*humida, frigida*) is opposed to the yellow fire of the summer (*calida, sicca*).

This does not make the character of the Catalan cosmological circles lose its novelty. In fact, these circles anticipate a type of illustration of the Creation which was studied by C. Rudolph, and was very common in Northern Europe in the 12th century. Therefore, in Dario's wife's mausoleum description in *Alexandreis* by Gautier de Châtillon, we can read a cycle of Genesis which is very similar to the cycle of the Catalan examples: «The material appeared here in a state of chaos, and a shapeless mass which gave origin to the four elements, distinguished by different colours and with inscriptions engraved upon them».⁶¹ The cosmos, as a wheel that contains the four elements appears in *Annales Colbazensis* (1159),⁶² in the paintings at S. Maria di Ronzano (Abruzzi) (1171)⁶³ or in the crypt of the Cathedral of Anagni

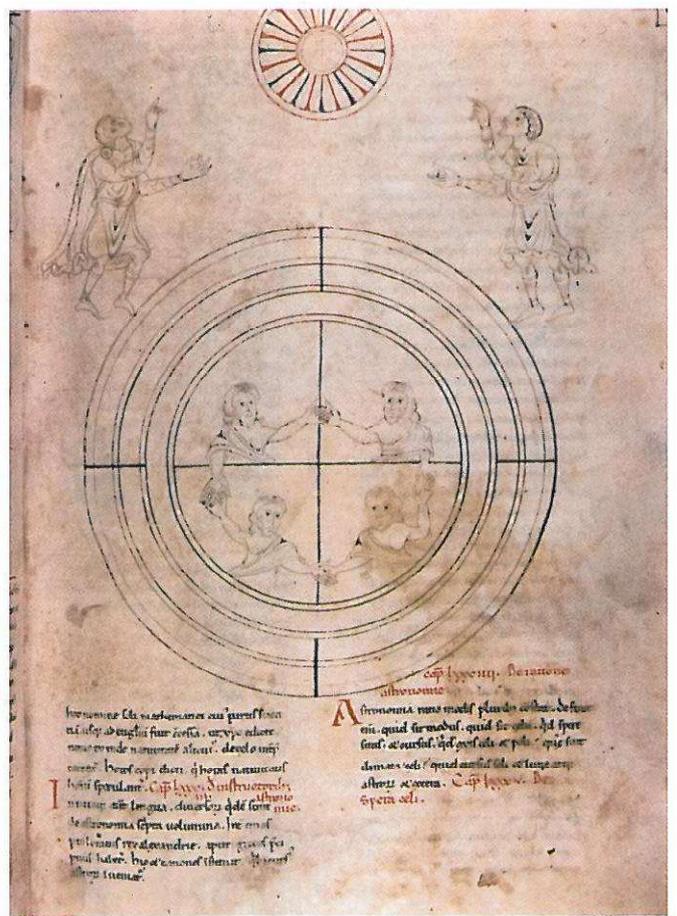


25. Anagni, Cathedral, crypt, cosmological wheel.

ni (ca. 1250) [25]. The system of a four-sectioned composition from the latter with the busts of the Ages, as well as the adjacent panel with the diagram of the *syzygia* or union of the elements are related to school text illustrations.⁶⁴ Actually, the origin of this diagram is found in the Ripoll *Hyginus*, f. 129r following *ad litteram* the iconography described in the *Timaeus* (55e-56c).⁶⁵ Furthermore, in a miscellaneous work from the second quarter of the 12th century [26], illustrated in Ripoll from a Cassinese prototype from the 11th century, the wheel appears with the busts of Elements.⁶⁶

According to J. Zahlten, the Cosmos in the Ripoll Bible equally alludes with its concentric circles dyed blue, red and violet to the elements: the water which covers the earth, the fire and the air.⁶⁷ In my opinion, following the tradition of the cosmological circles, the radios which divide it into eight parts show the double quality of each element. This appears as well in Catalonia in a disc carried by *Annus* in the Embroidery of the Creation of Girona (c.1100) [27], with which the birth of time is undoubtedly expressed, following the platonic premises. The circle of flames wrapping the wheel of the creation in the embroidery would have to be interpreted in the same way. By means of this, the allusion is made to the ether which, according to the *Timaeus*, surrounds the existent area between the Earth and the Eighth Sphere and is formed by unequal triangles. Its origin is found once again in Ripoll, in the illuminated halo enveloping the world map's orbit in the Ripoll *Hyginus* (fols. 143v-144r).⁶⁸

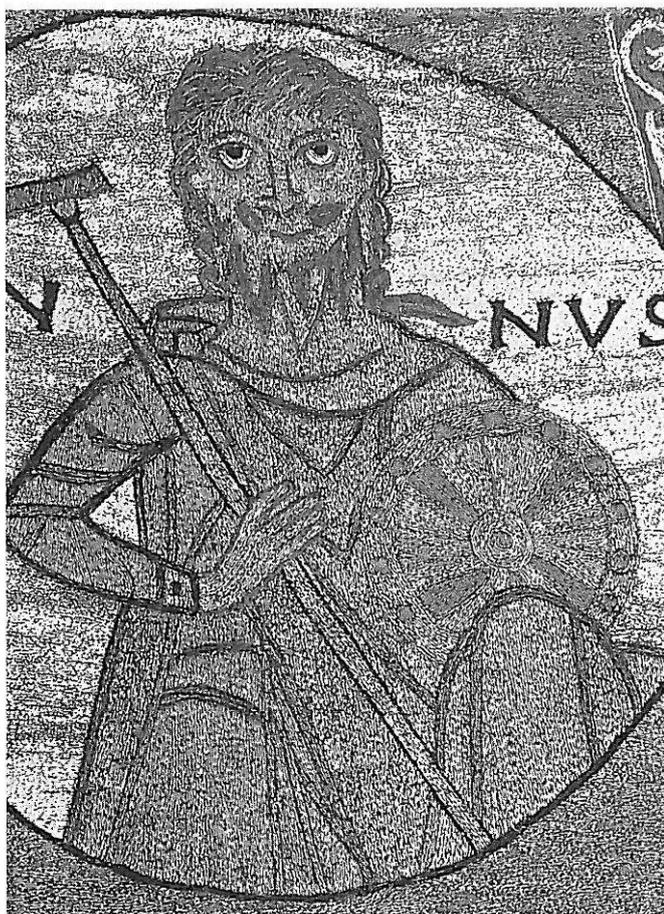
The repeated resource of diagrams in Ripoll's *scriptorium* could also explain the central motif of Ezekiel's vision in the Ripoll Bible (Vat. Lat. 5729, f. 208v) [28].⁶⁹ This is formed by the intersection of four circles colored in yellow and blue, which correspond to Ezekiel's text (1, 16-17) when speaking of four wheels. However, its disposition appears unusual in the illustrations of the text. It



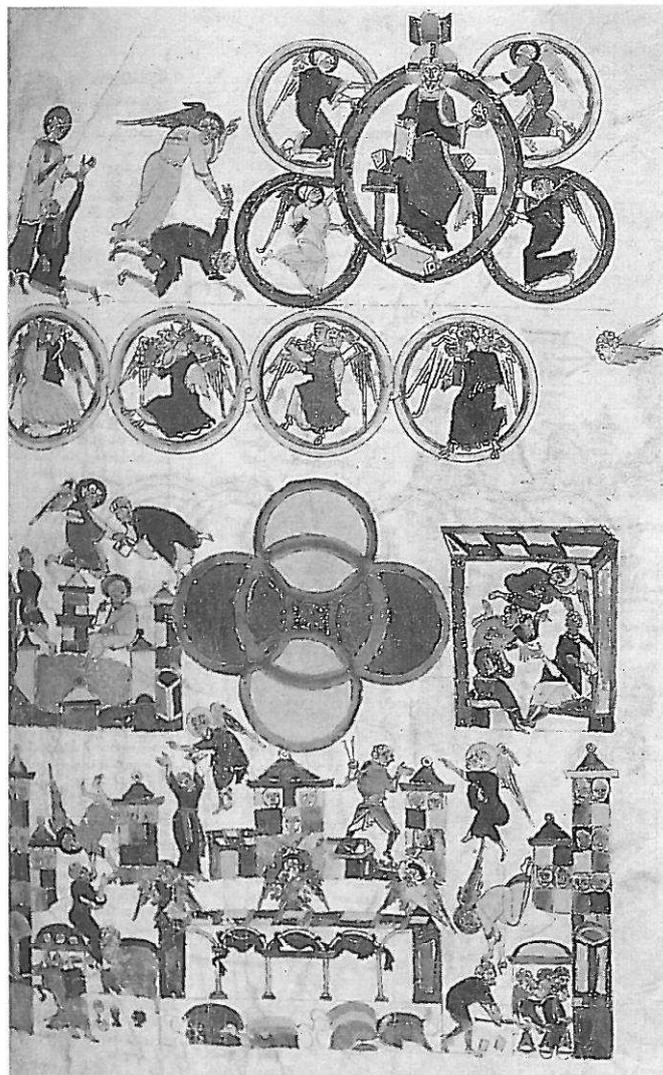
26. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, Ms. 19, f. 121r, diagram of the Elements.

seems possible that the text has given the artist the opportunity of representing, once more, in an image, a cosmological diagram in agreement with Saint Jerome's interpretation, whose commentary is included in the Ripoll Bible (f. 207v).⁷⁰ Following him, in his Commentary on Ezekiel, Hrabanus Maurus describes four faces, four carts, four wheels, four animals that obey *juxta Hippocratis sententiam* the four elements that compose everything (earth, fire, air, water) and the four seasons that form the year.⁷¹ From here comes the presence in Carolingian and Ottonian cosmological programmes of the four wheels of Ezekiel: Tapestry of Saint-Ewald of Saint Cunibert in Colonia (Saint Gall, 9th century?) and in the Sacramentary of Fulda (ca. 975) [29] (Göttingen, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Theol. Lat. 231, f. 250v).⁷²

5. Therefore, we could consider that the scenes of the Creation of Bibles of Ripoll and Rodes result from the role of the Catalan monastery as a true crossroads of artistic and scientific culture in the Mediterranean Europe of the 11th century. Just as what was happening then in Montecassino,⁷³ in the Catalan abbey ancient texts had stopped being mere instruments of linguistic learning or rhetoric models to become a source of doctrine and knowledge for a new culture. Actually, a significant part of the Ripoll artistic interests precede phenomena that would be very characteristic in the North of Europe such as the love of classic culture or the boom of the platonic exegesis in the biblical illustration. Because of this M. Zimmermann considered the period of abbot Oliba as the *mini-renaissance classique catalane*.⁷⁴ Its expectations, however, would be put to a close in few years. After the death of the prestigious abbot, the monastery would go into a crisis that would finish in 1070 with a sentence by the Pope for Simony and Nicholaitism. Ripoll, then, lost its independence when subordinated to the congregation of Saint Victor in Marseille.



27. Girona, Museum Capitular de la Catedral, Creation Embroidery, Annus.



28. Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 5729, f. 208v, Ezekiel's Vision.



29. Göttingen, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Theol. Lat. 231, f. 250v, cosmological program.

This study is the result of investigations carried out by the Investigation Project of the University of Barcelona, Las Biblias de Ripoll y Rodes: un corpus de la tradició iconogràfica altomedieval (CYCITY N^o PB981212), supervised by Milagros Guardia Pons. This text was submitted as a paper to the «Thirtieth International Congress of the History of Art, London, 3-8 September 2000» and was included in the Section Beginnings of Time chaired by Prof. Conrad Rudolph.

¹ In relation to Catalan Bibles, see: J. PIJOAN, *Les miniatures de l'Octateuch a les Biblias romàniques catalanes*, «Anuari de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans», IV (1911-1912), pp. 475-507; W. NEUSS, *Die Katalanische Bibelillustration um die Wende des ersten Jahrtausends und die altspanische Buchmalerei*, Bonn-Leipzig 1922; J. GUDIOL I CUNILL, *Els Primitius. III. Els Llibres Il·luminats*, Barcelona 1955, pp. 89, 98; P. KLEIN, *Date et scriptorium de la Bible de Roda. État des recherches*, «Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa», III (1972), pp. 91-102; A. M. MUNDO, *Las Biblias románicas de Ripoll*, in «Actas del XXIII Congreso Internacional de Historia del Arte, Granada 1973», I, Granada 1976, pp. 435-436; R. E. SHERMAN, *Observations on the Genesis Iconography of the Ripoll Bible*, «The Rutgers Art Review», II (1981), pp. 1-12; W. CAHN, *Romanesque Bible Illumination*, New York 1982, pp. 70-78; N. DE DALMASES, A. JOSÉ I PITARCH, *Els inicis i l'art romànic s. IX-XII* («Història de l'Art Català», D), Barcelona 1986, pp. 265 ss.; R. ALCOY, *Biblia de Rodes, Biblia de Ripoll*, in *El Ripollès* («Catalunya romànica», X), Barcelona 1987, pp. 292-315; P. KLEIN, *Bible*, in *The Art of Medieval Spain, a.d. 500-1200*, New York 1993, n. 157-158, pp. 306-309. Most authors coincide in ascribing only the first two volumes of the Saint Peter of Rodes Bible to the period of abbot Oliva, given that its colourful style concords perfectly with the Ripoll Bible. The most complete study of the composition of the library at this time is by R. BEER, *Los manuscritos del monestir de Santa Maria de Ripoll* («Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona»), Barcelona 1910.

² Following NEUSS, *Die Katalanische Bibelillustration*, p. 36, SHERMAN, *Observations*, p. 4, fig. 4, indicated that, as in the Catalan Bibles, in the destroyed Octateuch of Smyrna (Smyrna, Evangelical School Library, A. I, f. 4v), ca. 1150, personifications of Day and Night were represented. These same personifications also appear in the Greek Octateuchs of the Vatican Apostolic Library, Cod. Gr. 747, f. 15r (ca. 1070-1080) and 746, f. 20v (ca. 1150), M. A. CASTINEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, s. v. *Ripoll*, in *Enciclopedia dell'Arte Medievale*, X, Roma 1999, pp. 27-33: 31.

³ According to J. Zahlten, the Roman type of Creation, which is characterised by its summary of the first five days into a synthetic scene of the Creator accompanied by his cosmological attributes, conforms to a tradition different from that derived from the Cotton Genesis (Alexandria, 6th Century), which is distinguished by a detailed sequential development of the process in which the number of angels marks the order of the days, such as can be observed in the mosaics in the narthex of St Mark in Venice, dated from the 13th Century (L. ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi. Darstellungen der sechs Schöpfungstage und naturwissenschaftliches Weltbild im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1979, p. 15; K. WEITZMANN, *Observations on the Cotton Genesis Fragments*, in *Byzantine Book Illumination and Ivories*, London 1980, pp. 112-151: 117-121). For the said author, the origin of the Roman type would be in the Early Christian cycles of St Peter of the Vatican and St Paul *fuori le mura* (ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, pp. 33-34). In this group should be included, in the opinion of J. Zahlten, the Creation scenes from the Rodes and the Ripoll bibles, which would relate them to the development that this type of iconography is to undergo in the so called Giant Bibles (*Ibidem*, p. 48). The said hypothesis is somewhat problematic to say the least, given that the Catalan examples not only lack motives as characteristic as the Roman type, such as the haloed Christ Logos in *mandorla*, or the sphere on which he sits in the scene of the Creation of Adam, but that they also present, especially in the Ripoll Bible, a particular kind of sequential development for the First Day which distances them from the synthetic vision of the Roman group.

⁴ The figure of the Christ-Logos in the First Day appears both as full body, in the tradition derived from Genesis of Cotton, and as bust, in the Roman tradition (*Ibid.*, p. 102). On the contrary, in the Octateuchs its presence is only insinuated via the *dextera domini* (*Gen.* I, 1-2), as can be observed in the Vatican Octateuchs Gr. 746, f. 19v and Gr. 747, f. 14v, as in those in Seraglio (Istanbul, Biblioteca Topkapı Sarayı, Cod. G. I. 8, f. 26v) (ca. 1150) and Smyrna (*olim*: Evangelical School Library, Cod. A. I, f.

4r) (ca. 1150), J. LASSUS, *La Création du monde dans les Octateuchs byzantins du douzième siècle*, «Monuments et mémoires publiés par l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, Fondation E. Piot», LXII (1979), pp. 85-148: 97-99; J. LODWEN, *The Octateuchs. A Study in Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, University Park, Pennsylvania 1992, pp. 2-19; K. WEITZMANN, M. BERNABO, *The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint, II. Octateuch. Text*, Princeton 1999, pp. 15-17; Plates, figs. 18-20. These elements are however all absent in the Creation of the World of the Catalan Bibles.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 133-134; M. MENTRE, *Éléments bibliques et non bibliques dans l'iconographie de la Création au XI^e siècle*, «Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France», 1986, pp. 125-135: 126-127; B. OBRIST, *Le diagramme isidorien des saisons, son contenu physique et les représentations figuratives*, «Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome», CVIII (1996), pp. 95-164: 157-158.

⁶ For a profile of the monk Oliva, see: M. A. CASTINEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Diagramas y esquemas cosmográficos en dos misceláneas de cómputo y astronomía de la abadía de Santa María de Ripoll (ss. XI-XII)*, «Compostellanum», XLIII (1998), pp. 593-646: 594-597.

⁷ The Latin text of Genesis I, 1-2 appears in f. 7r: «In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram. Terra autem erat inanis et vacua et tenebrae erant super faciem abissi et spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas».

⁸ NEUSS, *Die Katalanische Bibelillustration*, p. 35. M. V. MARINI CLARELLI, s. v. *Abisso*, in *Enciclopedia dell'Arte Medievale*, I, Roma 1991, pp. 52-57: 56.

⁹ «Before all there existed Chaos. Then Gea [...] From Chaos came forth Erebo and the black Night. In their turn from the Night were born the Ether and the Day who shone pregnant by the loving contact with Erebo», HESIODO, *Teogonia*, ed. A. Pérez Jiménez, Barcelona 1981, pp. 100-101. Cf. S. VIARRE, *Cosmologie antique et commentaire de la création du monde. Le Chaos et les quatre éléments chez quelques auteurs du Haut Moyen Age*, in *La cultura antica nell'Occidente latino dal VII all'XI secolo*, «XXII Settimana di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, Spoleto 1974», Spoleto 1975, II, pp. 541-573: 542.

¹⁰ OVID, *Metamorfosis*, I, 7, ed. A. Ruiz de Elvira, I, Madrid 1992, p. 6. One might recall that in the Jewish tradition the Abyss is also a watery mass, G. SCHIAPARELLI, *La astronomía en el Antiguo Testamento*, Buenos Aires 1945, pp. 53-57.

¹¹ D. FERNÁNDEZ-GALIANO, *La Villa de Materno*, in *Mosaicos romanos*, «Actas de la I Mesa Redonda Hispano-Francesa, Madrid 1985», Madrid 1985, pp. 255-269: 261, 267, lám. 2; D. FERNÁNDEZ, G. B. PATÓN LORCA, C. M. BATAJIA CARCHENILLA, *Mosaicos de la villa de Carranque: un programa iconográfico*, in «VI Coloquio Internacional sobre el Mosaico Antiguo, Palencia-Mérida 1990», Guadalajara 1995, pp. 317-326: 324, fig. 6; H. A. KAHN, s. v. *Oceanus*, in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, VIII, I et supplementum, Zürich-Düsseldorf 1997, pp. 907-915: 912, n^o 33. I am indebted to Milagros Guardia for the comparison of the Ripoll Bible representation with the classical iconography of *Oceanus*. For further Late Imperial Hispanic precedents of marine animal figureheads, see M. GUARDIA, *Los mosaicos de la Antigüedad tardía en Hispania. Estudios de iconografía*, Barcelona 1992, pp. 300-307, figs. 52 (Villa of Quintanilla de la Cueva, Palencia, room XIII) and 72 (Villa of Dueñas, Palencia, room VI).

¹² Platonic cosmology was applied by Philo of Alexandria in his exegesis of Genesis, and from there it would pass to the patristic, especially to Saint Ambrose of Milan, Saint Augustine, Isidore and Bede the Venerable.

¹³ PHILON D'ALEXANDRIE *De officio mundi*, 20, 29, ed. R. Arnaldez, Paris 1961, pp. 152-153, 158-161. In relation to the poetics of the elements water and air in the material imagination of man, see the studies of G. BACIÉLARD, *El agua y los sueños*, Madrid 1994 (Paris 1942) and *Id.*, *El aire y los sueños*, México 1993 (Paris 1943).

¹⁴ WILLIAM OF CONCHES, *De philosophia mundi*, I, 21, Turnholt 1970, col. 54 (the text appears however published in the *Patrologia Latina* under the erroneous authorship of *Honorius Augustodunensis*). Even PLATO, *Timaeus*, 32b, trans., introd. and notes F. Lisi, Madrid 1997, p. 175, conceives of creation as springing from earth and fire, with air and water acting as mediator elements.

¹⁵ «Post enim Chaos, quam Graeci hylen, nos siluam uocamus»: cf. PLATO latinus, IV. *Timaeus a Calcidius translatus commentarioque instructus*, 123, ed. R. Klibansky, London 1962, p. 167 ss. The monk Oliva included, with illustrations, in his miscellany of computation and astronomy (Vat. Reg. Lat. 123, fols. 205v-218v), written in 1055, the chapters *De stellis ratis et errantibus* and *De coelo* from the Chalcidius' commentary of Plato's *Timaeus* (*Ibid.*, pp. 111-164). According to R. Klibansky (*Plato latinus*,

120, 123, 148), this text depends on a tenth century manuscript from northern France (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 2164). Cf. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Diagramas y esquemas*, pp. 601-602, fig. 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁷ Plato latinus, 350, p. 341. There are several passages in the work that touch on this same idea: «*Essentia et silua est quod subiacet corpori cuncto, uel ex quo cuncta sunt corpora, uel in quo proueniunt rerum sensibilibus commutationes ipsu statu proprio manente, item quod subditum est corporibus qualitates habentibus, ipsum ex natura propria sine qualitate*» (289, p. 294); «*quia princeps silua est omnium corporum*» (293, p. 295); «*Ergo silua etiam uestigium corporis fuit ante mundi exornationem*» (354, p. 345).

¹⁸ R. GREEN, *Catalogue of Miniatures*, in HERRAD OF HOHENBOURG, *Hortus Deliciarum*, London 1979, p. 91, fig. 6, 8.

¹⁹ The precedent would be in the Schulpforta Ms, f. 3r, with the St. Augustine's *City of God*, GREEN, *Catalogue*, p. 91, ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, fig. 159.

²⁰ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 6734, f. 3v, ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, pp. 146-148, fig. 278; C. RUDOLPH, *In the Beginning: Theories and Images of Creation in Northern Europe in the Twelfth Century*, «*Art History*», XXII (1999), 1, pp. 2-55: 41, fig. 16.

²¹ CICERÓN, *Timeo*, 10, introd., trans. and notes A. Escobar, Madrid 1999, p. 362. Plato in his turn used the word *zōion* (Plato latinus, 30b, p.173).

²² B. BRESCIANI, *Figurazioni dei Mesì nell'arte medioevale italiana*, Verona 1968, p. 28; A. PERONI, *Pavia. Musei Civici del Castello Visconteo*, Bologna 1975, pp. 100-101.

²³ SHERMAN, *Observation*, p. 4, fig. 3. Although WEITZMANN, BERNABÒ (*The Illustration*, pp. 16-17, notes 18-19) identify the bearded face in three quarters of the Smyrna Octateuch with the personification of Hades, it seems worth mentioning however that in Byzantine art he usually appears represented in the scenes of the Anastasis as a full body and not as a figurehead, M. A. ELVIRA, *De Hades a Satán. Un problema iconográfico en la Anástasis bizantina*, in *El diablo en el monasterio*, «*Actas del VIII Seminario sobre Historia del Monacato*, Aguilar de Campos 1-4 de agosto de 1994», Madrid 1996, pp. 133-149: 144-148, fig. 9 y 12. This is why the Smyrna image would be closer to the Ancient representations of Ocean, if it is indeed true that in both Ripoll and Rodes there is more fidelity to the Ancient models.

²⁴ H. L. KESSLER, *An eleventh Century Ivory Plaque from South Italy and the Cassinese Revival*, «*Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*», VIII (1966), pp. 67-95: 79; A. GOLDSCHMIDT, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der romanischen Zeit XI-XIII. Jahrhundert*, IV. Berlin 1975 (1926), pp. 42-43, n. 146. Pl. LIIb. Quoted in relation to Ripoll by NEUSS, *Die Katalanische Bibelillustration*, p. 35; SHERMAN, *Observation*, p. 4, fig. 3; MENTRE, *Elements bibliques*, pp. 126-127.

²⁵ KESSLER, *An eleventh Century*, pp. 93-94.

²⁶ M. A. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *La ilustración del De Naturis Rerum de Beda en un manuscrito de la abadía de Santa María de Ripoll* (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, Ms. 19) y su arquetipo cassinese, in *Arte d'Occidente. Temi e metodi. Studi in onore di Angiola Maria Romanini*, Roma 1999, II, pp. 791-800: 797.

²⁷ G. OROFINO, *Il ciclo illustrativo del Libellus de signis coeli dello Pseudo Beda, cod. Cass. 3: interesse scientifico e cultura figurativa a Montecassino durante l'abbaziato di Bertario*, in *Montecassino. Dalla prima alla seconda distruzione. Momenti e aspetti di storia cassinese (secc. VI-IX)*, «*Atti del II Convegno di studi sul Medioevo meridionale, Montecassino, 27-31 maggio 1984*», Montecassino 1987, pp. 571-595: 594-595, fig. 9.

²⁸ I have defended the said hypothesis on the basis of the similarities between the representations of the constellations in the Vat. Reg. Lat. 123 and Cod. Cass. 3; M. A. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Ripoll i les relacions culturals i artístiques de la Catalunya altmedieval*, in *Del romà al romànic. Història, art i cultura de la Tarraconense mediterrània entre els segles IV i X*, ed. P. de Palol, Barcelona 1999, pp. 435-442: 439. In relation to Ripoll's manuscript, see: M. E. IBARBURU ASURMENDI, *La pervivencia de las ilustraciones sobre temas astronómicos en el mundo clásico, a través del mas. Vat. Reg. 123*, in «*Actas del V Congreso Español de Historia del Arte, Barcelona 1984*», Barcelona 1986, pp. 29-37.

²⁹ The precedent is in a mid-tenth century codex in Saint-Martial de Limoges; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 5239, f. 223v, D. GABORIT-CHOPIN, *La Décoration des manuscrits à Saint-Martial de Limoges et en Limousin du IX^e au XII^e siècle*, Paris-Genève 1969, p. 54. The incorporation of the cornucopia motive would be derived from the Ocean personifications of the Carolingian world, where it usually appears as a full

body reclining in the manner of a Classic river. Thus it appears in the *Codex Aureus* of Charles the Bald (München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Clm. 4452) (ca. 820-830), cf. P. LASKO, *Arte sacra 800-1200*, Madrid 1999, p. 63, fig. 36, or in the Utrecht Psalter (Utrecht, Biblioteca de la Universidad, Ms. 32, f. 1v, Psalm 1, 3, y f. 56v, Psalm 97, 7-8) (816-823), cf. S. DUFRENNE, *Les illustrations du Psautier d'Utrecht. Sources et apport carolingien*, Paris 1978, pp. 75-76, Pl. 6.

³⁰ According to R.E. Sherman, in the scenes of the first chapters of the Ripoll Bible Genesis (ff. 5v-6r) one finds a curious fusion between recensions of Cotton Genesis' (Constantinople, 6th Century) and the Greek Octateuchs (11th-12th Centuries), which suggests a derivation from a Early Christian archetype from the 4th Century. The figures of the Abyss-Ocean refer to the Byzantine Octateuchs (Seraglio Octateuch, ca. 1150; the Monreale Mosaics, second half of the 12th Century) the disc of the Cosmos (Smyrna Octateuch, ca. 1150), and also the personifications of Day and Night (Vat. Gr. 747, f. 15r, ca. 1070-1080). Cf. nn. 2-3.

³¹ M. A. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *I Poderi Sono Venduti A Ciò Segue L'inganno: per una nuova lettura del programma iconografico del portico della cattedrale di Sessa Aurunca*, «*Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*», s. III, XXIV (1994), 2-3, pp. 565-585: 578, note 44, Pl. CXLVIII, 2.

³² Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. gr. 923, f. 69r. Cf. K. WEITZMANN, *The miniatures of the Sacra Parallela Parisinus Graecus 923*, Princeton (N. J.) 1979, p. 36, fig. 12; SHERMAN, *Observation*, pp. 7-9, fig. 2.

³³ M. A. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Cycles de la Genèse et calendriers dans l'art roman hispanique. A propos du portail de l'église de Beleña del Sorbe (Guadalajara)*, «*Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*», XXXVIII (1995), 4, pp. 307-317: 311, nn. 23-25; *Id.*, s. v. *Ripoll*, p. 31.

³⁴ I am referring to the Byzantine ivory caskets (or their remains), dated around the year 1000 and conserved in the Cleveland Art Museum, in the Ermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (A. GOLDSCHMIDT, K. WEITZMANN, *Die Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X-XIII. Jahrhunderts*, I, Berlin 1979, pp. 48 (Pl. 69 a-e)-49 (Pl. 68 a-d) and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. MAGUIRE, *Three Panels from Adam and Eve Caskets*, in *The Glory of Byzantium. Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era. A.D. 843-1261*, ed. H. C. Evans, W. D. Wixom, New York 1997, pp. 234-236, fig. 148c.

³⁵ Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Bibl. 94, f. 154v. Cf. C. FRUGONI, s. v. *Elementi*, in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, V, Roma 1994, pp. 780-783: 780-781; ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, pp. 81, 138, 173, 280, fig. 179.

³⁶ In *The City of God* Saint Augustine christianises Plato's *Timaeus* (VIII, 11) and establishes a single principle for the creation of the world and time (XI, 6) (SAN AGUSTIN, *La Ciudad de Dios*, ed. S. Santamarta del Rio, M. Fuertes Lanero, V. Capanaga, I, Madrid 1977, pp. 503-505, 692-694). Cf. H. BOBER, *In Principio. Creation before Time*, in *De artibus Opuscula XL. Essays in honor of Erwin Panofsky*, I, New York 1961, pp. 13-28: 17-18.

³⁷ For the inventory I have consulted the transcriptions of J. Villanueva conserved in Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, Ms. Est. 19 gr 4 n° 65, p. 4. This was realized by the said author starting from the lost cod. 40 before the fire of the Ripoll Library (1835).

³⁸ Tortosa, Arxiu Capítular, cód. 20, f. 5r. As M. E. Ibarburu Asurmendi has pointed out, the debt to the 11th Century Ripoll miniature are equally patent in the style of the initials of the Tortosa codex; M. E. IBARBURU ASURMENDI, *Estudio iconográfico de la "Ciudad de Dios" de San Agustín, códice 20 del Archivo Capítular de Tortosa and Algunos comentarios estilísticos sobre la "Ciudad de Dios" de San Agustín, códice 20 del Archivo Capítular de Tortosa*, in *De capitibus et litterarum et aliis figuris. Recull d'estudis sobre miniatura medieval*, Barcelona 1999, pp. 243-272: 265-272, fig. 58, and pp. 273-291: 290.

³⁹ *Ibid.* Cf. SAN AGUSTIN, *La Ciudad de Dios*, VII, 29-30, XI, 6, pp. 468-470, 692-694.

⁴⁰ Heiligenkreuz, Stiftbibliothek, Ms. 24, f. 96. Cf. ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, p. 64, fig. 100; RUDOLPH, *In the Beginning*, p. 32, fig. 5. It refers to the initial of chapter XI, where Saint Augustine narrates the Creation.

⁴¹ P. SPRINGER, *Trinitas-Creator-Annus. Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen Trinitätsikonographie*, «*Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch*», XXXVIII (1976), pp. 17-45: 31, 42, figs. 16 (St Paul fuori le mura), 28 (St John in Porta Latina). See also: ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, pp. 24, 33-36, fig. 24 (Anagni); E. PARLATO, S. ROMANO, *Roma y el Lazio*, Madrid 1992, pp. 126-127, fig. 24; P. TOESCA, *Gli affreschi della cattedrale di Anagni*, Roma 1996, p. 88.

⁴² Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouv. Acq. Lat. 2334, fol. IV, cf. ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, p. 107, fig. 186; D. HOOGLAND VERKERK, *Biblical Manuscripts in Rome 400-700 and the Ashburnham Pentateuch*, in *Imaging*

the *Early Medieval Bible*, ed. J. Williams, University Park (Penn.), 1999, pp. 97-120.

⁴³ Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteus 5. 38, f. 1v; WEITZMANN, BERNABÒ, *The Illustrations*, p. 15, fig. 1; LASSUS, *La Création*, pp. 94-95.

⁴⁴ I refer for example to the *Majestas Domini* from the *Vere Dignum* in the Sorrento Exultet (1105-1110), section 3 (G. OROFINO, *Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia, Exultet 2*, in *Exultet. Rotoli liturgici del Medioevo Meridionale*, ed. G. Cavallo, Roma 1994, pp. 377-392: 377, 387) as well as the *Angelica turba coelorum* in the Montecassino Exultet (1087), section I (L. SPECIALE, *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. Lat.*, 592, in *Exultet*, pp. 235-248: 236, 241). The Christ-Logos in the Rodes Bible appears sat on a globe which is intersected by a halo, following the Carolingian typology which W. W. S. Cook calls 'St. Denis': W. W. S. COOK, *The Earliest Painted Panels of Catalonia, II*, «The Art Bulletin», VI (1933), 2, pp. 31-60: 49-50, 53-55.

⁴⁵ Roma, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. Lat. 587, f. 5; CAHN, *Romanesque Bible Illumination*, pp. 146, 387, fig. 101. Late echoes of this Creation formula with animals can equally be found in the frescoes of the Superior Church of Saint Francis in Assisi, from the end of the 13th Century, and in the mosaics of the Baptistery dome of Florence Cathedral (1280), NEUSS, *Die Katalanische Bibelillustration*, p. 35, n. 5; ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, pp. 36, 42, figs. 28, 37.

⁴⁶ Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia, *Exultet 2*, section 2 (*Tellus*). Cf. n. 45.

⁴⁷ NEUSS, *Die Katalanische Bibelillustration*, p. 41, fig. 3.

⁴⁸ «*Separant ab arida et in quattuor fluminibus*», Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, Cas. 724 (BI 13) 2, section 5. The work was realized under Bishop Landolfo I of Benevento after the year 969, possibly by a cassinese artist, B. BRENK, *Benedizionale*, in *Exultet*, pp. 87-89: 88, 95. Equally suggestive is the comparison with another Southern Italy manuscript, the *Liber ad honorem Augusti* by Pietro da Eboli from the beginning of the 13th Century, as there is a very similar representation of the composition of Paradise to that of the f. 7v in the Rodes Bible, as here too the animals drink from the currents of water which spring from a fountain (Bern, Burgerbibliothek, ms. 120/II, f. 48), M. MIGLIO, *Il giardino come rappresentazione simbolica*, in *L'Ambiente vegetale nell'Alto Medioevo*, «LXXVIII Settimana di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, Spoleto 1989», II, Spoleto 1990, pp. 709-724: 722-723, Pl. VI, fig. 8.

⁴⁹ *Rabani Mauri De universo*, XII, 1, Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia, cod. 123, p. 294, M. REUTER, *Text und Bild im Codex 132 der Bibliothek von Montecassino "Liber Rabani de originibus rerum"*, *Untersuchungen zur mittelalterlichen Illustrationpraxis*, München 1984, pp. 115-156, Pl. II, fig. 93; SPECIALE, *Città del Vaticano*, pp. 236, 241.

⁵⁰ CICERÓN, *Timeo*, 9, p. 362. According to Philo, «beauty is in order as there is no beauty in disorder» (PHILO, *De opificio mundi*, 28, p. 159).

⁵¹ PLATO, *Timaeus*, 33b, p. 176; CICERÓN, *Timeo*, 17, pp. 368-369.

⁵² «*Appellatur enim apud eos kósmos, quod significat ornamentum. Nihil enim mundo pulchrius oculis carnis aspiciunt*», ISIDORO, *Etimologías*, XIII, 2, ed. J. Oroz Reta, M. A. Marcos Casquero, II, Madrid 1994, pp. 124-125; BEDE, *De natura rerum*, III, in *Beda Venerabilis Opera*, I, *Didascalica*, in *Corpus Christianorum. Series latina*, CXXIII A, Turnholt 1975, p. 192. Cfr. VIARRE, *Cosmologie*, p. 566.

⁵³ PLATO, *Timaeus*, 36b, p. 180. For Cicero, the world is a sphere with radii (CICERÓN, *Timeo*, 17, pp. 368-369). Cfr. G. BÖHME, H. BÖHME, *Fuego, Agua, Tierra, Aire. Una historia de la cultura de los elementos*, Barcelona 1998 (München 1996), pp. 120-133.

⁵⁴ Both Isidore and Bede recuperate and follow the elements physics of Aristotle (*De coelo*), in which these result from the combination of their respective qualities (hot/cold; wet/dry): ISIDORO, *Etimologías*, XIII, 3 (*De elementis*), pp. 126-128; BEDE, *De natura rerum*, I (*De Quadrifario Dei opere*), II (*De Mundi Formatione*), III (*Quid Sit Mundus*), pp. 192-194. Cfr. VIARRE, *Cosmologie*, pp. 557-567; BÖHME, BÖHME, *Fuego, Agua, Tierra, Aire*, pp. 133-144.

⁵⁵ Apart from the texts collected in Vat. Reg. Lat. 123 (Bede, Isidore, Chalcidius), in the Ripoll inventory are registered 2 *exameron* and 2 *Agustinus* (cf. n. 38).

⁵⁶ «*Quam artem si arcte et diligenti cura atque moderata mente perquirimus, hoc quod predictis divisionibus manifestum est, sensus nostros magnam claritate dilucidat, et illud supra, quale est coelum animo subire, totamque illam machinam supernam indagabili ratione aliter discutere, et inspectiva mentis sublimitate, ex aliqua parte colligere et agnoscere mundi factorem qui tanta et*

talia arcana velavit», Barcelona, ACA, Ripoll 106, f. 76r. Cf. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Diagramas y esquemas*, p. 598. See also G. BEAUJOUAN, P. MORGUÑO, s. v. *Geometria e Aritmetica*, in *Enciclopedia dell'Arte Medievale*, VI, Roma 1995, pp. 531-540.

⁵⁷ Barcelona, ACA, Ripoll 106, f. 81v. Cf. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Ripoll i les relacions culturals*, p. 435.

⁵⁸ Id., *Diagramas y esquemas*, p. 599, fig. 1.

⁵⁹ J. ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, pp. 132-134; MENTRE, *Elements*, p. 132.

⁶⁰ OBRIST, *Le diagramme isidorien des saisons*, pp. 157-158.

⁶¹ GAUTIER DE CHÂTILLON, *Alejandroida*, IV, 180, ed. F. Pejenante Rubio, Madrid 1998, p. 188.

⁶² Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Theol. Lat. 2^o 149, f. 2r. Two superimposed wheels are represented: the first, with multiple radii, corresponds to the division of the waters and the creation of the sky (Second Day); the second, in four sections, alludes to the separation of the water from the earth (Third Day), ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, pp. 75, 124, 153, 167, figs. 161-62.

⁶³ The Creator is depicted with a circle divided in three parts (Earth, Water, Fire) surrounded by the ring of Air, *Ibid.*, p. 134, fig. 245.

⁶⁴ L. PRESSOUYRE, *Los cosmos platonicos de la catedral de Anagni*, «*Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire*», LXXVIII (1966), 2, pp. 551-593: 570-572. Cf. TOESCA, *Gli affreschi*, pp. 14-20, figs. 1-3; M. T. D'ALVERNY, *L'homme comme symbole. Le microcosme*, in *Simboli e simbologia nell'alto medioevo*, «XXIII Settimana di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo», Spoleto 1976, I, pp. 123-183: 182-183, Pl. VII; E. SEARS, *The Ages of Man. Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle*, Princeton 1986, p. 20, fig. 5. In relation to the syzygia diagram, see: P. VOSSEN, *Über die Elementen-Syzygien*, in *Liber Floridus. Festschrift Paul Lehmann*, ed. B. Bischoff, S. Brechter, St. Ottilien 1950, pp. 33-46.

⁶⁵ Referring to the illustration of the chapter entitled *De elementis* (ISIDORO, *Etimologías*, XIII, 3, and *De natura rerum*, IX; BEDE, *De natura rerum*, IV). The *tituli* are transcribed from Greek and to each element is assigned a geometrical figure and a number in a progression of two: «*Ignis XII: PYRAMIS: acutus, subtilis, mobilis. Calidus, siccus/Aer XXII: II: SPERA: subtilis, mobilis, obtusus. Calidus, humidus; Aqua XLVIII: ICOSAEDRON: mobilis, corpulenta, obtusa. Humida, frigida; Terra XCVI: CYBOC: obtusa, corpulenta, immobilis. Frigida, arida*». The progression of two is called by Boethius (II, 12, PL, LXIII, col. 1205) 'geometric proportion' (Barcelona, ACA, Ms. Ripoll 42, f. 14v). Cf. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Diagramas y esquemas*, p. 603, fig. 7. The series of lines which unite the different elements in function of their shared characteristics demonstrates a knowledge of *The consolation of philosophy* by Boethius – an author well known to Oliva –, who praises Creation saying «*You submit the elements to the laws of numbers, in order that cold work in concert with heat, and the arid with the humid; so that the most subtle fire does not dissipate into the air, and that weight does not drag the earth to the bottom of the sea*», BOETHIUS, *La consolación de la filosofía*, III, 9, 9, trans. P. Masa, Madrid 1984, p. 119. This same Platonic cosmology becomes explicit in the *IN* monogram of the St. Hubert Bible Genesis (Ardennes ca. 1100): the story of the creation is interpreted in images following the *Timaeus*, as God-Demiurge appears surrounded by the four elements with numerical values in a 2/3 progression (sesquialteral progression) VII Fire, XII Air, XVII Water, XXVII Earth, BOBER, *In Principio*, pp. 13-15; W. CAHN, *Romanesque Bible Illumination*, pp. 124-126; RUDOLPH, *In the Beginning*, p. 40, fig. 13.

⁶⁶ Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, Ms. 19, fol. 121r, cf. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *La ilustración*, pp. 794-795, fig. 3.

⁶⁷ ZAHLTEN, *Creatio Mundi*, p. 135, fig. 54.

⁶⁸ *Timeo*, 56 a, 58d. In the *reginensis* mappamundi the elements appear from inside to outside following the order of the Platonic cosmology: earth, water, air (the Wind busts), fire, CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Diagramas y esquemas*, p. 620, figs. 29, 31. On the Girona Creation Tapestry, see P. DE PALOL, *Tapís de la Creació de la Catedral de Girona*, Barcelona 1986.

⁶⁹ CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, *Diagramas y esquemas*, p. 605, fig. 13.

⁷⁰ *Incipit prologus Sancti Jheronimi in Libro Hiezechiel*, Vat. Lat. 5229, fol. 207v. In the 1047 catalogue there also figures a *Omeliarium super Iezchielem*, which might also contain some of the cited commentaries. Saint Jerome interpreted the wheels of Ezekiel as the four Evangelists, the four elements, the four seasons, the four parts of the world, etc., PL, XXV, col. 15, cited in H. J. DOW, *The Rose-Window*, «*Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*», XXI (1957), pp. 248-297: 274.

⁷¹ Rabani Mauri *Commentariorum in Ezechielem*, I, in *PL*, CX, Paris 1852, cols. 508-509; U. NILGEN, s. v. *Elemente, vier*, in *Lexicon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. E. Kirschbaum, I, Roma-Freiburg-Basel-Wien 1968, pp. 600-606. A precedent of the central diagram of the vision of Ezekiel in the Ripoll Bible would be precisely in the acrostic with the four wheels of the four elements in *Hrabani Mauri De laudandibus Sanctae Crucis* (831-840) (Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 652, f. 12v), *Figurae. Invenit: Hrabanus Maurus. Praeceptor Germaniae*, ed. J. Perona, Murcia 1995, pp. 5-8, fig. VII (*De quatuor elementis*); R.

DE CÓZAR, *Poesía e imagen. Formas difíciles de ingenio literario*, Sevilla 1991, p. 177, fig. 50.

⁷² SPRINGER, *Trinitas-Creator-Annus*, pp. 37-38, 40-41, figs. 24-25.

⁷³ O. PECERE, *Prima dei classici: la cultura scritta a Montecassino da san Benedetto a Teobaldo*, in *Virgilio e il chiostro*, ed. M. dell'Olmo, Montecassino 1996, pp. 67-81.

⁷⁴ M. ZIMMERMANN, *La Catalogne de Gerbert*, in *Gerbert l'Européen*, «Actes du Colloque d'Aurillac 4-7 juin 1996», eds. N. Charbonell, J.-E. Jung, Aurillac 1997, pp. 17-101: 86.

DAL CAOS AL COSMO: L'ICONOGRAFIA DELLA CREAZIONE NELLE BIBBIE ROMANICHE CATALANE

Manuel Antonio Castiñeiras González

L'uso degli schemi e diagrammi nell'insegnamento del *quadrivium* nella scuola dell'abbazia di S. Maria di Ripoll durante il X e l'XI secolo aiuta a comprendere le particolarità dell'iconografia del *Cosmos* nelle bibbie illustrate sotto il governo dell'abate Oliva.

Platone, S. Agostino, Boezio, Macrobio, Isidoro e Beda erano ben conosciuti dagli scolari attraverso i manoscritti della biblioteca, nei quali si trovano spesso degli schemi circolari con contenuto cosmologico. Inoltre, la conoscenza del repertorio italo-bizantino risulta fondamentale nell'elaborazione dell'originale iconografia della Creazione delle bibbie catalane, la quale presenta formule che poi avranno un grande successo nella miniatura e nella pittura romanica romana e meridionale.

Il rinnovato atteggiamento verso i classici a Ripoll precede anche proposte che nel corso del XII secolo saranno considerate proprie delle scuole dell'Europa del Nord.