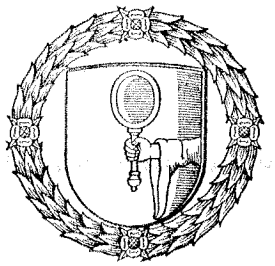
SPECULUM

A JOURNAL OF MEDIAEVAL STUDIES

Volume XXIX



1954

Published Quarterly by

THE MEDIAEVAL ACADEMY OF AMERICA

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

THE ART OF THE SCRIPTORIUM AT LUXEUIL

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The artistic worth of a manuscript is generally based on the quality of the painting and ornament it contains. How partial such an evaluation can be, is shown by the best unornamented pages of Merovingian script: they seem to reflect a deliberate effort on the part of the scribes to produce works of art, for in their elegance and discrimination, they are quite unrelated to mere "copy." The case of decorated Merovingian manuscripts is even clearer. The ornamented page was constructed on definite principles; the script, the colophons, and the decoration were integrated and ordered by a discipline aware of the esthetic possibilities of format, size, spacing, and ornamentation. The scribe and the painter, if indeed such a dichotomy always existed, seem to have been conscious of an *art* of bookmaking. One of the earliest of these Merovingian styles forms the subject of the present essay: the art of the manuscripts produced by, or under the direct influence of, the scriptorium of Luxeuil.[1]

The importance of St Columban in the religious history of Europe has often been emphasized,[2] but it may be well to recall once more certain aspects of the early history of his mission in France. Together with twelve followers, the Irish saint came to the region of Langres around 590 A.D.[3] In the course of the next two decades, he founded no less than three *coenobia* — Annegray, Luxeuil, and Fontaines[4] — the latter two in an effort to regain the quiet and peace necessary

[1] The argument for the existence of a scriptorium at Luxeuil has been presented most recently by Dom P. Salmon (*Le Lectionnaire de Luxeuil*, II: *Étude paléographique et liturgique suivie d'un choix de planches*, Abbaye St.-Jerôme-Vatican, 1953 (*Collectanea biblica latina*, IX), hereafter referred to as "Salmon" followed by plate-number) and, on more convincing grounds, by E. A. Lowe ("The 'Script of Luxeuil' — A Title vindicated," *Revue Bénédictine*, LXIII (1953), 132–142). The bibliography is available in these studies and in the works therein referred to. From the long list of works on the problem, two only must be mentioned here. The first is the important synthesis of Merovingian manuscript ornamentation by E. H. Zimmermann, *Vorkarolingischen Miniaturen* (*Denkmäler Deutscher Kunst*, Skt. III: *Malerei*, Abt. I, ed. Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft [Berlin, 1916]), hereafter referred to as "Zimm." followed by plate-number. The second is an important but unfortunately rather inaccessible and now somewhat out-of-date study on the scriptorium at Corbie by O. Dobiaš-Rozdestvenskaia, "Histoire de l'atelier de Corbie, 651–830, refletée dans les manuscrits de Leningrad," in *Trudy, Institut istorii, nauki y tekhnikii, Akademiya Nauk*, ser. ii, 3 (Leningrad, 1934), which was reviewed by L. W. Jones in SPECULUM, XI (1936), 204–205; the early Luxeuil-Corbie relations are discussed on pp. 46–49.

E. A. Lowe's *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, VI (Oxford, 1953), containing the résumé of his study of Luxeuil (pp. xv–xvii) was received too late to be incorporated into the text of this paper. It does not, however, alter the argument. Additional material provided by it has not been included here, with the exception of Lowe's numbers for French manuscripts not in Paris.

[2] For a concise summary and recent bibliography, see Dom L. Gougaud, in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, XI (1948), cc. 1131–1133; a more general article is his "L'Oeuvre des Scotti," in *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, IX (1908), 21–37, 255–277, esp. 22–26.

[3] *Vita sancti Columbani abbatis auctore Jona*, c. 12 ff. (ed. J. Mabillon, *AA SS O.S.B.*, II [Mâcon, 1936], 5–29, esp. 10 ff.).

[4] *Ibid.*, c. 12, Annegray (*loc. cit.*, 10–11); c. 17, Luxeuil and Fontaines (*loc. cit.*, 12–13). An excellent bibliography will be found in Dom L. H. Cottineau, *Répertoire topo-bibliographique des abbayes et prieurés* (Mâcon, 1935), I, cc. 1684–1685.

to meditation, which had vanished when the older monasteries became overpopulated. The region was in the kingdom of Burgundy, and Burgundian princes and law presided over the houses.[5] The Irish settlement lay not far from the Jura mountains and Switzerland, where older centers exercised hegemony; it is possible that the new foundations of St Columban were regarded with some suspicion by these Italianate centers, especially in view of the unusual and, for them, unorthodox Christianity of St Columban.[6] Although it is perhaps incorrect to insist on a too sharply defined "regionalism" in the late sixth century, the emplacement of the Irish settlement was significant for the scriptorium that was later to flourish there. On the northern confines of the contemporary Burgundian kingdom, Luxeuil was in touch with the Roman centers of Arles and Lyon and with the north of Italy; the Rhône, Saône, and Meuse valleys had functioned for centuries as a highway from the peninsula to the lowlands of the north, and in the seventh century, the road from Compiègne to Italy passed close by.[7] But Luxeuil was in a relatively uninhabited part of France which remains rural to this day; it had been a spa under the Empire, but it was in reality only a local resort, deserted long before the arrival of St Columban.[8]

St Columban did not stay very long in Burgundy. The monk Jonas' story of the saint's life makes clear the facts that, after a short period of inactivity, he engaged in local politics with the royal house of Burgundy;[9] that he presently ran into difficulties created by his opposition to the dowager queen Brunehilda on the succession of her grandsons to the throne;[10] and that, as a result, he was compelled by royal command to leave Burgundy. ". . . The king's servants declared that only those would be allowed to follow him who were his countrymen or who had come to him from Brittany; the others, by the king's command, were to remain in that place. . . ."[11] We must assume that when St Columban left Luxeuil, in 610 A.D., his twelve Irish followers went with him, together with some uncertain number of Bretons or Britons.

Luxeuil may well have served as a station for the immigration of Irish and English after 610 A.D., and strong and continuous relations were certainly maintained between the monastery and the foundations of St Columban in Switzerland and Italy.[12] But it seems more than probable that after the saint's de-

[5] As is evident from the *Vita*, c. 12 ff. (*loc. cit.*, pp. 10 ff.); see T. P. McLaughlin, *Le très ancien droit monastique de l'occident* in *Archives de la France monastique*, XXXVIII (Ligugé-Paris, 1935), p. 154.

[6] For a résumé of the conflict of the Insular and Roman dates for Easter, see H. Leclercq, *ad verb. Luxeuil*, in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, IX, 2 (Paris, 1930). Cf. also J. C. MacNaught, *The Celtic Church and the See of Peter* (Oxford, 1927), pp. 43–56, esp. 43–44.

[7] Dom L. Gougaud, "Sur les routes de Rome et sur le Rhin avec les 'peregrini' insulaires," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, XXIX (1933), 253–271.

[8] H. Leclercq, *loc. cit.*, cc. 2722–2724, with bibliography (1930).

[9] *Vita sancti Columbani*, c. 31 ff. (*loc. cit.*, pp. 17 ff.).

[10] *Ibid.*, c. 32–36 (*loc. cit.*, pp. 18–20).

[11] *Ibid.*, c. 37 (*loc. cit.*, p. 21). The translation is from D. C. Munro, "Life of St. Columban by the monk Jonas," *Translations and Reprints from the "Original Sources of European History,"* II, 7, p. 23.

[12] The history of Bobbio, St Gall, and Luxeuil in the seventh and eighth centuries provides evidence for such a conclusion. See J. Roussel, *Saint Columban et l'époque colombanienne* (Baume-lès Dames, 1941–1942), *passim*.

parture, as well as before, the *majority* of the brothers at Luxeuil were Continental in origin, and specifically Burgundian: who else could have swollen the settlements at Annegray, Luxeuil, and Fontaines, except local people? In addition, the royal decision to oust St Columban, quoted above, indicates the desire to oblige the Burgundian brothers, often landed aristocracy, to remain within Burgundian realm and law. I shall return to this point below, in the discussion of the scribes at Luxeuil later in the century.

St Columban's rule required the monks to spend part of each day reading,[13] and it is to be assumed that the monasteries contained a number of volumes soon after their foundation. These were not the manuscripts executed in the "style of Luxeuil," however, for the latter were not copied and decorated before the second half of the seventh century. The lapse of time from about 600 to 669 A.D.,[14] from the foundation to the first dated manuscript, is probably to be explained by the relatively late inauguration of the scriptorium as a professional center.[15]

The manuscripts of the Luxeuil group are of two kinds: the sumptuous volume and the ordinary volume with little or no ornamentation. The simple, unadorned manuscript is not necessarily to be considered an indication of the incapacity of the scribe or of the "decadence" of the scriptorium; it may reflect the order of a particular patron as well as a *torpor scribendi* which sometimes overcame the scribe toward the end of his work. The *de luxe* volume is of greater interest to the art historian, however, since it represents a more deliberate effort on the part of both patron and scribe to produce a work of art.

The extant manuscripts of the Luxeuil group do not include a wide variety of texts. In a consideration of the manuscripts as works of art, the classification according to character (liturgical, theological)[16] seems to be less important than one based on the *length* of the texts. Since the ornamentation was placed only at the opening of each section, a volume composed of shorter sections inherently contained a greater possibility of display and decoration than one with relatively long passages. Thus for our purposes, the Augustine homilies at Wolfenbüttel,[17]

[13] *Regula coenobialis*, iii (*PL*, LXXX, c. 211); ed. O. Seebass, "Regula monachorum sancti Columbani abbatis," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, XV (1895), 366–386, esp. 376.

[14] The date A.D. 669 for Morgan M 334 was established by J. Havet, "Questions mérovingiennes, III: La date d'un manuscrit de Luxeuil," in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, XLVI (1885), 430–439.

[15] The manuscripts are themselves the primary evidence for professional production. They are generally grouped in the last quarter of the seventh and at the start of the eighth centuries (Cf. E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, *passim*, hereafter referred to as *CLA* followed by Lowe's number). In addition, the nature of the Luxeuil scriptorium as a center for copying and exportation is indicated by the following: (1) the martyrology in Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 14086, seems to have been made for the monastery of Moûtiers-St.-Jean (P. Salmon, "Le Martyrologe-calendrier conservé dans le MS l. 14086 de Paris et ses origines," *Revue Bénédictine*, LVI (1945–1946), 42–57); (2) the Missale Gothicum (Vatican, Reg. lat. 317) was probably made for Autun (*CLA* 106); (3) Ivrea I (1) was apparently sent to Italy for Bishop Desiderius of Ivrea (*ca* 678–680) (*CLA* 300). It is thus not necessary to resolve the problems surrounding the Lectionary (Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 9427) on this particular point; indeed, some assistance in these problems may be furnished by this evidence of the professional center.

[16] This is the classification made by O. Dobiaš-Rozdestvenskaia, *loc. cit.*

[17] Wolfenbüttel, Weiss. 99.

the Lectionary[18] and the Missale Gothicum[19] are infinitely more interesting than the Leningrad Gregory.[20] There are unfortunately no Bibles or Evangeliaries,[21] so that a comparison of the Luxeuil presentation of these texts with that of other scriptoria is not possible.

The most important feature of the Luxeuil style was the *mise en page*. The manuscript opened to a frontispiece which contained the title or merely formed an ornamental page.[22] Sometimes several decorative pages were placed at the start, giving the volume an air of elaboration and importance.[23] Such ornamental pages were occasionally placed in the body of the volume, at points that seemed to merit a distinct and sumptuous introduction.[24]

The analysis of the few extant ornamental pages shows that the conception of the page at Luxeuil was not monumental. The ornament is disposed according to the formula of the canon-table,[25] but the "architecture" has deteriorated: although architectonic elements, such as columns, bases and capitals, are present, they have been emptied of their solidity. In any adaptation to a scriptorial medium, architecture may be expected to become linear and thin; but an even greater transformation has occurred at Luxeuil. The function of the canon-table is no longer operative; there are fewer shafts to the page and larger interstices between them, although the dimensions of the elements remain approximately the same.[26] The arched forms are reduplicated, reversed, and symmetrically aligned. If the decoration is used on a page of text or to frame a title, it is the text-block or the title which gives the decorative forms stability. In those few instances where the composition is other than a derivative of the canon-table (such as the first folia of the Leningrad Gregory),[27] one might expect to find a

[18] Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 9427 (*CLA* 579); reproductions in Zimm. 51–57 and 62; Salmon vi–xxxii.

[19] Vatican, Reg. lat. 317 (*CLA* 106); reproduction by C. Mohlberg, *Codices liturgici*, I (Augsburg 1929); references to the manuscript are automatically to Mohlberg's plates.

[20] Leningrad, Q.v.I, No. 14.

[21] With the exception of Admont, Stiftsbibl., 12, and the various isolated pages from it (*CLA*, VI, xvi–xvii), and possibly Morgan M 825.

[22] E.g., Wolfenbüttel, Weiss. 99 (Augustine), f. 1 Ro (Zimm. 56b); Ivrea, Bibl. Cap. I (1) (Gregory) (*CLA* 300), f. 2 Ro (Zimm. 48a); London, Brit. Mus., Add. Ms. 11878 (Gregory) (*CLA* 163), f. 1 Vo (Zimm. 50b); St Gallen, Stiftsbibl., 188, p. 1 (Zimm. 74d). The first pages of the Lectionary and the Missale Gothicum have been lost.

[23] E.g., Wolfenbüttel, Weiss. 99, f. 0 Vo; Ivrea I (1) ff. 1 Ro, 1 Vo; Leningrad, Q.v.I, No. 14, ff. 1 Vo, 2 Ro-Vo (Zimm. 64a–b, 63 b).

[24] E.g., Missale Gothicum, f. 169 Vo, the incipit of the Mass for Easter (Zimm. 46a); Leningrad Gregory, at the start of nearly every homily (e.g., ff. 33 Vo, 49 Ro, 91 Ro, 129 Ro, 143 Ro) (Zimm. 62b; 65–67a); Lectionary, f. 32 Vo (Zimm. 56a; Salmon vi).

[25] See C. Nordenfalk, *Die spätantike Kanontafeln* (*Die Bücherornamentik der Spätantike*, I [Göteberg, 1938]), *passim*.

[26] E.g., Leningrad Gregory, where two arcades are replaced by birds on either side of a central motif (f. 143 Ro, Zimm. 67a), or transformed into alternations of semicircles and triangles (ff. 49 Ro, 129 Ro, Zimm. 65a–b). The triangular "pediment" of the Ivrea Gregory (f. 2 Ro, Zimm. 48a) more closely resembles the monumental pages of Carolingian manuscripts in design.

[27] Zimm. 64a–b. The argument of Dobiaš-Rozdestvenskaia (*loc. cit.*, pp. 46 ff.) that this manuscript was made at Corbie by Luxeuil scribes would not alter its contribution as evidence for the Luxeuil style.

new creation in the Luxeuil style. But here, the essentially *additive* nature of Luxeuil decoration is evident. In one of the Gregory pages (f. 2 Ro), a grid-like schema occupies the page; it has approximately the same shape and size as the text-block. Into the grid are woven oblique shafts and circular forms; and the interstices are filled with elegant flowers or the bird-and-fruit motif. In the other (f. 1 Vo), a large cross surrounded by an inscription occupies the center of the page; this is framed by interlocking circles and poorly drawn "S"-shaped shafts, the whole interspersed with birds and flowers. These pages indicate that while the Luxeuil style weakened the monumental canon-table, it was unable to replace it with another constructive solution. The persistence of the canon-table tradition may have been the cause of this lacuna.

Luxeuil excelled rather in the composition of the incidental folio in the manuscript. In the more elaborate volumes, such as the Lectionary, the text forms a block of script placed in the center of the page and considerably taller than wide. The margins are important as blank spaces surrounding and setting off the darker mass of the text.[28] The single column, or "long line," of text is basic in the formation and appearance of this block.

The pages bearing ornament are those with colophons, and the number of such pages as well as the exact situation of the colophon on the individual page, vary according to the length of the texts and the hands of various scribes. But the lines are not merely a succession of letters and words; they are elongated, narrow spaces reaching from margin to margin and bound by the rulings. Each one is a unit; several units may be joined together to form a larger box; and the single or multiple units receive special sets of forms according to their position in the colophon. At the same time, the opening line of the text is often broken in the center, in order to give balance and symmetry to the sections on either side of the vertical axis; the center is sometimes even further accentuated by an ornamental initial.[29]

One of the principles in the composition of the colophon is the alternation of alphabets and of colors. In the Lectionary, each selection of text is introduced by a line of "hollow" capitals, followed by one or more lines of uncials.[30] The first line of the text starts with an ornamented initial and continues with solid capitals. The pockets of the hollow capitals are filled with alternating red, green, yellow, and orange colors; the uncials are in red, orange, or brown, line by line; and the solid capitals generally in brown.

The ornamental initials and hollow capitals are delicate in form. They are made with thin lines by a pen much finer than that used for the cursive script. This is not the bold, heavy contour of the Corbie school,[31] or the stiff contour of the older, Italian manuscripts;[32] it is rather a fragile line from which the very letter is constructed, and which remains visible after the addition of the colors.

[28] E.g., Zimm. 51, 52; Salmon vii–xiv.

[29] E.g., Zimm. 54 a, c, d; 55c; and *ibid.*, 51a, 52a, 55b (with the caesura); Salmon vii–xiv, *passim.*

[30] E.g., Zimm. 54b; Salmon x.

[31] Cf. Zimm. 85–118, *passim.*

[32] *Ibid.*, 5–8.

The ornament shows a marked tendency to exploit this quality of the pen, for the hollow capitals, when executed with care,[33] have involved spirals prolonging the serifs in the same manner as the terminations of the initials, whether of shaft, fish, or other motif. The colors are not opaque but light and transparent;[34] they are used merely to fill in the pockets sketched by the pen lines.

The relationship between contour and colors is symptomatic of another distinguishing characteristic of Luxeuil. The line contour forms the skeleton of the initial. Motifs are hung onto it, placed inside it, or disfigured to fit it. The contour, not the motif, is the controlling factor in the construction of the initial. This can be seen most clearly, perhaps, in the manner in which the Luxeuil fish differs from the one at Corbie: at Luxeuil, it is bound by regular arcs drawn with the compass; the lines imprison it and give it shape at the same time. At Corbie, the fish is often thought of as a live creature; it moves and bends, obliging the contour to follow.

The typical Luxeuil initial, with a shaft which often extends the entire height of the page, has attracted the attention of every student of the manuscripts. The analysis of this feature may give us further insight into the nature of the style. The initial is placed at the start of a section of text; it invades the margin and sometimes forms a complete border on one side of the text block. Certain letters, such as F, H, P and T, where the uncial form has a shaft at the left side, lend themselves to this treatment. Others, such as C, D and Q, do not. But even in the latter two cases, expedients are found whereby the shafts may be elongated: in the Lectionary[35] and the Wolfenbüttel Augustine,[36] for instance, the tail of the uncial D, which normally would terminate close to the margin, is prolonged up the left side of the page and even partway across the top; in the Leningrad Gregory, the shaft of the Q moves to the bottom margin, interrupting the text-block which is broken vertically at this point.[37] The principle involved is multiple. In the first place, the initial is never separated from the text; it is always part of the text-block, even though it may be given a larger space than any of the other letters. Secondly, the text is never deformed to fit the movement and extension of a stylized letter; it remains a single, solid block into which the initial is set. This is made clear by those few examples where the text penetrates the interior of the initial, in the loops of the C, D or G, for instance. This kind of overlapping occurs repeatedly in the Missale Gothicum and seems to reach an extreme point in the Leningrad Gregory.[38] Thus, the initial does not have, and

[33] *Ibid.*, 53a, c; Salmon, *passim.*

[34] J. J. Tikkanen, *Studien über die Farbengebung in der mittelalterlichen Buchmalerei*, ed. Societas Scientarum Fennica (Helsinki, 1933), pp. 227–246, esp. 236–237, uses the term "impressionistic" for Luxeuil.

[35] Ff. 95 Vo, 101 Vo, 142 Vo, 178 Vo, etc. (Zimm. 54a–d)

[36] Ff. 56 Vo, 73 Vo, etc. (Zimm. 58a–b).

[37] To the best of my knowledge, the only plates of these pages are those prepared for Zimmermann's study but not included in the final publication. Dr C. Nordenfalk has kindly permitted me to copy his prints of the Zimmermann negatives.

[38] Leningrad Gregory, f. 143 Ro (Zimm. 67a); Missale Gothicum, ff. 1 Vo, 3 Ro, 89 Ro, 153 Ro, etc.

does not create on the page, a space of its own. It forms a link between the solid text and the bare margins, and it frames the text ornamentally, on the left side and occasionally across the top. Like the motif, which fits into the contours of the initial, so the initial, with few exceptions, is fitted into the physical context of the text.

The ornamental vocabulary of the Luxeuil group is not characterized by new, experimental forms, as is that of the contemporary Insular schools. It is an old repertory coming from the Mediterranean, although the development of the forms in scriptorial art may have become important only a short time before, that is, in the sixth century. Four main motifs may be isolated in the Luxeuil vocabulary.[39] They are:

1. The Fish

Fish are generally used as "filling" for the areas formed by the intersecting lines of compass-drawn circles. The Luxeuil fish has a personality of its own: part of the body is divided from the rest by a small band representing gills; the head forms a triangle and the eye is made of a disk, often placed in the center of the head and occasionally joined to the apex by a line forming a mouth. The gills bear small, decorative scales on the body-side, and fins project from the back and belly of the latter. When the tail of the fish is disengaged from the initial, it is inscribed in the prolongations of the compass arcs and generally consists in a three-lobed form which must be classed with the "flowers."

2. The Bird

The bird has a special head, separated from the body by a long, extensible neck and differentiated from it by two wide collar-bands. The eye is a disk, and the beak is long, thin and curved. The body is an irregular mass bearing wings, legs and a long, plumed tail. The wings are often drawn within the limits of the body, as if they are folded, especially when the bird is placed inside a circumscribing arc. The legs project from the body in all cases; the "drumstick" is pronounced and tapers to the fine, three-toed foot. The bird occurs in the initial circumscribed by a circle, but it never forms part of the initial proper, as does the fish. It may be placed inside the loop, where it generally stands free and looks over its shoulder. Occasionally, it is used as a replacement of the short shafts of some initials, for example A, and is represented here plucking at a fruit or flower.

3. The Shafts

The shafts show the greatest variety in the Luxeuil vocabulary. They comprise geometric patterns which are repetitive and endless, and which are never organized, in a given area, into a center and balanced terminations. The patterns are propagated from the straight shaft to any area inside the contours of the

[39] My classification of the Luxeuil motifs is merely an endeavor to isolate the basic ornamental patterns. The treatment of these motifs in the hands of various scribes is infinitely complex, as a glance at the Lectionary or the Missale Gothicum will show; and a classification which endeavors to list each form in all its variations is practically useless (cf. the distortions and inadequacies of Mohlberg's distinction between "natural" and "fantastic" *op. cit.*, I, 43–74).

initial. Four basic patterns may be distinguished:

a. the rope and three-strand weave

The rope consists in a single, circular band twisted to form an elongated design which turns back upon itself at either end. It must be emphasized that this motif bears no relationship to the stylized Insular rope, where angular, straight sections alternate with curved, creating a rhythm within the shaft. The three-strand weave is the only interlace pattern used at Luxeuil. It can easily be distinguished from Insular interlace by the absence of any attempt at depth and by the comparative incompetence with which it is executed.

b. the triangles

The shafts are most often filled with triangular patterns that may be deciphered as simple triangles with the base placed against one side and the apex touching the other, each triangle dovetailing into the next to form a band. Sometimes the bases are omitted, and the apices point downward, forming a series of V's; occasionally, the triangle is replaced by concentric circles or semicircles drawn free-hand. The basic triangular pattern undergoes a series of metamorphoses: each one may be invested with parallel lines forming smaller triangles, or with concentric circles. The fish-head is sometimes transplanted from the fish-body to the shaft, where its triangular shape is accentuated.

c. the "objects"

Objects, such as the heart or the flower, are often placed vertically in series within the shaft; the pattern is one of juxtaposition and endless repetition.

d. the rinceaux

The rinceaux are simply the reverse curve or the wavy line. Sometimes the form approaches the triangular pattern of the shaft, as a sort of zig-zag; equally often, the swell of the curve is flattened. The stem of the vine bears leaves which curve into the trapezoidal or triangular interstices, and each such area generally contains a flower.

4. The Flowers

The flowers show the same sort of repetition as the shafts. A single, four-lobed star becomes an elaborate, eight-petalled flower by the superimposition of the fish-tail; the fish-tail itself is deformed and attached to the twin-ball form to make a pendant, and this is presently metamorphosed into "pine-tree" branches and ferns. The flowers are used as pendants and as crowns for the "Ionic" orders at the summits of the shafts; they are added together to create a filler for the shafts or are linked by a central stem to form an elaborate marginal flora.

Such are, briefly, the materials of which the Luxeuil decoration is composed. It is not possible here to discuss the development of these elements in the style; the chronological evidence for an analysis of this kind is not clear or precise, and the very nature of a scriptorium, and, indeed, of a style, prohibits the unilinear classification of the forms in time.[40]

[40] The isolation of one decorator in several manuscripts is still largely a matter of conjecture. Even were this possible, the relative dates of execution could not be fixed without considerable knowledge

Even from this cursory description, however, it can be seen that there are few original features at Luxeuil. The vocabulary was used in the sixth and seventh centuries in certain manuscripts which may be related to south France and to Italy.[41] The ultimate source may have been manuscripts coming from the Greek-speaking world;[42] however, this is a problem in and of itself. It must only be remarked here that the Luxeuil motifs are closely paralleled in nearly all the minor arts of the late Empire; jewelry and metal-work, textiles, ivories, mosaics, ceramics, even sarcophagi, stelae, and frescoes, from such varied regions as Egypt, Byzantium, northwest Africa, Sicily, Campania and northern Italy and Gaul present strong analogies to various Luxeuil motifs. The vocabulary was "international." Yet it seems clear that by the second half of the sixth century,[43] the motifs had already been used in manuscript ornament, and that up to the end of the Merovingian era, transfer from other media was negligible if not non-operative. The positive side of the problem rests on the probability that manuscripts were copied from other manuscripts in a library or scriptorium, and that the immediate sources therefore were scriptorial in character, to the general exclusion of other media.

The sources of the disposition of the page can also be outlined, and it is again evident that Luxeuil did not innovate in an unusual way. The early history of the format of the volume is known:[44] the oblong, horizontal page was gradually shortened to a square, with a corresponding reduction in the number of columns. To the modern paleographer, the perfectly square text-block is an indication of the antiquity of the manuscript.[45] But the page continued to grow, from the square to the oblong vertical; and the single column, already in use in the fourth century, became nearly an exclusive feature. In the Luxeuil group, only rarely are double columns employed;[46] the particular characteristics of the Luxeuil *mise en page*

of the personality of the artist, since personal styles develop sometimes toward simplicity, sometimes toward complication and sometimes not at all. In more general terms, the evolution of the Luxeuil style is still unclear despite Zimmermann's masterly effort, since it is not yet possible to isolate the elements taken over bodily from the sources or to show in what way they evolved at Luxeuil itself. Two points might bear examination in the full style: (1) the moment at which *all* the initial shafts are as long as possible (in the Missale Gothicum, both long and short forms are contemporary); and (2) the steps taken toward the conception of the pages in the Leningrad Gregory, where the initial shaft breaks through the block of the text; this would seem to be an abrogation of principle and possibly an indication of a late date.

[41] This suggestion is based on the analysis outlined in the present study and on E. A. Lowe's *Codices Lugdunenses antiquissimi: Le scriptorium de Lyon — La plus ancienne école paléographique de France*, in *Documents paléographiques, typographiques, iconographiques*, ed. La Ville de Lyon, III–IV (Lyon, 1924), and on his *CLA*, *passim*.

[42] C. Nordenfalk, "En senantik initialhandskrift," *Society of the History of Art*, Stockholm, VI (1937) with English summary, 127 ff.

[43] C. Nordenfalk, "Before the Book of Durrow," *Acta Archeologica*, XVIII (1947), 141–174, esp. 153–155.

[44] K. Weitzmann, *Illustration in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton, 1947), pp. 52 and 69–84.

[45] E.g., E. A. Lowe, in *CLA*, V, 42 (No. 666).

[46] E.g., Valenciennes, Bibl. Mun. 495 (455) (*CLA* 841), Morgan M 789 (from Admont, Stiftsbibl., 12) and M 825.

could not have taken shape without the development of the single column on the vertical page.

The colophon has long been recognized as the *topos* of decorative developments in early Latin manuscripts.[47] This area enabled the reader to find the opening passage of a particular text with greater ease, and it served to identify both preceding and following texts by short titles. But the colophon occupied a space on the page between two sections of text, and this space had already become, in sixth-century Italy, an ornamental area filled by patterns of dots, flourishes, and ropes.[48] Often, certainly before the seventh century, it comprised letters measuring the full height of the ruled lines and separated by blank lines varying in number according to the area left vacant by the text.[49]

The colophon is also the area where other features important to the style of Luxeuil were to be found. It was here that the capital resisted the introduction of the uncial,[50] just as later the ornamented initials in uncial script resisted the introduction of cursive. The precise steps of these transformations remain to be investigated in detail; but sixth-century Italian manuscripts often use capitals for the colophon and uncials or semiuncials for the text.[51] The ornamented initial itself must have become standard during this period, before the introduction of cursive into the text, since Merovingian initials are based to an extraordinary degree on uncial forms;[52] the exceptions indicate an even older date for this change, since they are rustic or semi-square capitals. Likewise, the use of capitals in the Luxeuil colophon, although they are far removed from the capitals of late Antique script and partake of the peculiar flourish of the Merovingian hand, must be explained by this same phenomenon. The colophon was a composed, decorative space; it contributed to the design of an ordered page and certain of its characteristics at Luxeuil had already been acquired as early as the late sixth century.

The general lines of the development of the "filled" initial have recently been sketched by Nordenfalk.[53] The identification of the capital in the colophon depends on the occurrence of one of the letters characteristic of the alphabet (A, D, H, M, etc.); unfortunately, many of the shorter colophons do not contain any of these, and the evidence is thereby partly obscured. But the development given to the lines of the colophon and the known examples of capitals which exist here are perhaps sufficient to explain their use at Luxeuil.[54]

[47] C. Nordenfalk, "The Beginning of Book Decoration," *Essays in Honor of Georg Swarzenski* (Chicago-Berlin, 1951), pp. 9–20, esp. 9.

[48] E.g., Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 8907, ff. 16 Vo, 29 Ro (*CLA* 572), or *ibid.*, nouv. acq. lat. 1592 (*CLA* 685), in Zimm. 2a–b.

[49] E.g., Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 17225, ff. 40 Vo, 151 Vo (*CLA* 666), or *ibid.*, lat. 10592, ff. 13 Vo–14 Ro (*CLA* 602).

[50] E.g., Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 10593 (*CLA* 603); Lyon, Bibl. Mun. 448 (872); Florence, Laur. LXV, 1 (*CLA* 298); Milan, Ambros. E. 147 sup. (*CLA* ** 26b); *ibid.*, S. 45 sup. (CLA 365).

[51] E.g., Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 9285 (*CLA* 543); *ibid.*, lat. 10593 (*CLA* 603); Milan, Ambros. H. 78 sup. (*CLA* **347); *ibid.*, 0.210 sup. (*CLA* 358); Rome, Bibl. Naz. Vittorio Emmanuele, Sessoriano 13 (2094) (*CLA* 418), etc.

[52] A notable series of exceptions occurs in the Missale Gothicum, esp. ff. 95 Ro, 122 Vo, 125 Ro, 131 Vo, 218 Ro, etc., where the initials are capitals.

[53] C. Nordenfalk, "Before the Book of Durrow," *loc. cit.*, pp. 153–154.

[54] See note 51 for a few examples picked at random.

On the other hand, the initials were more and more frequently uncials, after the sixth-century Orosius at Florence.[55] The number of examples of uncial A treated as a decorative initial in the sixth century is already fairly impressive, and intensive research will surely reveal more.[56] A second series is furnished by Q.[57]

Another characteristic feature of the later sixth-century colophon was the use of alternating colors. The text of the interstice was set off from the block by the use of red, and even of alternating lines of red and brown.[58] The colophon was no longer merely an introductory space, even when purely decorative forms were absent; it had already become ornamental. The first line of the text proper was also occasionally set off in red,[59] and sometimes only half of this line, to the vertical axis of the page, was colored, the remainder being left in the ordinary brown of the text.[60]

But these features of sixth- and seventh-century manuscripts, the "sources" of the Luxeuil style, do not serve to explain it as an art-form. They merely help to place the scriptorium in context and to indicate the direction of the influence working upon it. It is in this respect that I must take to task those students who insist on finding a predominantly Insular touch at Luxeuil.[61] Insular ornamentation is biomorphic; the motif is endowed with a separate life from that of the text, it forms the skeleton of the design even when this design is enclosed by a frame. The motif grows, it expands and fills the page, and when it can no longer move across the surface it disappears in depth. The Insular manuscript is furthermore characterized by frequent, monumental *pages-tapis* on which only a few letters compose an entire decorative scheme.[62]

In contrast, the Luxeuil style has no inner rhythm or organization. The motifs do not react against the frame of the letter; they are deformed by the frame and some of them (e.g., the fish) may have been suggested by the construction of the letter from intersecting arcs. They do not push against the frame, nor do they seek expansion in depth. The incompetent interlace, and the lack of interest in intricate twists and bends are further indications of the Continental mentality of Luxeuil. The frame is a simple contour enclosing or supporting the motifs; it is itself the skeleton onto which, or within which, the motifs are placed.

[55] Florence, Laur. LXV, 1 (*CLA* 298).

[56] *Ibid.*; and Verona XXXIX (37) (*CLA* 496); Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 12634 (ff. 9–165) (*CLA* 646); *ibid.*, lat. 2235 (*CLA* 543); *ibid.*, lat. 2796 (ff. 1–13) (*CLA* 550).

[57] Florence, Laur. LXV.1; Milan, Ambros. I.61 sup. (*CLA* 350); *ibid.*, S. 45 sup. (*CLA* 365).

[58] E.g., Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 2235 (*CLA* 543), f. 65 Ro; *ibid.*, lat. 17225 (*CLA* 666), ff. 40 Vo, 151 Vo; *ibid.*, lat. 4808 (ff. 53–65) (*CLA* 550), f. 65 Ro; *ibid.*, lat. 10593 (*CLA* 603), ff. 10 Ro, 17 Ro, 28 Ro-Vo; *ibid.*, lat. 8907 (*CLA* 572), f. 16 Vo. etc.

[59] E.g., Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 10593 (*CLA* 603), ff. 41 Vo, 68 Ro, 79 Ro; *ibid.*, lat. 11326 (*CLA* 609), *passim*: *ibid.*, nouv. acq. lat. 1592 (*CLA* 685), ff. 123 Ro, 215 Ro, etc.

[60] E.g., Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 2234 (*CLA* 543), ff. 85 Vo, 89 Ro.

[61] E. A. Lowe has, of course, merely accentuated the few insular features found sporadically at Luxeuil ("The 'Script of Luxeuil'," *loc. cit.*, p. 140). Mlle F. Henry, on the other hand, has not had occasion to give the problem her close attention ("Les débuts de la miniature irlandaise," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, s. 6, XXXVII (1950), 5–34, esp. 26–28.

[62] Cf. F. Henry, *loc. cit.*, and her *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period* (London, 1940).

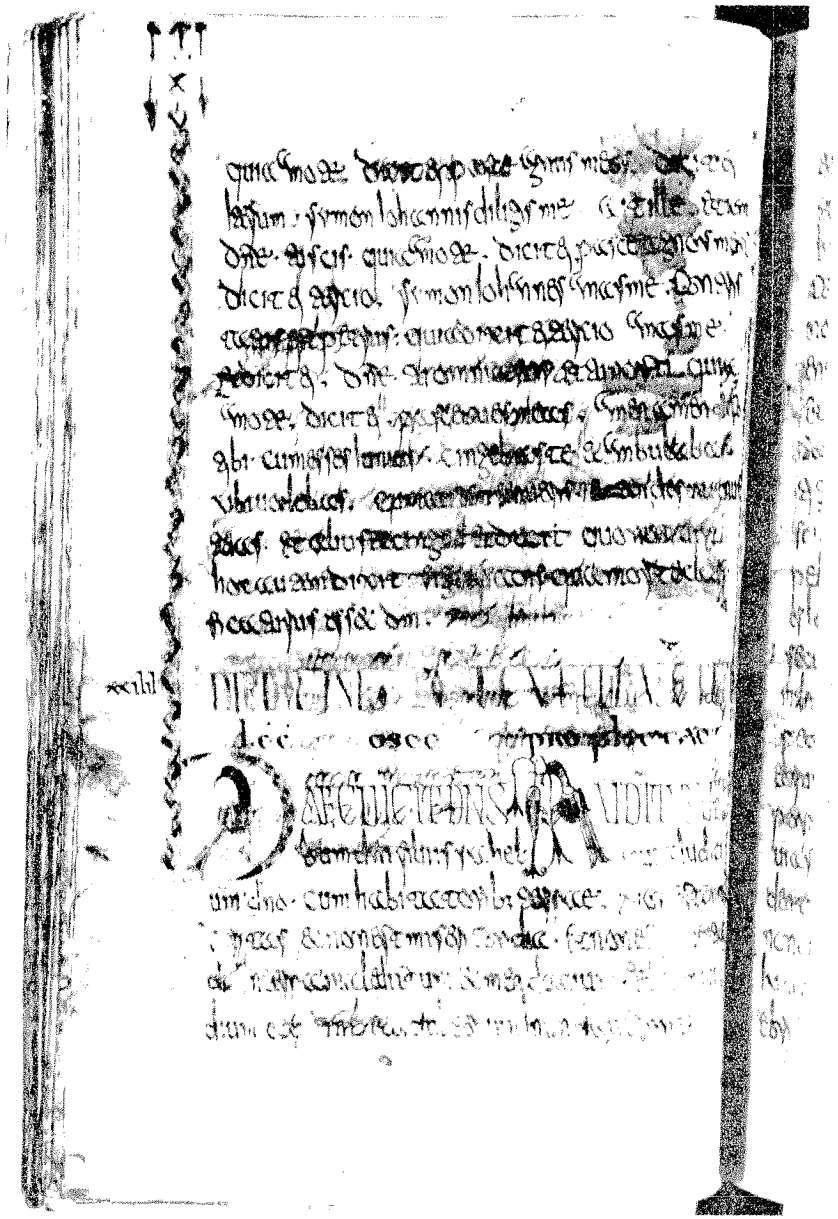

FIG. 1. The Luxeuil Lectionary, Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 9427, f. 84 Vo

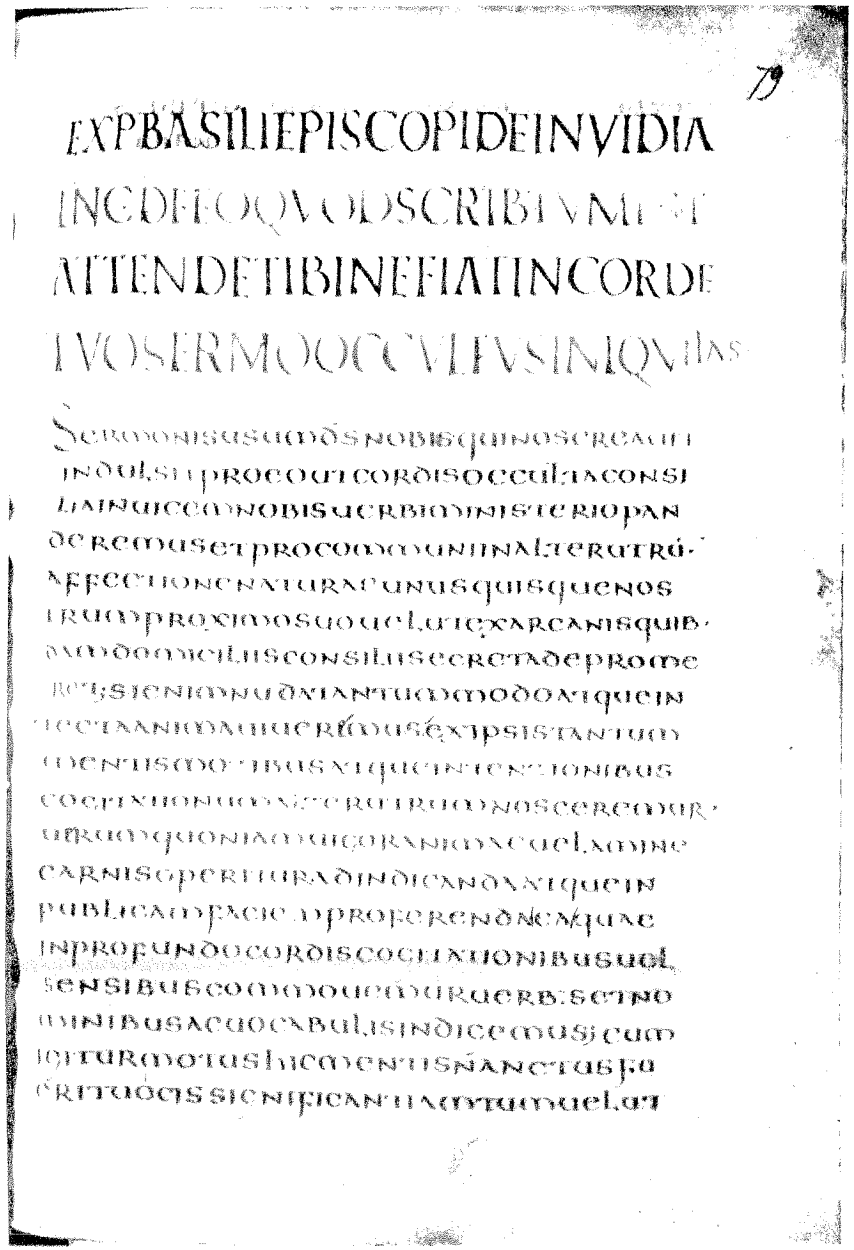

Fig. 2. Paris, Bibl. Nat., Nat. 10593, f. 79 Ro.

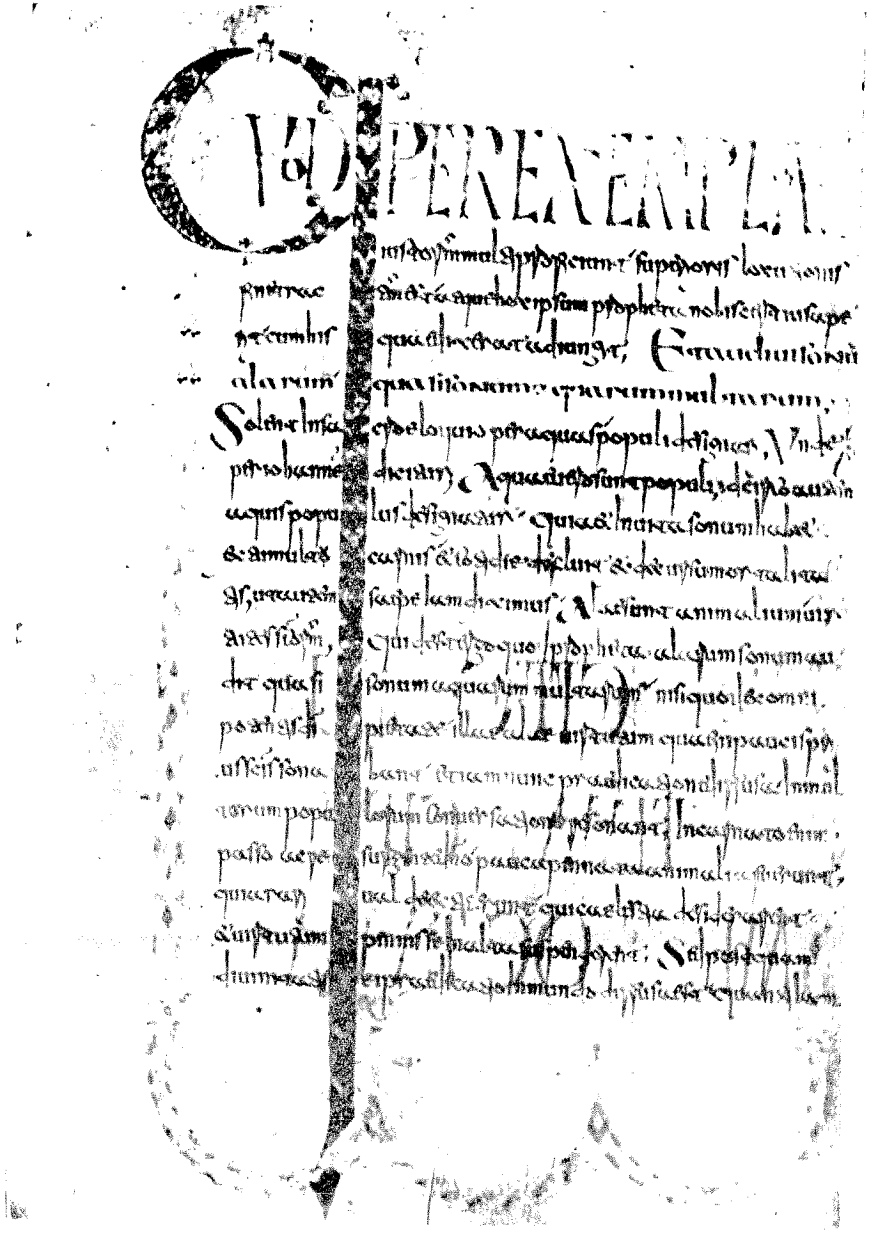

Fig. 3. Leningrad, Q.v.I, No. 11, f. 74 Ro.

These principles serve to explain the composition of the page as a whole. The block of text is the central organizational factor, the colophon the *topos* of decoration. The text does not impose a form upon the initial any more than the initial imposes upon or distorts the text. The decoration is built in and around the text-block; motif is added to motif to form the long shafts and undulating stems. It is a system capable of infinite extension but of no inner development; there is no termination indicated by the decorative structure, and the initial ends only where the page itself stops.

There are the terms which characterize the Continental mentality of Luxeuil in the late seventh century. It is possible to obtain a more precise understanding of this vision by comparing the work of the three men who worked simultaneously on the Missale Gothicum.[63] Scribe A was the most extraordinary and proficient. He rarely missed the opportunity to exploit a colophon, and the *mise en page* was, in his hands, a coherent and well-organized display. But his capitals are not nearly so developed as those of scribes B and C. The initials generally stay well within the text-block, and the shafts do not extend up or down indefinitely (excepting perhaps on f. 85 Ro). His H, L, P and even I (f. 58 Ro) seem to be governed by a regulation size, on a large scale but always in keeping with the text. Scribe B did not have the stamina or the interest of scribe A. He used the tall colophon capitals and nearly always included two lines of them in alternating colors. His repertory of ornamental initials is impressive and his imagination in combining motifs is perhaps greater than that of the first scribe. But his presentation of the page with colophon is not so carefully controlled. Scribe C qualifies for third place in terms of repertory and conception. His initials are closer to those of scribe A in form and motif. He obviously felt the necessity of placing an ornamental initial at the start of each section of each mass, with the result that some of his pages contain as many as five initials, each sharply constricted by the available space. It is clear that his shafts would extend to the maximum length were there space for them. But his concept of the page is poor. He employs only a single line of capitals, and he obviously thought that a full display of ornament should be reserved for unusual and meritorious incipits: it was this scribe who executed the introduction to the Mass for Easter (f. 169 Vo).

The variation in technique and in the development of the motifs in the initials would also serve to characterize these three individuals. But it is more important to note that their work was simultaneous and unrestricted. Each interpreted the current vocabulary and style according to his own understanding of it, each constructed pages according to his own conception of the ornamental possibilities and the propriety of the particular texts in question. The Missale Gothicum is evidence of the freedom and the experimentation of the Luxeuil scribes. The traditional vocabulary and the dosage vary almost as the personality of each man. This liberty had, of course, its limitations: the particular volume, the scriptorium, the habit of thought. But this last is of great consequence. It shows us in what manner the style was controlled by the individuals, and how each envisioned the presentation of his particular section of text.

[63] I follow the isolation of the hands made by Mohlberg, *op. cit.*, 1, 43 ff.

The art of Luxeuil has the characteristics of a Mediterranean vision, filtered and transformed by the Merovingian mind. The human figure is absent, but the ornamentation is additive and repetitive, the structure of the page inorganic. In this sense, the style of Luxeuil is Continental. But it is also mediaeval: the book itself represented a relatively new tradition in the Occident, displacing the older codex; and at Luxeuil, the book was often a major artistic production. The volumes produced by the scriptorium are veritable masterpieces of design and execution. The Lectionary and the Wolfenbüttel Augustine are worthy brothers of the Gothic missals and books of hours; and an artist such as Jean Pucelle was spiritual kin to the scribes of Luxeuil. Both possessed an extraordinary vision of ornament in the world of forms; both were sensitive to the qualities of the fine pen and the long, undulated spiral. But at Luxeuil, the page was a setting, a surface to be ordered according to the demands of the texts which were the constant criterion of the composition.

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EREC AND THE JOY OF THE COURT

By WILLIAM A. NITZE

At the basis of any great work of art there is always a simple idea, thought Anatole France. Chrétien de Troyes' *Erec* (*D'Erec, le fil Lac, est li contes*, vs. 19[1]) may not have a simple theme or be without imperfections. It parades the poet's erudition[2] and gives a long but summary list of Arthurian knights.[3] But it is a notable work of art with a definite idea or situation to which the main characters, Erec, Enide, Mabonagrain all revert. The mediaevals knew the idea as *accidia*[4] or "sloth." Foerster terms it *Verliegen*; Tennyson, more poetic and Vergilian,

[1] I take this to be the title, paralleling the Welsh *Gereint ab Erbin*, on whom see Loth, *Mabinogion*, 2nd ed. (1913), II, 121, note 1. On the other hand, Roques in his edition of MS. 794 (*CFMA*, 80) prints *Erec et Enide*, following Chrétien's *Cligés*, vs. 1: "Cil qui fist d'Erec et d'Enide," and the explicit of the Guyot text: "Explycyt li Romans d'Erec et d'Enyde." On the possibility that the Welsh version, together with Hartmann and the Norse saga, goes back to a better form of Chrétien's text than the extant manuscripts, see Foerster, 3rd ed., p. xxviii, and Roques, p. xxxiv; also Loth, *op. cit.* I, pp. 53 ff., and Loomis' useful survey in *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* (1949), pp. 32–38. Notable is the fact that the *Gereint* lacks the name *Joie de la Cort* for its last episode, as well as most of the Otherworld landscape, although it appropriately calls the place *Clos de Nuage* (apparently in imitation of Chrétien). Of course, it does not refer to the crowning at Nantes, on which see below, p. 699.

[2] On his reference to *esciënce* (vs. 17) and *sens* (MS P, vs. 5) and his dependence on the *Liber Sapientiae*, chs. vii and viii, see *Romania*, LIV (1915), 14–36, *Univ. Calif. Pub. in Mod. Phil.*, XXVIII, 5 (1949), 238 ff., and *BBSIA*, V (1953), 77. Spitzer's comment on these words in Marie de France (*MP*, XLI [1943], 96 ff.) fails to note that *sens*, as used there, is L. *sensus* employed in the *Liber Sapientiae*. On Macrobius (vs. 6738, Roques 6679) see Hofer, *ZRPh*, XLVIII (1928), 130, Curtius, *ibid.*, LVIII (1938), 450 ff., and Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science* [1924], *passim*. On Alexander (vss. 2270 and 6673 ff., Roques 2244 and 6611 ff.) see Hofer, *ZRPh*, LX (1940), 19–32, and Fourrier, *BBSIA*, II (1950), 70. On other allusions see Foerster, p. xiii. Since Roques disregards Chrétien's clerical background, it is important to note the remarks of Ernst R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, 1948 (now translated into English, Bollingen Series, XXXVI), pp. 388 ff.: "Das Latein hat dem Französischen die Zunge gelöst. Weil Frankreich der Träger des *studium* war; weil die *artes*, Grammatik und Rhetorik an der Spitze, dort ihr Hauptquartier hatten—deshalb sprosst dort zuerst der Flor der volkssprachlichen Poesie," as I tried to show in SPECULUM, XXIII (1948), 464–471. Hence, Chrétien, who had translated the *Remedia Amoris* (*Comandemans Ovide*), took his cue from *Remedia*, vs. 144: "(Cedit amor rebus) res age: tutus eris," as Erec becomes at the close of the romance.

[3] Cf. vss. 311 ff. and, for the Round Table, vss. 1691 ff. (Roques, 1672 ff.). For bibliography on these names consult J. J. Parry, *Bibl. of Crit. Arthur. Lit.*, published annually in *Modern Language Quarterly*. Certainly Colescestre (MS C, Roques, 1885) must be Colchester, the Roman *Camulodunum* or *Camalodunum*; see Collingwood and Myres, *Roman Britain* (1936), p. 497, although the variety of readings (*gloecestre, loucestre, leuecestre*) leaves one in doubt. Delbouille's claim (*Romania*, LXXIV [1953], 188 ff.) that Wace is responsible for the Round Table and that "rien ne prouve cependant qu'il n'ait pas simplement obéi au souci de la rime" is too shallow to be accepted. He neglects the important fact, reasserted by Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes*, pp. 63 ff., that the Celts were accustomed "to sit in a circle at individual tables about the bravest. Posidonius, about 90 B.C., testified to the practice among the Gauls. Irish sagas [e.g. *Briciu's Feast*] show that it prevailed among the Irish in the eighth and later centuries;" cf. *Studies in Honor of A. Marshall Elliott* (1911), I, p. 34 ff. Moreover, the parallel drawn by Loomis (p. 65) between Lawman's *Brut* and *Briciu's Feast* is conclusive, as even Bruce was compelled to grant.

[4] On the Seven Deadly Sins see John L. Lowes, *PMLA*, XXX (1915), 243 ff.